

The Effects of Principals' Transformational Leadership Style and Teachers' Work Commitment on Teacher Performance in Public Junior High Schools in Banyuasin III District

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the effects of principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' work commitment on teacher performance in public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District. The study employed an explanatory quantitative approach with an ex post facto design. The population comprised 139 teachers from five public junior high schools, while the sample consisted of 103 teachers determined using the Slovin formula at a 5% margin of error and selected through proportional random sampling. Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires and documentation. The instruments included 29 valid items for transformational leadership style, 29 valid items for work commitment, and 30 valid items for teacher performance. The corresponding Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were 0.964, 0.961, and 0.966. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression, t-tests, an F-test, and the coefficient of determination with SPSS version 26. The findings showed that transformational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance ($B = 0.371$; $\beta = 0.405$; $t = 5.003$; $p < 0.001$). Teachers' work commitment also had a positive and significant effect ($B = 0.411$; $\beta = 0.381$; $t = 4.706$; $p < 0.001$). Simultaneously, both variables significantly affected teacher performance ($F = 28.311$; $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.362$), with the regression equation $Y = 36.960 + 0.371X_1 + 0.411X_2$. These findings emphasize the importance of inspirational school leadership and the continuous strengthening of teachers' commitment.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership; Teachers' Work Commitment; Teacher Performance; Junior High School

INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance is a major determinant of the quality of educational services because teachers interact directly with students and are responsible for planning, implementing, evaluating, and following up learning. Good performance is

reflected not only in attendance and the completion of administrative duties, but also in teachers' ability to manage learning effectively, use relevant strategies, build educational interactions, and engage in continuous professional development. In the junior high school context, these demands are particularly important because teachers work with students at a developmental stage that requires academic reinforcement, character formation, independence, and readiness to respond to social and technological change (Panjaitan & Hafizzah, 2025; Sedarmayanti, 2022). Educational policies such as the Merdeka Curriculum, strengthened assessment practices, the use of learning technologies, and the development of professional learning communities require teachers to work adaptively. However, teachers' ability to respond to these demands is not determined solely by individual competence. The school organizational environment, the principal's leadership pattern, and teachers' psychological attachment to their work also shape the quality of task implementation. Accordingly, improving teacher performance should be understood as a managerial process that connects individual capacity with organizational support.

Principals occupy a strategic position in shaping a work environment that promotes improved performance. They do not merely perform administrative functions, but also set direction, build communication, provide motivation, develop teacher capacity, and create a work culture that supports innovation. Transformational leadership is relevant in this context because it emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Through these four dimensions, principals can encourage teachers to move beyond personal interests and routine work toward higher school goals (Bass & Riggio, 2021; Northouse, 2022). Transformational leadership operates through the development of a shared vision and changes in organizational members' ways of thinking. Principals who serve as role models, communicate the school's direction convincingly, provide space for new ideas, and attend to teachers' developmental needs tend to build stronger trust and a more professional climate. Under these conditions, teachers receive psychological and organizational support to strengthen creativity, responsibility, and the quality of instructional implementation. Ramatni et al. (2024) found that transformational leadership is associated with a conducive organizational climate, while Mulyani and Wiarta (2022) emphasized its contribution to improved teacher performance.

In addition to leadership, teachers' work commitment is an internal factor that determines consistency in performing duties. Work commitment reflects emotional attachment, loyalty, moral responsibility, and considerations related to remaining part of the organization. Highly committed teachers demonstrate seriousness in preparing instruction, discipline in fulfilling responsibilities, willingness to participate in school programs, and readiness to improve professional practice. Conversely, low commitment may be reflected in minimal involvement, limited initiative, and a tendency to view work merely as an administrative obligation (Meyer & Allen, 2020; Sudarsana, 2021). Transformational leadership and work commitment are mutually complementary. Leadership provides direction, support,

and working conditions that encourage change, whereas commitment provides the psychological energy that enables teachers to persist and exert their best efforts. Inspirational principals can strengthen teachers' sense of belonging to the school, while highly committed teachers are more prepared to respond to direction, innovation, and organizational change. Efendi et al. (2023) and Prakoso and Lestari (2023) indicated that work commitment can strengthen the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance.

