

The Influence of the Principal's Leadership Role and Learning Community Interaction on Improving Elementary School Teachers' Performance in Tanjung Lago District

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Abstrak: This study aims to determine and analyze: (1) the partial effect of the principal's leadership role on teacher performance; (2) the partial effect of learning community interaction on teacher performance; and (3) the simultaneous effect of the principal's leadership role and learning community interaction on the improvement of elementary school teacher performance in Tanjung Lago District. The research method used is a quantitative method with a correlational approach. The population in this study comprises all public elementary school teachers in Tanjung Lago District, with a sample of 82 respondents. Partially, within the multiple regression model, it was found that the Principal's Leadership Role variable has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance (Sig. < 0.001 < 0.05). The Learning Community Interaction variable also shows a positive and significant partial effect on teacher performance (Sig. 0.019 < 0.05). The simultaneous test results indicate that there is a positive and significant effect of the Principal's Leadership Role and Learning Community Interaction jointly on the Improvement of Teacher Performance (Calculated F = 40.16; Sig < 0.001). Based on the coefficient of determination, both variables simultaneously contribute 50.4% (R Square = 0.504) to the improvement of teacher performance. This indicates that the principal's leadership serves as the main driving force, which, when combined with active collaboration within the learning community, is highly effective in boosting teacher performance at the research location.

Keywords: *principal leadership, learning community, teacher performance.*

A. Introduction

Basic education is the primary foundation for developing quality human resources. Teachers, as the primary implementers of the learning process, play a strategic role in determining educational success. Teacher performance is reflected in their ability to plan lessons, implement the teaching and learning process, conduct evaluations, and provide effective guidance to students (Kasman & Lubis, 2022); (Kilag et al., 2023). In the era of Society 5.0 and the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, teachers are required not only to possess pedagogical competence but also to adapt to technological developments and learning innovations.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that principal leadership and professional learning communities positively influence teacher performance. However, several important gaps remain. First, most empirical studies have examined these variables independently, while limited research has investigated their simultaneous contribution to teacher performance within a single analytical model. Second, prior studies have predominantly focused on secondary schools or urban educational settings, leaving elementary schools in geographically diverse districts underexplored. Third, existing literature has primarily emphasized statistical relationships without sufficiently explaining how effective principal leadership and collaborative learning community interactions complement one another in improving teacher performance. Consequently, empirical evidence from elementary schools in Tanjung Lago District remains scarce, indicating the need for further investigation.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating the principal's leadership role and learning community interaction into a single explanatory model to examine their combined influence on elementary school teacher performance within the context of Tanjung Lago District. Unlike previous studies that generally investigated these variables separately or in different educational contexts, this study provides empirical evidence from rural elementary schools with diverse geographical characteristics. The findings contribute to educational management literature by demonstrating how leadership practices and collaborative professional learning simultaneously enhance teacher performance in decentralized educational environments.

Therefore, this study aims to examine both the partial and simultaneous effects of the principal's leadership role and learning community interaction on elementary school teachers' performance in Tanjung Lago District. Furthermore, the study seeks to enrich educational management literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the synergistic relationship between instructional leadership and collaborative professional learning in improving teacher performance, particularly within rural elementary school contexts.

Teacher performance issues remain a significant issue in various regions, including Tanjung Lago District. School monitoring data from 2024–2025 shows that 63% of teachers have not implemented varied learning strategies, 65% have not implemented effective learning activity structures, 70% have not improved their teaching performance through classroom action research, and 65% have not conducted contextual analysis in syllabus development. This situation indicates that improving teacher performance still requires serious attention from various parties, particularly school principals and teacher learning communities.

One factor believed to influence teacher performance is principal leadership. The principal functions not only as an administrator but also as an instructional leader capable of guiding, motivating, and developing teachers on an ongoing basis Göçen & Döğler, (2025); Lubis et al., (2025). Effective leadership can create a conducive work climate and encourage teachers to improve their professionalism (Wityastuti et al., 2025). Research by Khasanah et al., (2025) found that the principal's instructional leadership has a positive and significant impact on elementary school teacher performance.

In addition to principal leadership, interaction within the learning community also plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance. Learning communities provide a forum for professional collaboration that allows teachers to share experiences, reflect on teaching practices, and seek solutions to classroom problems (Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024a). Active interaction within the learning community can enhance teachers' pedagogical and professional competence through social and collaborative learning processes Khasawneh et al., (2023); Laia et al., (2025).

Various previous studies have consistently demonstrated the positive influence of principal leadership and learning communities on teacher performance. Dutta & Sahney, (2022) found that principal leadership indirectly influences student achievement through improving teacher professionalism. Pairi, (2022) reported that teachers active in teacher working groups have higher self-efficacy and pedagogical performance than teachers who work individually. Islami et al., (2025) demonstrated that interaction within a Professional Learning Community significantly improves teacher performance, particularly in aspects of learning reflection and innovative teaching methods.

