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Improving teacher performance through motivation: the role of academic supervision and principal leadership

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ABSTRACT

This research is located in junior high schools Kendal Regency, with purpose of the research being to analyze and understanding the influence of Academic Supervision and Principal Leadership on Work Motivation, Academic Supervision, Principal leadership and work motivation on teacher performance, (Academic Supervision on teacher performance mediated by work motivation, and Principal leadership towards performance mediated work motivation. This study used a sample of 118 people who were state civil service teachers at SMPN in Kendal Regency Data collection methods using questionnaires and interviews, from the results of questionnaire answers in feasibility tests using validity tests and reliability tests, as well as analyzing data using regression analysis, model tests and hypothesis test. Results of this research concluded that: Academic Supervision and Principal Leadership affects Work Motivation, Academic Supervision, Principal Leadership and Work Motivation affects teacher performance, Academic Supervision influences teacher performance mediated by work motivation, and the influence of Principal Leadership on teacher performance Mediated Work Motivation.

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Introduction

The quality of education in Indonesia continues to be a national concern, particularly in relation to the performance of teachers, who serve as the primary agents of learning. In Kendal Regency, Central Java, several indicators point to challenges in improving teacher performance. Based on preliminary data from the Kendal District Education Office (2023), only 62% of teachers achieved the minimum performance criteria in classroom management, pedagogical planning, and student engagement. This underperformance affects not only academic outcomes but also the broader goals of national education reform.

Teacher performance is a multidimensional construct influenced by various internal and external factors. At the individual level, work motivation plays a critical role in shaping how teachers approach

their duties and responsibilities. At the organizational level, leadership and supervision practices are equally significant. However, despite government programs aimed at improving school governance, gaps in effective leadership and supervision persist in many public middle schools in Kendal RegencyPerformance draws from a variety of sources in order to function at its best. Individuals, organizations, and the external environment are the sources that lead to optimal performance, according to Sedarmayanti (Suryadi, 2019). Intellectual, psychological, physical, motivational, personality, financial, job preparation, and value orientation are examples of individual or internal difficulties. Systems, group roles, leadership, supervisory conduct, and organizational climate are examples of organizational challenges. Family, the economy, politics, the law, social values, the labor market, technical advancements, and unions are examples of external issues (Mulyasa, 2016).

Performance in this research is limited to teacher performance. Meanwhile, the source of performance problems is thought to originate from individual and organizational problems. Individual problems in organizations are described in the motivation possessed by teachers which is manifested in work motivation variables. Organizational problems are described in leadership problems which are manifested in the principal's leadership variable, as well as supervisory behavior which is manifested in academic supervision.

Meeting teacher needs will, of course, increase the performance provided by teachers. Work motivation is the state that drives an individual to carry out their work in accordance with organizational and individual goals. The ability to address individual wants is a necessary condition for motivation, which is the willingness to put in a high level of effort towards organizational goals (Uno, 2017). Basically, motivation can come from within oneself or from other people. With motivation, a person can do work with enthusiasm and is of course responsible for the results of his work

Each instructor has a different motive for their work. This will lead to variations in the way teachers perform in raising the standard of instruction. According to Herzberg (2016), there are two components that make up work motivation: the hygienic factor and the motivational factor, or what makes one feel more satisfied at work. Motivator elements, which include work performance, recognition, advancement, a sense of importance in one's work, and responsibility, are what lead to job happiness. Extrinsic elements that affect hygiene include working environment, status, pay, connections with coworkers, supervision, administrative regulations, and feelings of security at work.

Raharjo (2015) indicates that teacher performance can be influenced by academic leadership and supervision, with a high degree of influence. This indicates that one strategy for raising teacher performance is the academic supervision and guidance provided by the school principal; yet, Suliyanti (2018), according to her research, the principal's leadership has an impact on teacher performance, but not on teacher performance itself. are teacher competency and academic oversight.

Rivai (2018) demonstrated that the connection between a leader and their followers or subordinates is one of influence. Leadership is a relationship-building style that involves using power and ability to influence, motivate, and guide an individual or group of individuals in order to accomplish organizational objectives.

Masʼud (2018) explained that the leadership of the school principal is a strong factor influencing teacher performance, the influence exerted is 75%. However, in another study, Rohayati (2017) stated that the principal's leadership was an influencing factor, but the influence was very weak. These two studies need to be strengthened and developed in this research regarding whether or not the principal leadership influences teacher performance.

It is believed that academic supervision affects teachers' effectiveness. Similarly, emphasized the benefits of academic supervision in enhancing teacher capability, the mechanisms through which this supervision translates into performance improvement remain underexplored. Furthermore, the mediating role of teacher motivation in this relationship is often mentioned but rarely empirically tested (Saddi, 2021).

