

The Influence of Motivation and School Culture on Teacher Performance at State Vocational High Schools in the Sigli City Area, Pidie Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of work motivation and school culture on the performance of teachers at State Vocational High Schools in Sigli City, Pidie Regency. Using a mixed-method approach, the research combines quantitative and qualitative data obtained through surveys, interviews, and documentation. The study sample consists of 148 teachers selected through proportional random sampling. The results indicate that work motivation has a significant positive effect on teacher performance, as evidenced by a significance value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$. Similarly, school culture significantly influences teacher performance, with a significance value of $0.026 \leq 0.05$. Furthermore, the simultaneous influence of motivation and school culture on teacher performance is statistically significant, with a significance value of $0.001 \leq 0.05$. These findings suggest that enhancing school culture can positively impact teacher performance and ultimately improve educational outcomes. School leaders should implement policies that strengthen a positive and supportive school environment. Teachers, in turn, are encouraged to continuously enhance their professional competencies to optimize their teaching performance.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental factor in determining a nation's progress. A country with a high-quality education system tends to have better living standards and overall well-being. In Indonesia, the government has made significant efforts to ensure access to quality education, as stated in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, Article 5, which guarantees every citizen the right to quality education (Depdiknas, 2003).

Teachers play a crucial role in improving educational quality. They are responsible for guiding students to achieve optimal learning outcomes. According to Arifin (2023), the success of education is closely linked to the quality of teacher performance. One key indicator of high-quality education is the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. In vocational high schools (SMK), teachers are responsible for equipping students with practical skills that align with industry needs (Niswanto et al., 2021).

Despite efforts to enhance vocational education, Indonesia still faces a high unemployment rate among SMK graduates. The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) reported that in February 2023, the open unemployment rate (TPT) among SMK graduates was the highest compared to other education levels, reaching 9.60% (CNN Indonesia, 2023). Although this rate improved slightly in 2024, with a recorded decrease of 390,000 unemployed individuals (DetikEdu, 2024), the high unemployment rate among SMK graduates remains a concern.

Teacher performance in vocational schools is influenced by several factors, including work motivation and school culture. Work motivation is essential for ensuring that teachers remain committed and productive in their roles (Syafuruddin, 2023). A positive school culture, which includes shared values, norms, and traditions, also plays a critical role in shaping teacher behavior and effectiveness (Sukadari, 2020).

A preliminary study conducted in three State Vocational High Schools in Sigli City, Pidie Regency, revealed that while most teachers demonstrated satisfactory performance, some challenges remained. These included incomplete lesson planning, inadequate class management, and a lack of collaboration among teachers. Additionally, several teachers exhibited low work motivation, as evidenced by tardiness and reluctance to take on additional responsibilities.

Given these challenges, this study aims to analyze the influence of work motivation and school culture on teacher performance in State Vocational High Schools in Sigli City, Pidie Regency. The research seeks to provide insights into the factors that contribute to teacher effectiveness and offer recommendations for enhancing the quality of vocational education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Motivation

Definition of Work Motivation

Motivation plays a crucial role in influencing an individual's performance. According to Arifin (2023), motivation is an internal force that drives a person to act or perform certain behaviors. Gracia (2017) defines motivation as the factor that directs and supports human behavior to achieve optimal results. In an

educational context, motivation is essential for teachers to remain engaged and committed to their responsibilities (Herawati, 2023).

Work motivation can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation arises from internal desires, such as personal growth and achievement (Jane Cristin et al., 2017). Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors, including salary, work environment, and supervision (Sutrisno in Jane Cristin, 2017).

Indicators of Work Motivation

Utami (2019) identifies several indicators of work motivation in teachers:

1. Responsibility – Teachers with high motivation complete their tasks effectively.
2. Achievement – Motivated teachers strive for recognition and excellence in their field.
3. Self-Development – Continuous professional development is a key indicator of motivation.
4. Independence – Teachers take initiative and fulfill responsibilities without external pressure.

School Culture

Definition of School Culture

School culture refers to the shared values, traditions, and norms that shape behavior within an educational institution (Huda, 2021). Putri (2023) describes school culture as a pattern of assumptions developed by school members to adapt and integrate into their environment. A strong school culture fosters a positive learning atmosphere and enhances teacher performance (Khairunnisa, 2024).

Elements of School Culture

Huda (2020) classifies school culture into three elements:

1. Positive Elements – Values that encourage collaboration, responsibility, and respect among school members.
2. Negative Elements – Unproductive habits or behaviors that hinder school development.
3. Neutral Elements – Traditions or practices that do not significantly impact school performance.