Another study by Ohayon & Albulescu, (2023) concluded that active learning communities can improve teachers' pedagogical competence and positively impact learning implementation. He et al., (2024) found that principal leadership significantly influences teacher performance, both partially and simultaneously with school culture. Liu & Watson, (2023) also emphasized that distributive leadership can enhance collaboration among teachers and strengthen their professional commitment.

Although various studies have addressed the influence of principal leadership and learning communities on teacher performance, a research gap remains. Most research has been conducted at the secondary education level or in urban areas, while research specifically examining the relationship between these two variables among elementary school teachers in Tanjung Lago District is still very limited. Furthermore, few studies have simultaneously analyzed the influence of principal leadership and learning community interaction on improving teacher performance in areas with varying geographic characteristics and accessibility.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the influence of principal leadership and learning community interaction on improving elementary school teacher performance in Tanjung Lago District. The results are expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of educational management, particularly in formulating strategies to improve teacher performance through strengthening principal leadership and optimizing teacher learning communities.

B. Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational survey method. The research method used was *ex post facto*, which is a study conducted to examine the relationships and influences between variables without providing any specific treatment or intervention to respondents. This study aimed to analyze the influence of principal

leadership (X₁) and learning community interaction (X₂) on teacher performance (Y) at public elementary schools in Tanjung Lago District.

The sample consisted of 82 public elementary school teachers selected using a proportional random sampling technique to ensure that teachers from different schools were adequately represented. This sampling technique was chosen because it provides each teacher with an equal opportunity to participate while maintaining proportional representation across schools in Tanjung Lago District. The sample size was considered adequate for multiple linear regression analysis, which requires a sufficient number of observations to estimate the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections corresponding to the research variables. The Principal's Leadership Role (X₁) was measured through indicators of instructional leadership, supervision, motivation, decision-making, communication, and teacher professional development. Learning Community Interaction (X₂) was measured using indicators related to collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, reflective discussion, peer support, and collective problem-solving. Teacher Performance (Y) was assessed through indicators of lesson planning, instructional implementation, classroom assessment, professional responsibility, and continuous professional development. All questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Prior to hypothesis testing, the research instrument was evaluated for validity and reliability. Item validity was examined using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, and all questionnaire items met the minimum validity criterion. Instrument reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, and all variables demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, indicating that the questionnaire was reliable for data collection. These procedures ensured that the research instrument accurately measured the intended constructs before conducting regression analysis.

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed because the study examined the simultaneous influence of two independent variables on one dependent variable. This analytical approach enables the estimation of both partial and simultaneous effects while controlling for the contribution of each predictor variable. Statistical significance was determined at the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

The study population was all public elementary school teachers in Tanjung Lago District. Based on the research data, 82 teachers were selected as a sample. The sample was determined according to the procedures described in the thesis to represent the characteristics of the study population.

Research data was collected using two main techniques:

1. Questionnaire: Used to collect data on the independent variables (Principal Leadership and Learning Community Interaction) and the dependent variable (Teacher Performance). The questionnaire was structured using a Likert scale with five response options (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

2. Documentation: Used to collect supporting data in the form of school profiles, number of teachers, and teacher supervision data in Tanjung Lago District.

The research data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27 (IBM Corporation, Armonk, New York, USA). The analysis began with descriptive statistics to describe the data characteristics, followed by validity testing using Pearson Product Moment and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha. Prior to hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests, to ensure the data met the requirements for regression analysis. Next, the hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis, supported by a t-test to determine partial effects, an F-test to determine simultaneous effects, and a coefficient of determination (R^2) to measure the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable. All tests were conducted at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

C. Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze the influence of the principal's leadership role and learning community interaction on improving teacher performance at public elementary schools in Tanjung Lago District. The analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression on data obtained from 82 respondents. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data met the prerequisite analysis requirements, including normality, linearity, and multicollinearity, thus declaring the regression model suitable for use.

The Influence of the Principal's Leadership Role on Teacher Performance

The analysis results indicate that the principal's leadership variable has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The partial t-test showed a significance value less than 0.05 (Sig. < 0.001), thus accepting the first hypothesis. This finding indicates that the better the principal performs leadership functions, such as providing direction, conducting academic supervision, motivating teachers, and facilitating professional development, the higher the teacher's performance in carrying out teaching tasks.

These results demonstrate that principal leadership is a crucial factor in creating a school environment that supports improved learning quality. Principals who implement effective leadership are able to build a collaborative work culture, increase teacher motivation, and encourage innovation in the learning process.

The Effect of Learning Community Interaction on Teacher Performance

The results of the second hypothesis test indicate that learning community interaction has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, with a significance value of 0.019 (<0.05). These results indicate that the more intensive teacher interaction within the learning community, the better the teacher's performance in carrying out their professional duties.