Research conducted by Hardono (2017) demonstrates the partial and simultaneous influence of academic supervision and school principal leadership on job motivation. Additionally, testing demonstrates that job motivation, academic supervision, and the principal's leadership all partially and simultaneously affect performance. The path analysis test results demonstrate that academic

supervision and principle leadership have an impact on performance, with work motivation serving as a mediating factor

Other similar research was conducted by Suroso (2015), the results of which shown (1) academic supervision, education and training, professional competence, had a direct influence on motivation. (2) Academic supervision, education and training, professional competence and motivation have a direct influence on teacher performance. (3) Academic supervision, education and training, teacher professional competence influence teacher performance by mediating work motivation.

Theoretically, Herzberg′s Two-Factor Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of teacher motivation. His distinction between hygiene factors (e.g., supervision, working conditions) and motivator factors (e.g., recognition, responsibility) suggests that both the leadership style of school principals and the quality of academic supervision could significantly influence work motivation, which in turn affects teacher performance. However, a critical gap exists in understanding how these variables interact in an integrated model within the Indonesian public school context.

Given the inconsistent findings in previous research and the limited focus on Kendal Regency, this study aims to investigate the influence of academic supervision and principal leadership on teacher performance, with work motivation as an intervening variable. Specifically, the research addresses the following problem: To what extent do academic supervision and principal leadership affect teacher performance, and how is this relationship mediated by teacher work motivation in public middle schools in Kendal Regency?

This study contributes to the academic literature by integrating leadership theory, supervision practices, and motivational frameworks within a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. Methodologically, it offers a nuanced perspective on the mediating effects of motivation, while practically, it informs educational policy and leadership training programs in regional school systems.

By addressing both theoretical and practical dimensions, this research not only enriches the discourse on teacher performance but also provides evidence-based recommendations for improving educational quality in Kendal Regency and similar contexts.

Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Foundation

The performance of teachers is a multidimensional construct shaped by internal motivators, external support systems, and institutional leadership. This study is grounded in the Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Vroom, 1964), which posits that employee performance is influenced by expected outcomes, and the Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Avolio, 1994), which emphasizes how leaders inspire and elevate follower motivation and capabilities. By contextualizing these within the Indonesian education system, we explore how work motivation, academic supervision, and principal leadership affect teacher performance in madrasahs.

Teacher Performance

The definition of teacher performance according to Supardi (2014) is a teacher's capacity to complete assignments at madrasas and take accountability for the pupils under his direction by raising their academic performance. Meanwhile, another opinion by Rachmawati and Daryanto (2013) defines teacher performance as the capacity exhibited by educators to carry out their responsibilities, which include creating lesson plans, implementing instructional activities, and performing assessments. Pianda (2018) stated that teacher performance in school organizations is determined by the teacher's ability and willingness to participate in supporting the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Rorinpandey (2020) defines teacher performance as the capacity of an educator to carry out actions in line with predetermined goals. These goals include aspects of organizing and carrying out the teaching and learning process, building and maintaining ideal classroom environments, managing ideal learning environments, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Rosida in Mulyasa (2016) explains that the factors that influence teacher performance are a) Knowledge, namely the abilities possessed by teachers which are more oriented towards intelligence and thinking power as well as mastery of broader knowledge possessed by teachers, b) Skills, abilities and mastery technical operations in certain fields that teachers have, c) Abilities, namely abilities formed from a number of competencies possessed by teachers, d) Attitude, namely a patterned habit, e) Behavior, namely the teacher's work behavior in carrying out various activities and work activities.

Teacher performance as stated by Mitchell in Oktavia (2019) has 5 dimensions, namely a) the quality of work dimension, b) the accuracy/speed of work dimension, c) the initiative dimension in work, d) the ability dimension in work, e) the communication dimension. By examining the elements involved in evaluating each person's performance (including teachers) (Supardi, 2014). The following aspects are suggested to be associated with teacher performance variables: work quality, teacher speed/accuracy, work initiative, work ability, and communication.

Teacher performance indicators according to Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers: (1) Learning Planning Mastering the general outlines of implementation; (2) Implementation of Learning Carrying out learning in class; (3) Evaluation of Learning Outcomes Assessing student learning outcomes, namely by assessing each process of learning activities using certain techniques

Work Motivation

According to Fathurrohman & Suryana (2018), teacher motivation is the encouragement to work toward objectives and complete tasks in a planned and efficient manner. An incentive to constantly complete tasks according to plan is what motivates teachers. Anoraga (2016) work motivation is the urge that propels activities toward the accomplishment of the task at hand. This clarifies that something that inspires zeal or encouragement for work is what constitutes work motivation. Consequently, the degree to which an employee feels motivated at work dictates the extent of their accomplishments. As'ad (2016) something that inspires excitement or encouragement for work is called work motivation.

According to Siagian (2016) an employee's motivation is greatly influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Meanwhile, according to Fathurrohman and Suryana (Fathurrohman, P., Suryana, AA., & Fatriany, 2018) the dimensions used to measure teacher work motivation include: 1) Decent rewards; 2) Opportunities for promotion; 3) Obtain recognition; 4) Work safety.