Characteristics of a Strong School Culture

Ghozali (2017) highlights six key characteristics of a successful school culture:

1. Strong leadership by the school principal.
2. Discipline among all school members.
3. Family-like relationships between teachers, staff, and students.
4. Democratic leadership that fosters responsibility.
5. Fairness and tolerance within the school community.
6. Moral development that guides students and teachers.

Teacher Performance

Definition of Teacher Performance

Teacher performance refers to the effectiveness of educators in carrying out their professional duties. According to Joen et al. (2022), teacher performance encompasses planning, executing, and evaluating the learning process. Performance is influenced by individual competence, work motivation, and organizational support (Silaen, 2021).

Factors Affecting Teacher Performance

Several factors impact teacher performance, including:

1. Ability – A teacher's knowledge and skills influence their effectiveness (Khatab in Silaen, 2021).
2. Motivation – High motivation results in better performance (Robin in Silaen, 2021).
3. Organizational Support – A supportive work environment enhances teacher productivity (Gibson in Silaen, 2021).

Key Indicators of Teacher Performance

Supardi in Irfan (2022) outlines four key indicators:

1. Planning – Developing syllabi, lesson plans, and instructional strategies.
2. Implementation – Conducting engaging and effective teaching sessions.
3. Classroom Management – Creating a conducive learning environment.
4. Assessment and Evaluation – Measuring student progress and adjusting teaching methods accordingly.

The Role of Vocational High Schools (SMK)

Definition and Purpose of SMK

Vocational High Schools (SMK) focus on equipping students with industry-specific skills. According to the Indonesian Education Law No. 20 of 2003, SMKs aim to prepare students for employment in various fields. Niswanto et al. (2021) emphasize that vocational education must align with labor market demands to reduce unemployment among graduates.

Challenges in Vocational Education

Despite their importance, SMKs face significant challenges, including:

1. High Unemployment Rates – BPS (2023) reports that SMK graduates have the highest unemployment rate in Indonesia.
2. Gaps in Teacher Performance – Some teachers struggle with outdated teaching methods and lack of professional development.
3. School Culture Issues – Weak collaboration among teachers hinders knowledge-sharing and innovation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The research follows an Explanatory Sequential Design, where quantitative data is collected first, followed by qualitative data to provide deeper insights into the findings.

The research was conducted in three public vocational high schools (SMKs) in Sigli City, Pidie Regency, namely SMK Negeri 1 Sigli, SMK Negeri 2 Sigli, and SMK Negeri 3 Sigli. The study was carried out between February and March 2025.

The population of this study consists of 235 teachers, including both civil servant and non-civil servant teachers. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, resulting in a total sample of 148 teachers. The study focuses on three key variables:

1. Independent Variables: Work Motivation (X1) and School Culture (X2)
2. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance (Y)

Data collection methods include:

1. Questionnaires - Distributed via Google Forms to capture teachers' responses on motivation, school culture, and performance.
2. Interviews - Conducted with school principals, vice principals, and selected teachers to validate questionnaire findings.
3. Observation and Documentation - Used to analyze school policies and teacher behaviors in real settings.

For data analysis, the study employs:

1. Descriptive statistics to summarize survey responses.
2. Inferential statistics (regression analysis) to examine relationships between variables.
3. Hypothesis testing using t-tests and F-tests, where a significance level of ≤ 0.05 indicates a meaningful impact of motivation and school culture on teacher performance.

By applying this methodology, the study aims to provide empirical evidence on whether teacher motivation and school culture significantly influence teacher performance in vocational high schools in Sigli City.

RESEARCH RESULT

This study involved 148 teachers from three vocational high schools (SMKs) in Sigli City, Pidie Regency. Data collection was conducted through surveys, interviews, and observations. The findings are categorized into descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

Descriptive Analysis

The work motivation levels among teachers were assessed using a standardized questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Work Motivation

Statistic	Value
N	148
Mean	21.37
Median	21.0
Mode	22

Std. Deviation	1.635
Minimum	18
Maximum	24

The results indicate that 56.08% of teachers have "Good" work motivation, while 8.78% fall into the "Very Low" category.

Similarly, school culture was evaluated, and the findings are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of School Culture

Statistic	Value
N	148
Mean	39.62
Median	39
Mode	26
Std. Deviation	2.45
Minimum	32
Maximum	45

From the results, 30.40% of teachers perceive school culture as "Excellent," while 2.70% categorize it as "Very Poor".