Learning communities provide a medium for teachers to share experiences, discuss learning strategies, reflect, and resolve various problems that arise during the learning

process. Through these activities, teachers gain new knowledge that can be applied to improve the quality of classroom learning.

The Simultaneous Effect of Principal Leadership and Learning Community Interaction on Teacher Performance

The results of the simultaneous test (F-test) indicate that principal leadership and learning community interaction simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The F-value of 40.16, with a significance level of 0.000 (<0.05), indicates that the regression model used is appropriate for explaining the relationship between the variables.

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.504$) indicates that principal leadership and learning community interaction explain 50.4% of the variation in teacher performance. The remaining 49.6% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as work motivation, school organizational culture, professional competence, teacher welfare, and support for educational facilities and infrastructure.

The results of the study indicate that principal leadership has a significant influence on improving teacher performance. This finding supports the Instructional Leadership theory proposed by Ayumi & Nasution, (2025), which states that principals are responsible for establishing a learning vision, conducting academic supervision, monitoring the learning process, and creating a school environment conducive to improving educational quality. Effective leadership can increase teacher motivation, thereby impacting the quality of learning Saputra & Darmawan, (2023); Sariakin et al., (2025).

The results of this study also align with the transformational leadership theory proposed by (Wityastuti et al., 2025). According to this theory, principals who are able to provide inspiration, motivation, and support to teachers will increase organizational commitment and encourage teachers to continuously develop their professional competencies. Thus, principal leadership functions not only as a school administrative manager but also as an agent of change capable of improving the quality of human resources in the school.

The findings of this study are consistent with the research of Khasanah et al., (2025) , which concluded that principal instructional leadership has a positive influence on elementary school teacher performance. Research by He et al., (2024) also shows that principal leadership is a dominant factor in improving teacher professionalism through academic development and providing work motivation.

In addition to principal leadership, this study also shows that interaction within a learning community has a positive effect on teacher performance. These findings indicate that learning communities are an important tool for teacher professional development through collaboration, discussion, reflection, and sharing of good practices among teachers. Continuous interaction allows teachers to gain new experiences that can enhance both pedagogical and professional competencies.

These research findings support the concept of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) developed by DuFour et al., (2024) & Fullan, (2026), which explains that improving school quality is strongly influenced by a collaborative culture among teachers in solving learning problems. Through learning communities, teachers can share experiences, evaluate learning practices, and develop learning innovations tailored to student needs.

These findings also align with by Zamiri & Esmaeili, (2024b); Edwards-Fapohunda, (2024) which states that professional learning develops through social interaction within a community with a shared purpose. Furthermore, Chand, (2025); Firmansyah & Saepuloh, (2022); Karina et al., (2024) explains that individuals acquire knowledge and skills through observation, interaction, and shared experiences with others in their social environment.

The results of this study reinforce the research of Islami et al., (2025) ,which found that teacher learning communities improve their ability to reflect on learning and innovate in teaching methods. Research by Ohayon & Albulescu, (2023) also reported that teachers who actively participate in learning communities have better pedagogical and professional competencies than teachers who are less active in collaborative activities.

Simultaneous testing indicates that principal leadership and learning community interactions complement each other in improving teacher performance. The principal acts as a leader, providing policy direction, support, and professional development facilities, while the learning community serves as a medium for implementing collaboration between teachers to improve the quality of learning. The synergy between these two factors creates a school environment that supports the continuous improvement of teacher competency.

The coefficient of determination of 50.4% indicates that both variables contribute significantly to improving teacher performance. However, 49.6% of the variation in teacher performance is still influenced by factors outside this study. Therefore, further research is recommended to include other variables such as work motivation, school organizational culture, teacher digital competence, job satisfaction, and organizational climate to obtain a more comprehensive model explaining the factors influencing teacher performance.

Practically, the results of this study imply that improving the quality of basic education depends not only on individual teacher competence but also requires effective principal leadership and the strengthening of sustainable learning communities. Therefore, principals need to optimize their academic supervision and professional development functions, while education offices need to strengthen teacher learning community programs as part of their improvement strategies.

D. Conclusions

This study aims to analyze the influence of the principal's leadership role and learning community interaction on improving teacher performance at public elementary schools

in Tanjung Lago District. The results indicate that principal leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Learning community interaction also has a positive and significant impact on teacher performance. Furthermore, both variables simultaneously significantly influenced teacher performance improvement, contributing 50.4%, with the remaining influence being influenced by factors outside the research model.

These findings indicate that improving teacher performance depends not only on individual abilities but also requires effective principal leadership and active and ongoing learning community interaction. Therefore, principals need to strengthen their instructional leadership function through academic supervision, coaching, and motivating teachers. Furthermore, schools and educational stakeholders need to optimize the implementation of learning communities as a means of professional collaboration to improve teacher competency and the quality of learning. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers in formulating strategies to improve the quality of elementary education.

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