This is similar with Donal's opinion in Komarudin (2016) that the factors that influence motivation can be categorized into two types, namely: 1) intrinsic factors, or elements that originate from inside a person, such as the drive for success or the need for acceptance; and 2) extrinsic factors, or those originating from outside of an individual, for example: promotion, praise, prizes and so on Uno (Uno, 2017) states that aspects of teacher work motivation can be seen through: (1) Responsibility in carrying out work. High-motivation teachers are seen in their accountability for completing their tasks; (2) The achievements he achieved. The achievements obtained by the teacher show that the teacher has high work motivation; (3) Self-development. Teachers in carrying out their profession really need to carry out self-development; (4) Independence in action. Someone who has entered the productive age certainly has an independent attitude in acting.

Academic Supervision

In order to better prepare teachers to support and mentor each student toward the fullest and brightest participation in a contemporary democratic society, teaching supervision aims to encourage, coordinate, and direct the ongoing professional development of educators in a school, both individually and collectively. Mulyasa (2016) said that the capacity to design and carry out educational supervision programs and make use of the outcomes is a necessary component of the school principal's function as a supervisor. Wahyudi (2014) argues that the purpose of school principle supervision is to support teachers in applying their expertise to the process of teaching and learning.

According to Sahertian (2016) the purpose of academic supervision is to support and aid in the development of the teaching and learning environments that instructors implement in the classroom. It is envisaged that academic monitoring will improve the caliber of work that instructors do. Similar to opinion of (Suhardan, 2016) that various responses regarding the function of academic supervision are in accordance with the definition that has been put forward, but there is one general agreement, that the main function of academic supervision activities is aimed at "improving teaching". Likewise, Sahertian (Sahertian, 2016) considers "the function of supervision to maintain existing programs as well as possible so that there are improvements".

Decree of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2007 states that the function of a school principal as a supervisor must have the following competencies: 1) establishing a program for academic supervision to improve the professionalism of teachers. 2) Use the proper

methods and procedures for academic monitoring when overseeing teachers. 3) keeping track of the outcomes of instructors' academic supervision to enhance their professionalism.

Principal Leadership

The principal as a leader has the characteristics of being proactive, raising the level of awareness of followers regarding inspirational collective interests, and helping followers achieve extraordinary high performance results. To fulfill the vision, purpose, and goals of their schools, principals must be able to empower every aspect of the institution, both within and outside the building, and maintain an effective, transparent, and responsible management structure. Leadership factors play an important role in whether the world of education advances or not. The principal is a principal who has big ambitions to make changes in the school in order to obtain a higher level of school productivity (Indrafachrudi, 2016).

According to Wahjosumidjo (2013), In order to propel school life toward goals, the principal's involvement is crucial. The principal serves as the focal point and the engine of school life. To ensure the school's success, the leader must be aware of their responsibilities and roles and show concern for the faculty, staff, and students. According to Hidayat and Machali (2017), the leadership function of a school or madrasah principal includes at least seven main functions known as EMASLIM (educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator and motivator): (1) The principal as an educator. An educator, sometimes known as a teacher, is someone who oversees pupils' attempts to grow spiritually and physically to the extent that it satisfies educational objectives; (2) Principal as manager. Planning, organizing, coordinating, and regulating the school's current resources are among the manager's tasks assigned to the principal in order to carry out instructional programs effectively, efficiently, and productively; (3) Principal as Administrator. The school principal as an administrator has the task of planning, organizing, directing, organizing and supervising various fields that support education, such as: curriculum, student affairs, office, personnel, equipment, finance and library; (4) Principal as supervisor. To enhance teachers' professional competence and capacities and create a better learning process through improved teaching approaches that eventually improve student learning results, school principals conduct educational supervision; (5) Principal as Leader. The principle, in his or her capacity as the school's leader, bears the duty of organizing all available resources to foster a strong work ethic and increase productivity in the pursuit of academic objectives. The principal is in charge of all program policies' execution and must decide on the general framework for policies, programs, and operational actions in order to exercise leadership; (6) Principal as Innovators. As an innovator, school principals must be able to find new innovations in learning; (7) Principal as a Motivator. The school principal must provide motivation and encouragement to all parties to progress, develop in accordance with individual desires to advance the school

In this research, only 5 dimensions were used which are directly related to the role of the principal to support the performance of teachers as his subordinates, namely manager, supervisor, leader, innovator and motivator.

Integrative Perspective and Research Gap

Although the literature provides robust definitions and typologies of the four constructs teacher performance, motivation, supervision, and leadership few studies synthesize them into a cohesive framework applicable to Indonesian education, especially madrasah settings. Most prior works treat these concepts in isolation, with little attention to their interdependence.