The teacher performance assessment is displayed in Table 3:

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Performance

Statistic	Value
N	148
Mean	31.97
Median	31.5
Mode	33
Std. Deviation	2.299
Minimum	26
Maximum	37

The results indicate that 24.29% of teachers fall into the "Good" performance category, while 5.62% have "Very Poor" performance.

Inferential Analysis

Several statistical tests were conducted to determine the relationship between work motivation, school culture, and teacher performance.

1. Normality Test: Using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, data was found to be normally distributed with p-values > 0.05.
2. Linearity Test: The F-test results indicated that the relationship between independent and dependent variables is linear with p-values > 0.05.
3. Multicollinearity Test: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were < 10, indicating no multicollinearity between variables.

Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed, and the regression equation was obtained as follows:

where:

1. Y = Teacher Performance
2. X_1 = Work Motivation
3. X_2 = School Culture.

The analysis showed that both work motivation and school culture positively influence teacher performance.

Hypothesis Testing

1. T-Test (Partial Influence)
 - Work Motivation (X_1) → Teacher Performance (Y): $t = 17.346$, $p = 0.000$ (significant)
 - School Culture (X_2) → Teacher Performance (Y): $t = 4.298$, $p = 0.026$ (significant).
2. F-Test (Simultaneous Influence)
 - $F = 158.067$, $p = 0.001$ (significant).
3. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)
 - $R^2 = 0.577$, meaning 57.7% of teacher performance is explained by work motivation and school culture.

DISCUSSION

The Impact of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance

The results confirm that work motivation has a significant effect on teacher performance ($p = 0.000$). Teachers with high motivation tend to exhibit better discipline, dedication, and enthusiasm in their teaching activities.

During interviews, a school principal mentioned that most teachers demonstrate strong motivation, though 5% still show low enthusiasm in their duties.

The Role of School Culture in Teacher Performance

The study found that school culture significantly influences teacher performance ($p = 0.026$). A supportive school environment encourages teachers to collaborate, share knowledge, and maintain discipline. According to interviews with school leaders, teachers in schools with a strong culture tend to be more proactive, engaged, and committed to school programs.

Simultaneous Effect of Work Motivation and School Culture

The F-test results ($p = 0.001$) indicate that both work motivation and school culture together have a significant effect on teacher performance. Teachers in schools with high motivation and a strong culture tend to perform better compared to those in schools with weaker motivational and cultural structures.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that work motivation and school culture significantly influence teacher performance in vocational high schools (SMKs) in Sigli City, Pidie Regency. The statistical analysis confirmed that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance ($p = 0.000$), while

school culture also plays a crucial role ($p = 0.026$). Furthermore, the combined effect of motivation and school culture on teacher performance is highly significant ($p = 0.001$).

These findings highlight that enhancing school culture and strengthening teacher motivation are essential for improving teaching effectiveness and overall educational quality. Teachers who are motivated and work in a supportive school environment tend to demonstrate higher dedication, professionalism, and better instructional delivery.

To optimize teacher performance, several recommendations are proposed:

1. Teachers should actively maintain high motivation levels by engaging in continuous professional development, adopting innovative teaching methods, and collaborating with peers to enhance learning quality.
2. School administrators should foster a strong school culture by implementing leadership strategies, supporting teacher well-being, and ensuring a positive work environment that encourages teamwork, discipline, and shared values.
3. Policymakers and education stakeholders should support vocational schools by providing adequate infrastructure, professional training programs, and career development opportunities to help teachers align their competencies with industry needs.
4. Future research should explore additional factors influencing teacher performance, as this study found that 42.3% of performance variance is explained by other variables, such as leadership styles, workload, and educational policies.

By addressing these recommendations, vocational education can be significantly improved, leading to better teacher performance and higher employability rates for graduates. Strengthening both internal motivation and external school culture will create a more effective learning environment and ensure long-term success in vocational education

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future research should explore additional factors influencing teacher performance beyond work motivation and school culture, such as leadership styles, workload, educational policies, and technological integration in teaching. A longitudinal study could provide deeper insights into how motivation and school culture evolve over time and their long-term impact on teacher effectiveness. Expanding the study to a broader geographical area or different types of schools could enhance generalizability. Additionally, qualitative research focusing on teachers' personal experiences, challenges, and coping strategies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting their performance. Integrating artificial intelligence and digital learning tools into vocational education is another critical area for future exploration to enhance teacher efficiency and student engagement.

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