Empirical conditions in public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District indicate that efforts to improve teacher performance still face several challenges. Teachers are expected to adapt to curriculum changes, strengthen the use of technology, improve assessment quality, and address increasingly diverse learning needs. At the same time, teachers do not all display the same levels of involvement, discipline, and readiness to innovate. These variations indicate the need for research that examines organizational and psychological factors simultaneously, particularly principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' work commitment.

Previous studies have extensively examined the effects of transformational leadership on teacher motivation, professionalism, and performance, as well as the effects of work commitment on instructional effectiveness. However, empirical evidence that specifically examines both variables simultaneously in public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District remains limited. Differences in school characteristics, work environments, and regional policies mean that findings from other contexts may not fully represent conditions in this area. Based on this gap, the study aimed to analyze the effect of principals' transformational leadership style on teacher performance, the effect of teachers' work commitment on teacher performance, and the simultaneous effect of both variables on the performance of teachers in public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District. The findings are expected to provide an empirical basis for principals and education authorities in designing leadership development, strengthening work commitment, and implementing more focused teacher performance improvement programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Studies

Hasinah et al. (2024) found that the implementation of principals' transformational leadership improved teacher motivation and performance through exemplary conduct, individualized attention, and intellectual stimulation. Pratiwi et al. (2023) similarly showed that principals who build a positive work environment and consistently provide motivation can improve the quality of teachers' work. These studies reinforce the view that principals' behavior influences not only work systems but also teachers' psychological conditions when carrying out their duties. Herry et al. (2024) showed that principal leadership and work commitment jointly affected teacher professionalism. Elsidia and Deswidya (2023) found that transformational leadership influenced organizational commitment, which

subsequently affected teacher performance. These findings indicate that commitment is not merely a personal variable; it can be shaped by leadership practices and then translated into work behavior.

Sari and Setiyadi (2022) demonstrated that transformational leadership affected teacher performance, particularly instructional planning and learning evaluation. Nugroho et al. (2023) showed that teachers' work commitment was associated with instructional effectiveness and school organizational performance. Rahmawati and Kurniawan (2021) emphasized that affective commitment is important for improving performance because emotional attachment encourages teachers to work with a stronger sense of ownership. Nasir (2025) found that principal leadership, work discipline, and commitment simultaneously contributed to improved teacher performance. Meanwhile, Prakoso and Lestari (2023) showed that work commitment can mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and performance. Overall, previous studies demonstrate a consistent direction of relationships, but there remains a need to examine the relative strength of the two variables in the context of public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District.

Principals' Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is a process through which leaders influence followers by means of vision, values, exemplary behavior, and empowerment, encouraging them to perform beyond minimum standards. Bass and Riggio (2021) identified four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence is evident when principals act as consistent and trustworthy role models. Inspirational motivation is reflected in their ability to communicate a vision and inspire optimism. Intellectual stimulation is shown by encouraging creativity and problem-solving, while individualized consideration is reflected in attention to each teacher's needs and development.

Within school organizations, transformational leadership integrates the roles of manager and instructional leader. Principals need to organize programs, distribute responsibilities, supervise implementation, and evaluate outcomes while fostering a collaborative work culture. Bush (2020) emphasized that effective educational leadership cannot focus solely on structure but must also develop organizational members' capacities. Leithwood and Jantzi (2019) added that transformational school leadership operates through building a shared vision, developing people, and establishing organizational conditions that support learning. Operationally, transformational leadership style in this study was measured through principals' exemplary behavior and integrity, their ability to communicate a vision and motivate teachers, their encouragement of innovation and critical thinking, and their attention to teachers' individual needs. The more consistently these behaviors are implemented, the greater the likelihood that a work climate conducive to improved performance will develop.