This study aims to fill this gap by proposing that principal leadership and academic supervision serve as institutional mechanisms that influence teacher performance, both directly and indirectly through their impact on teacher work motivation. The following figure (to be included) presents the proposed conceptual framework.

Toward Hypotheses Development

Building on the synthesized literature, the study formulates the following hypotheses: (1) H1: Principal leadership has a positive effect on teacher performance; (2) H2: Academic supervision has a positive effect on teacher performance; (3) H3: Work motivation mediates the relationship between principal leadership and teacher performance; (4) H4: Work motivation mediates the relationship between academic supervision and teacher performance

Method

This framework to facilitate understanding is described as follows:

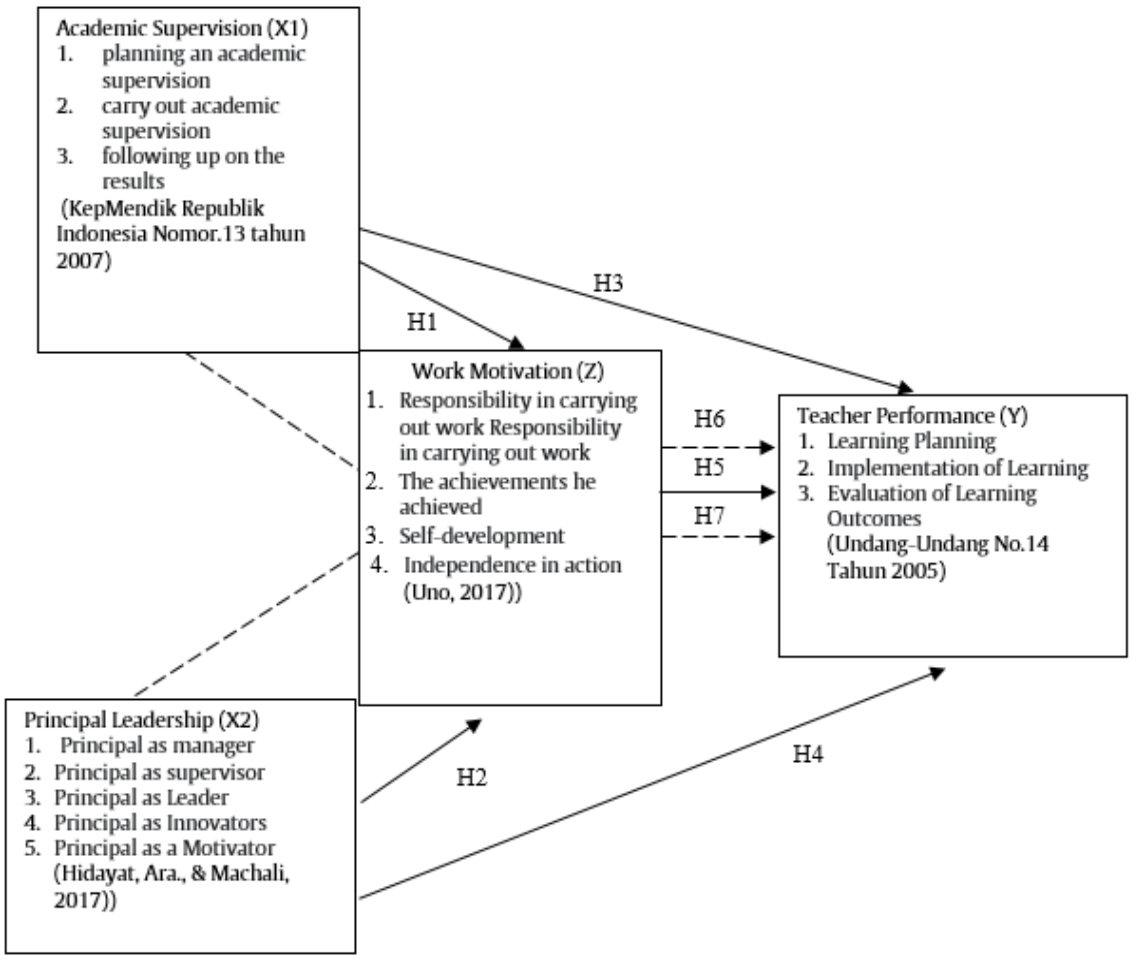

Figure 1 Framework

Research Type

This research is an ex post facto research which is a method that can be used in situations faced by many educational researchers and can provide a lot of valuable information for decision making in the field of education (Furchan, 2016). In this case, the research aims to explore the effects of academic supervision and principal leadership on teacher performance through work motivation factors that have already occurred and cannot be manipulated by the researcher.

Population and Sample

The population in this study comprises 166 civil servant teachers from Public Middle Schools in Kendal Regency. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, resulting in 118 respondents. The sampling method used was proportionate random sampling, which allows for random selection without considering strata, as explained by Sugiyono (2018). This ensures that each teacher in the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample, thereby improving the representativeness of the data (Sugiyono, 2018).

Instrument Feasibility Test

Before the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents, instrument validity and reliability were assessed to ensure accurate data collection: (1) Validity Test: Each item s validity was tested using the corrected item-total correlation method with SPSS. The instrument was declared valid if the calculated r-value exceeded the r-table value at df = 116 (N = 118 - 2), which is 0.181. The results showed that all items had r-values above this threshold (Ghozali, 2017), indicating valid items; (2) Reliability Test: Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A construct is considered reliable

if its alpha value exceeds 0.70 (Ghozali, 2017). All variables in this study had alpha values above this benchmark, confirming internal consistency (Ghozali, 2017).

Data analysis technique

The data analysis technique employed in this study is the Structural Equation Model (SEM) method, which combines two distinct statistical techniques: simultaneous equation modeling, which was established in econometrics, and factor analysis, which was created in psychology and psychometric (Ghozali, 2017). The program used to run SEM in this research is AMOS, which able to describe and measure relationships between variables simultaneously through path diagrams.

Hypothesis testing

This research hypothesis testing was carried out based on C.R. of a causal relationship from the results of processing the structural equation model. The criteria used in this test are the C.R value which must be 1.95 and the significance value is 0.05. Mediation testing, to test the mediation hypothesis, is carried out by comparing the direct influence value of Academic Supervision, Principal Leadership and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance with the total influence value.

Validity test

The calculated r value is obtained from the correlation results of the answers to each question analyzed using SPSS with the output called corrected item total correlation. Meanwhile, the r table value is obtained by determining df = n (sample) 2, namely 118 2 = 116, so we get a two-sided r table of 0.181. From the results of the analysis was found that all r calculations were greater than 0.181 so they were all declared valid.

Reliability Test

Reliability assessment for this study was done in one step, utilizing Cronbach's alpha. When a variable's Cronbach's alpha value is higher than 0.70, it suggests that the questionnaire that the variable was measured with is deemed reliable. All of the variables were deemed credible as their Cronbach's alpha values were higher than 0.7.

SEM Analysis Technique

Full Structural Model Technique

The causality model, which has been previously presented in a variety of cause-and-effect connections (causal models), is tested using this model. It will be determined whether the model is appropriate and whether the causal links included in the model under test are sound through complete model analysis.

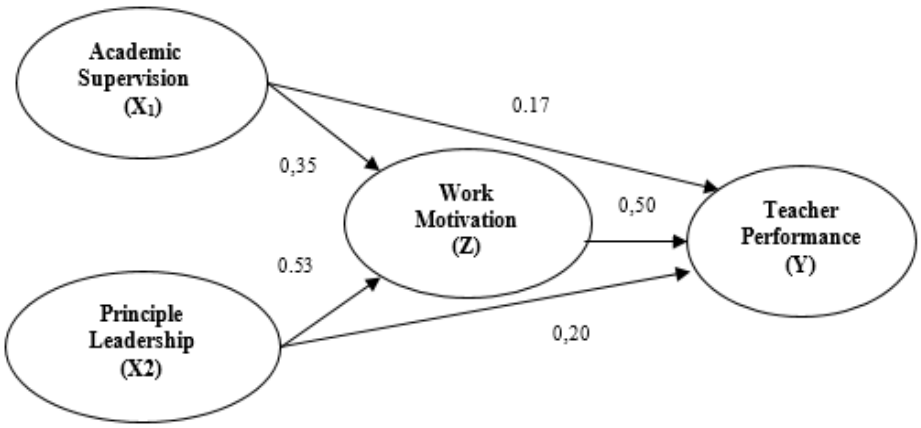

Figure 1 Full Structural Model Technique

Table 1 displays the findings of statistical tests and appropriateness tests conducted on the entire SEM model. The covariance matrix between the predicted and actual data is the same, according to the model fit test results, which indicate a chi square value of 77.711, which is less than the chi square table of 108.648 with a probability of 0.727, which is larger than 0.05. In the meanwhile, additional findings demonstrate that the RMSEA, TLI, CFI, GFI, and CMIN/DF values meet the designated cut of value. In the meanwhile, the AGFI value is regarded as marginal because it is less than the typical cutoff threshold. Based on the findings, it can be said that the SEM model was generally effective in characterizing the causal link between the elements that were employed.

Table 1. Result of Fit Full Model SEM Test

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut of Value	Result Analysis	Model Evaluation
Chi-Square	It is expected to be smaller than the Chi-Square table, namely with sig. = 0.05, and df = 86, then Chi-Square table = 108.648.	77,711	Good
Probability	≥ 0,05	0,727	Good
CMIN/DF	≤ 2,00	0,904	Good
GFI	≥ 0,90	0,918	Good
AGFI	≥ 0,90	0,885	Marginal
TLI	≥ 0,95	1,005	Good
CFI	≥ 0,95	1,000	Good
RMSEA	≤ 0,08	0,000	Good

The whole SEM model analysis findings demonstrate the huge value of the standard regression coefficient, often known as "beta" or β in SPSS. Table 2 displays the Regression Weights' findings.