Teachers' Work Commitment

Work commitment is a psychological condition that connects individuals to an organization and influences their decision to remain and contribute. Meyer and Allen (2020) classified commitment into affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment concerns emotional attachment and pride in being part of the school. Normative commitment arises from a moral obligation to carry out duties and maintain membership, whereas continuance commitment relates to the perceived benefits and consequences of leaving the organization. In the teaching profession, work commitment extends beyond the desire to remain at a school. It is reflected in a willingness to devote one's best time and effort to students, adherence to professional values, participation in school development, and perseverance in responding to change. Teachers with strong commitment tend to maintain instructional quality despite limitations because they understand their work as both a professional and moral responsibility. In this study, work commitment was measured through teachers' pride in and attachment to the school, loyalty and concern for school progress, awareness of professional obligations, intention to remain, and considerations of job stability. These dimensions represent teachers' emotional, moral, and rational attachment to their work.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance refers to the work outcomes achieved by teachers in carrying out professional duties in accordance with assigned responsibilities and established standards. Sedarmayanti (2022) viewed performance as a combination of work outcomes and competencies demonstrated within a particular period. In education, teacher performance includes the quality of instructional planning, teaching implementation, learning outcome evaluation, discipline, collaboration, and professional development. Performance is determined not only by technical ability but also by motivation, work goals, opportunities, organizational support, and teachers' beliefs in their own capabilities. Locke and Latham (2020) explained that clear and challenging goals can improve performance, while social cognitive theory emphasizes the role of self-efficacy. Principals can influence both aspects by setting direction, providing feedback and reinforcement, and creating opportunities for teachers to develop. This study measured teacher performance through the ability to prepare instructional plans, implement learning effectively, conduct evaluation and use its results, and demonstrate professional responsibility. These four aspects represent teachers' work processes from preparation through instructional follow-up.

Relationships among the Variables

Theoretically, transformational leadership style is expected to have a positive effect on teacher performance because principals establish a vision, motivation, support, and organizational conditions that encourage teachers to work more effectively. Work commitment is also expected to have a positive effect because strong

attachment makes teachers more disciplined, responsible, and consistent in achieving school goals. When both variables are present, leadership functions as an external driver, while commitment serves as an internal driver that sustains performance stability. Based on these relationships, the study tested three hypotheses: transformational leadership style affects teacher performance; work commitment affects teacher performance; and transformational leadership style and work commitment simultaneously affect teacher performance.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed an explanatory quantitative approach with an ex post facto design. The design was selected because the variables had occurred naturally and the researchers did not administer any treatment to respondents. The study was conducted at five public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District, Banyuasin Regency, from December 2025 to April 2026. The population comprised 139 active teachers: 50 teachers at Public Junior High School 1 Banyuasin III, 40 at Public Junior High School 2 Banyuasin III, 10 at Public Junior High School 3 Banyuasin III, 20 at Public Junior High School 4 Banyuasin III, and 19 at Public Junior High School 5 Banyuasin III. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula at a 5% margin of error, resulting in 103 respondents. Proportional random sampling was used so that each school was represented in proportion to its number of teachers.

Instruments and Procedures

The primary data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Documentation was used to obtain data on the number of teachers, school profiles, and administrative information supporting the study. The questionnaires were distributed after permission had been obtained, the purpose of the study had been explained, respondent confidentiality had been assured, and procedures had been established to ensure that all questionnaires were returned complete. The transformational leadership style instrument initially consisted of 30 items representing idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The work commitment instrument consisted of 30 items measuring affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The teacher performance instrument comprised 30 items measuring instructional planning, teaching implementation, evaluation, and professional responsibility. The instruments were piloted with 20 teachers outside the sample. Item validity was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation, with a critical r value of 0.444. The transformational leadership style variable contained 29 valid items and one invalid item; the work commitment variable contained 29 valid items and one invalid item; and all 30 teacher performance items were valid. Instrument reliability

was very high, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.964 for transformational leadership style, 0.961 for work commitment, and 0.966 for teacher performance.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics were used to present minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values. Before regression analysis, residual normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, multicollinearity was examined using tolerance and variance inflation factor values, and heteroscedasticity was evaluated based on the scatterplot pattern. Hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression with the model $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$. The t-test was used to assess the partial effect of each independent variable, the F-test was used to assess their simultaneous effect, and R Square was used to determine the proportion of variance in teacher performance explained by the model. Statistical decisions were made at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistical Results

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Transformational leadership style (X ₁)	103	110	145	131.534	10.149
Teachers' work commitment (X ₂)	103	109	144	126.019	8.615
Teacher performance (Y)	103	120	150	137.485	9.279

Table 1 shows that transformational leadership style obtained a mean score of 131.534 with a standard deviation of 10.149. The minimum score of 110 and maximum score of 145 indicate that respondents' assessments tended to fall within a high range. The source data also showed a median of 135 and a mode of 136, indicating that responses were concentrated at positive scores. These descriptive findings suggest that principals were generally perceived as providing exemplary leadership, motivation, encouragement for innovation, and individualized attention to teachers.