Table 2. Standardized Regression Weights Full SEM

			Estimate
Work_Motivation	<---	Academic_Supervision	.345
Work_Motivation	<---	Principal_Leadership	.533
Teacher_Performance	<---	Academic_Supervision	.168
Teacher_Performance	<---	Work_Motivation	.496
Teacher_Performance	<---	Principal_Leadership	.197
SPA1	<---	Academic_Supervision	.966
SPA2	<---	Academic_Supervision	.954
SPA3	<---	Academic_Supervision	.906
KKS5	<---	Principal_Leadership	.945
KKS4	<---	Principal_Leadership	.933
KKS3	<---	Principal_Leadership	.890
MKJ1	<---	Work_Motivation	.925
MKJ2	<---	Work_Motivation	.940
MKJ3	<---	Work_Motivation	.920
KNJ3	<---	Teacher_Performance	.929
KNJ2	<---	Teacher_Performance	.934
KNJ1	<---	Teacher_Performance	.940
KKS2	<---	Principal_Leadership	.922
KKS1	<---	Principal_Leadership	.933
MKJ4	<---	Work_Motivation	.907

Based on the coefficient values obtained, the following equation can be created: Work Motivation = 0,345 Academic Supervision + 0,533 Principal Leadership. Teacher Performance = 0,168 Academic Supervision + 0,197 Principal Leadership + 0,496 Work Motivation

Hypothesis test

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Work_Motivation	<---	Academic_Supervision	.314	.068	4.628	***
Work_Motivation	<---	Principal_Leadership	.748	.107	6.982	***
Teacher_Performance	<---	Academic_Supervision	.167	.079	2.109	.035
Teacher_Performance	<---	Work_Motivation	.541	.112	4.849	***
Teacher_Performance	<---	Principal_Leadership	.302	.138	2.190	.029

Based on the regression weights, the following tests can be carried out: (1) The Effect of Academic Supervision on Work Motivation. The cr value of academic supervision on work motivation is 4.628, greater than 2.00 with prob. of *** is smaller than 0.05. With the results, we accept hypothesis 1;

(2) The Influence of Principal Leadership on Work Motivation. The result of the cr value of the principal's leadership on work motivation is 6.982 which is greater than 2.00 with prob. of *** is smaller than 0.05. With the results, we accept hypothesis 2; (3) The Effect of Academic Supervision on Teacher Performance. The cr value of academic supervision on teacher performance is 2.109 which is greater than 2.00 with prob. of 0.035 is smaller than 0.05. With the results, we accept hypothesis 3; (4) The Influence of Principal Leadership on Teacher Performance. The cr value of the principal's leadership on teacher performance is 2.190, which is greater than 2.00 with prob. of 0.029 is smaller than 0.05. With the results, we accept hypothesis 4; (5) The Influence of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance. The result of the cr value of work motivation on teacher performance is 4.849 which is greater than 2.00 with prob. of 0.000 is smaller than 0.05. With the results, we accept hypothesis 5.

Evaluation goodness-of-fit Criteria

Table 3. Result Normality Test

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
MKJ4	5.000	15.000	-.366	-1.622	-.551	-1.221
KKS1	2.000	10.000	-.542	-2.405	.079	.175
KKS2	2.000	10.000	-.170	-.755	-.007	-.016
KNJ1	4.000	15.000	-.174	-.771	-.535	-1.187
KNJ2	4.000	15.000	-.213	-.945	-.369	-.818
KNJ3	4.000	15.000	-.413	-1.830	-.393	-.872
MKJ3	4.000	15.000	-.497	-2.204	-.331	-.735
MKJ2	4.000	15.000	-.191	-.845	-.091	-.202
MKJ1	4.000	15.000	-.487	-2.158	-.077	-.172
KKS3	2.000	10.000	-.302	-1.339	-.316	-.700
KKS4	2.000	10.000	-.473	-2.095	-.397	-.880
KKS5	3.000	10.000	-.339	-1.503	-.118	-.261
SPA3	3.000	10.000	-.271	-1.203	-.836	-1.854
SPA2	6.000	25.000	-.209	-.925	-.646	-1.432
SPA1	3.000	15.000	-.307	-1.360	-.479	-1.063
Multivariate					19.405	4.667

The normality test results show that the highest cr skewness value is -2.405 (KKS1) and the highest cr kurtosis value is -1.854 (SPA3). The largest values of skewness and kurtosis do not exceed 2.58 so that the data is normally distributed. In the multivariate data, normality was obtained which was still far from the threshold. However, because this number is still below 8, the analysis is allowed to continue (Ferdinand, 2014).

Direct Impact, Indirect Impact and Total Impact

Table 5. Result of Intervening Test

Variable	Direct Impact		Indirect Impact trough Work Motivation	Total Impact
	Work Motivation	Teacher Performance	Teacher Performance	
Academic Supervision	0,345	0,168	0,171	0,339
Principal Leadership	0,533	0,197	0,264	0,461
Work Motivation		0,496		

Based on the intervening test, the following proof can be carried out: Academic supervision has an effect on teacher performance with work motivation as an intervening variable; the effect obtained is 0.339. The indirect effect of academic supervision on teacher performance with work motivation as an intervening variable is 0.171, which is greater than the direct effect of academic supervision on employee performance, namely 0.168

The principal's leadership has an indirect effect of 0.264 on teacher performance with work motivation as an intervening variable, which is greater than the direct effect of 0.197 on employee performance. As a result, the principal's leadership has an overall effect of 0.461 on teacher performance with work motivation as an intervening variable.

Results and Discussions

Hypothesis testing proves that academic supervision has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of Kendal Regency State Middle School teachers, as evidenced by CR= 4.628 > 2.00 and prob. = *** < 0.05. With positive results, the more academic supervision increases, the work motivation of Kendal Regency State Middle School teachers will increase. According to (Sahertian, 2016) that supervision is not merely evaluative but developmental intended to enhance the teaching-learning environment and foster professional growth. In the context of Kendal Regency, where teachers face evolving pedagogical challenges, effective academic supervision acts as a catalyst for motivation by offering practical support, constructive feedback, and continuous improvement opportunities.

In summary, the goal of academic supervision is to enhance and expand the teaching and learning process in a thorough way, not only revolving around a strict selection and acceptance system but also fostering the potential of existing teachers in a broad sense, including the provision of facilities that support learning activities. teaching, then when this condition is achieved it can motivate teachers because in academic supervision there will be development efforts for teachers and also the availability of various educational support facilities that can be more supportive in providing better education to students. The research results obtained support Sudirjo's (2020) research which states that academic supervision has a positive effect on work motivation. Academic supervision that includes reflective dialogue, peer collaboration, and resource provision may particularly resonate in schools with limited professional learning communities. Therefore, policymakers should consider integrating structured supervisory mentoring systems to enhance intrinsic teacher motivation.

Hypothesis testing proves that the principal's leadership has a positive and significant effect on the work motivation of Kendal Regency State Middle School teachers, as evidenced by CR= 6.982 > 2.00 and prob. = *** < 0.05. With positive results, the increasing leadership of the school principal will increase the work motivation of Kendal Regency State Middle School teachers.

According to (Wahjosumidjo, 2013) In order to propel school life toward goals, the principal's involvement is crucial. The principal serves as the focal point and the engine of school life. Principals must be aware of their roles in the school's success and show concern for both staff and students. As a result, they must be able to influence every aspect of the school, including the teachers. By doing this, they can increase teachers' motivation to do their jobs well and work toward the school's objectives. The research results obtained support Sudirjo's research (Sudirjo, 2020) which states that the principal's leadership has a positive effect on work motivation.

Hypothesis testing proves that academic supervision has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Kendal District Public Middle School teachers, as evidenced by CR= 2.109 > 2.00 and prob. = 0.035 < 0.05. With positive results, the more academic supervision increases, the performance of Kendal Regency Public Middle School teachers will increase.

Purwanto (2015) said that the task of supervision is to identify the necessary circumstances that would ensure the accomplishment of educational objectives. In order to help teachers and other school staff achieve their educational goals, school leaders provide supervision. This assistance takes the form of opportunities for professional development, encouragement, and guidance. Afterward, supervision is linked to efforts made to enhance teachers' abilities through various programs, which has the effect of raising the caliber of the work that teachers produce, making it a reliable indicator of their work performance.

The overall goal of academic supervision initiatives is to provide more favorable circumstances and environments for the teaching and learning process. In order to maximize children's personal formation the ultimate purpose of education efforts are made to enhance both teaching and learning. To create these situations and conditions, the principal's intelligence or skill is needed in recruiting

teaching staff, namely selecting teaching staff who are competent in their field, and academic supervision is one way of developing the competence of teachers so that by having more competence, teachers are more in control of their field of work and the results. achieved will be better and support increased performance. The research results obtained support research by Sudirjo (2020), Wijaya (2021) which states that academic supervision has a positive effect on employee performance.

Hypothesis testing proves that the principal's leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Kendal Regency State Middle School teachers, as evidenced by CR= 2.190 > 2.00 and prob. = 0.029 < 0.05. With positive results, the more the principal's leadership increases, the performance of Kendal Regency Public Middle School teachers will increase.

According to (Mulyasa, 2016) the school principal is one of the most important structures in formal educational organizations. Good principal leadership will have a positive impact and good changes in the school education system. School principals who can manage and develop teachers well so that their abilities increase can certainly further improve the performance of teachers.