Teachers' work commitment obtained a mean score of 126.019 with a standard deviation of 8.615. The relatively small dispersion indicates that respondents' perceptions were fairly homogeneous. Teacher performance had a mean of 137.485 with a standard deviation of 9.279, a minimum score of 120, and a maximum score of 150. Overall, the three variables showed favorable conditions; however, descriptive analysis alone does not explain whether differences in leadership style

and commitment are actually associated with changes in performance. Regression testing was therefore required.

Prerequisite Test Results

Table 2. Summary of the Prerequisite Tests

Test	Indicator	Result	Criterion	Decision
Residual normality	Asymp. Sig.	0.138	> 0.05	Normal
Multicollinearity X ₁	Tolerance/VIF	0.972/1.029	Tol. > 0.10; VIF < 10	Not detected
Multicollinearity X ₂	Tolerance/VIF	0.972/1.029	Tol. > 0.10; VIF < 10	Not detected
Heteroscedasticity	Scatterplot	Randomly dispersed points	No distinct pattern	Not detected

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value was 0.138, which exceeded 0.05, indicating that the residuals were normally distributed. The tolerance value for both variables was 0.972 and the VIF was 1.029, indicating no multicollinearity. The scatterplot in the source document showed points randomly distributed above and below the axis without forming a particular pattern; therefore, no heteroscedasticity was detected. Thus, the model met the basic assumptions for multiple linear regression analysis.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Results

Predictor/Model	B	SE	Beta	t/F	Sig.	R ²
Constant	36.960	13.443	-	t = 2.749	0.007	-
Transformational leadership style (X ₁)	0.371	0.074	0.405	t = 5.003	< 0.001	-
Teachers' work commitment (X ₂)	0.411	0.087	0.381	t = 4.706	< 0.001	-
Simultaneous model X ₁ and X ₂ → Y	-	-	-	F = 28.311	< 0.001	0.362

The resulting regression equation was $Y = 36.960 + 0.371X_1 + 0.411X_2$. The positive coefficient for X₁ indicates that a one-unit increase in transformational leadership style was predicted to increase teacher performance by 0.371 units when work commitment was controlled. The coefficient for X₂ of 0.411 indicates that a one-unit increase in work commitment was predicted to increase teacher performance by 0.411 units when transformational leadership style was controlled.

The t-test showed that transformational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance because $t = 5.003$ with $p < 0.001$. Work commitment also had a positive and significant effect because $t = 4.706$ with $p < 0.001$. Based on the standardized beta coefficients, the relative effect of transformational leadership style (0.405) was slightly stronger than that of work commitment (0.381). Therefore, the first and second hypotheses were accepted.

The simultaneous test yielded $F = 28.311$ with $p < 0.001$, indicating that transformational leadership style and work commitment jointly had a significant effect on teacher performance. The R^2 value of 0.362 indicates that 36.2% of the variance in teacher performance was explained by the two variables, while the remaining 63.8% was influenced by other factors not included in the model. These factors may include competence, motivation, discipline, school culture, academic supervision, working conditions, facilities and infrastructure, and support from families and the community.

Discussion of the Effect of Transformational Leadership Style on Teacher Performance

The first finding showed that principals' transformational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. This result indicates that principals who serve as role models, communicate a clear vision, provide motivation, encourage creativity, and attend to teachers' individual needs create conditions that support the performance of professional duties. This effect occurs not only through formal instructions but also through increased trust, clarity of purpose, and teachers' confidence to experiment with new instructional practices. The standardized beta value of 0.405 indicates that transformational leadership was the strongest relative predictor in the model. This position can be explained by the principal's influence on several organizational aspects simultaneously, including task distribution, work climate, supervision, communication, professional development, and recognition. When principals connect teachers' duties with the school's vision, teachers develop a stronger sense of meaning in their work. When ideas and innovations are valued, teachers are more motivated to improve instructional strategies and develop relevant media.