It can be concluded that leadership factors play an important role in whether the world of education advances or not. The principal is a principal who has big ambitions to make changes in the school in order to obtain a higher level of school productivity (Indrafachrudi, 2016), then when the principals are able to carry out coaching, and have efforts to develop teachers and are able to carry out management effectively right in the agency he leads, this will further support the improvement of teachers. The research results obtained support the research of Saddi, Elisabet, et al (Saddi, 2021) which states that the principal's leadership has a positive effect on employee performance variables

Hypothesis testing proves that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Kendal Regency Public Middle School teachers, as evidenced by CR= 4.849 > 2.00 and prob. = *** < 0.05. With positive results, the more work motivation increases, the performance of Kendal Regency Public Middle School teachers will increase.

Teacher motivation according to (Fathurrohman, P., Suryana, AA., & Fatriany, 2018) is encouragement for a teacher to do work in order to achieve work goals according to plan. This is based on the fact that teachers who have high motivation will work harder to achieve the goals they want to achieve and the impact of course is that the results of their hard work can achieve good performance.

Overall, it can be interpreted that according to Wahyudi (2017) motivation is the factors that exist within a person that move, direct behavior, provide high enthusiasm to fulfill certain goals that have been set effectively and efficiently, then when teachers have high motivation in If you work, you will have more enthusiasm for your work and will have more movement to try to achieve results according to your goals, so this can have an impact on achieving better performance. The research results obtained support Wijaya's research (Wijaya, 2021) which states that work motivation has a positive effect on employee performance

Tests of hypotheses demonstrate that work motivation serves as an intervening variable to impact how well teachers perform when under academic supervision. This is demonstrated by the fact that academic supervision has a higher indirect impact on teacher performance through job motivation 0.171 than it does on teacher performance 0.168.

These results mean that when academic supervision is further improved it will tend to increase the motivation of teachers, because with academic supervision there will be efforts to develop teachers through coaching, planning, and various improvements to deficiencies or mistakes made previously that can then be implemented effectively. right in the next learning year, apart from that there is also an element of development for teachers, so this will give teachers the opportunity to develop further in terms of knowledge and work abilities. Teachers who have high motivation will certainly have more attention in their work and will be more willing to work hard to produce work that meets the objectives and of course quality, so the motivation boost based on the opportunity for self-development through academic supervision will have an impact on improving the performance of teachers. The research results obtained support Suroso's research (Suroso, 2015) which states that academic supervision influences employee performance with work motivation as an intervention.

Testing the hypothesis demonstrates that, with work motivation acting as an intervening variable, the principal leadership affects teachers' performance. The value of the principal leadership's indirect impact on teacher performance through work motivation, which is 0.264 and higher than the direct impact of the principal's leadership on employee performance, which is 0.197, is proof of this.

This means that when school principal leadership is able to pay attention to teachers by providing support with the means to carry out their duties and implementing various policies that can support the progress of teachers, this will motivate the teachers more because there are development opportunities provided by their leaders, namely headmaster. When teachers are motivated, they will be more oriented towards the work they are doing, that is, there will be an effort to complete the work as quickly as possible and according to the standards determined by the leadership and achieve the target number, so with motivation due to the support of the school principals it will enable teachers to achieve good performance. The research results obtained support Kurniawan's (2017) research which states that school principal leadership influences employee performance with work motivation as an intervening.

Conclusions

This study explored the influence of academic supervision and principal leadership on teacher performance, with work motivation as an intervening variable among public junior high schools in Kendal Regency. The findings reveal a complex interplay of factors that collectively shape teacher performance. Academic supervision and principal leadership both significantly affect teacher motivation and, through it, influence teacher performance. These results align with motivation theory and leadership theory in education, particularly supporting the notion that intrinsic and extrinsic factors, guided by effective leadership and institutional support, foster improved work outcomes.
The study contributes to the growing body of literature on educational leadership by confirming that supervision and leadership not only have direct effects but also indirect effects through motivation. Importantly, the mediating role of work motivation highlights the necessity of understanding how psychological factors translate administrative efforts into performance outcomes. Compared to prior studies, this research reinforces findings by Susanti & Oktafia (2020) and Mahendra & Sutanto (2021), but adds a localized dimension by contextualizing the analysis within the specific administrative and cultural environment of Kendal s public schools.

The findings underscore that teacher motivation is not merely a personal attribute but is heavily shaped by institutional practices. However, the SEM analysis assumes causal directionality that, while statistically significant, may still be influenced by unmeasured variables such as organizational culture or external policy pressures. Furthermore, given the study's focus on public schools in Kendal Regency, generalizability to private institutions or different regions should be approached with caution.

Overall, this research suggests that strengthening teacher performance requires more than isolated interventions. A systemic approach that integrates effective academic supervision, transformational leadership, and structured motivational strategies is essential to elevate both teaching quality and educational outcomes.

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