This result is consistent with Bass and Riggio (2021), who stated that transformational leaders improve performance through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The findings also support Mulyani and Wiarta (2022), Hasinah et al. (2024), and Ramatni et al. (2024), who emphasized the role of transformational leadership in improving performance and establishing a conducive work climate. In the context of public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District, principals need to maintain open communication, strengthen developmental supervision, and provide teachers with opportunities to take professional initiative. The practical implication is that principal development programs should focus on instructional leadership rather than administrative mastery alone. Training should include the ability to formulate

a data-informed vision, provide feedback, facilitate professional learning communities, respond to differences in teachers' needs, and manage change. Through this approach, principals can translate school policies into tangible support experienced by teachers in their daily work.

Discussion of the Effect of Teachers' Work Commitment on Teacher Performance

The second finding showed that teachers' work commitment had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The regression coefficient of 0.411 indicates that increased commitment was associated with improved performance after controlling for the effect of leadership. Teachers who are proud of their school, feel a moral responsibility, and intend to maintain their organizational membership tend to perform their duties more consistently. Affective commitment encourages teachers to work because of a sense of belonging and emotional attachment. Normative commitment strengthens the awareness that serving students is a professional obligation, while continuance commitment helps teachers consider career continuity and the benefits of remaining in the organization. These three dimensions can explain the emergence of discipline, loyalty, participation, and willingness to make additional efforts when schools face challenges.

The findings support Meyer and Allen (2020), Kurniawan et al. (2022), Rahmawati and Kurniawan (2021), and Nugroho et al. (2023), who identified commitment as a predictor of performance and school effectiveness. Work commitment should not be understood as an obligation to remain passively, but as active involvement in achieving educational goals. Schools therefore need to foster fairness, recognition, opportunities for growth, communication, and workplace support that make teachers feel valued. Commitment can be strengthened by involving teachers in decision-making, distributing duties proportionally, recognizing contributions, providing opportunities to participate in training, and establishing transparent career development. Teachers also need to engage in professional reflection so that commitment to the school remains connected to commitment to students and instructional quality rather than merely to job stability.

Discussion of the Simultaneous Effect on Teacher Performance

The third finding showed that transformational leadership style and work commitment simultaneously had a significant effect on teacher performance. The R^2 value of 36.2% indicates that the two variables provided meaningful explanatory power, although teacher performance remains multidimensional. This result confirms that organizational and individual factors need to be managed in an integrated manner. Transformational leadership provides direction, meaning, support, and a work climate, whereas commitment provides psychological stability and teachers' willingness to exert effort. Teachers working under inspirational principals but lacking strong commitment may improve performance only in the short term. Conversely, highly committed teachers who do not receive leadership

support may experience fatigue or limitations in developing innovation. The synergy between the two enables change to occur more consistently.

These findings are consistent with Herry et al. (2024) and Nasir (2025), who showed that leadership and commitment jointly affect professionalism and performance. Elsida and Deswidya (2023) and Prakoso and Lestari (2023) also explained that transformational leadership can strengthen commitment, which subsequently improves performance. Although this study did not test mediation, the coefficient pattern indicates that both variables make independent yet complementary contributions. For schools, these findings require performance improvement programs that are not partial. Principals need to integrate academic supervision, professional development, recognition, communication, and teacher involvement in school programs. Education authorities should ensure that principal performance appraisal includes the capacity to develop people and school culture, while teacher development programs should address commitment, well-being, and organizational support. This study has limitations because it used perception data and an ex post facto design; therefore, the results should be interpreted as statistical effects or predictive relationships rather than absolute causality. The sample was drawn only from public junior high schools in one district, so generalization should be made cautiously. Future studies may include work motivation, school culture, academic supervision, competence, and job satisfaction, and employ mixed methods to understand the relationship mechanisms in greater depth.

CONCLUSION

Principals' transformational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on the performance of teachers in public junior high schools in Banyuasin III District. Principals who serve as role models, inspire teachers, encourage creative thinking, and attend to teachers' individual needs can improve the quality with which teachers perform their professional duties. Teachers' work commitment had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Emotional attachment, moral responsibility, loyalty, and willingness to maintain organizational membership encourage teachers to conduct instruction in a more disciplined, consistent, and responsible manner. Simultaneously, transformational leadership style and work commitment had a significant effect on teacher performance, contributing 36.2%. The resulting regression equation was $Y = 36.960 + 0.371X_1 + 0.411X_2$. Improving teacher performance requires strengthening principals' instructional leadership and developing teacher commitment through a fair, participatory, supportive work environment that provides opportunities for continuous professional development.

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