



The Influence of Servant Leadership, Work Motivation, and Work Commitment on Public Elementary School Teachers' Performance

Pengaruh Servant Leadership Kepala Sekolah, Motivasi Kerja, dan Komitmen Kerja terhadap Kinerja Guru Sekolah Dasar

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of school principals' servant leadership, work motivation, and job commitment on the performance of public elementary school teachers in Dusun Timur District. A quantitative correlational approach was used, with path analysis as the main analytical technique. The sample consisted of 169 teachers selected proportionally from a population of 292. Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire. The findings revealed that: (1) servant leadership, work motivation, and job commitment each had a significant direct effect on teacher performance; (2) servant leadership and work motivation significantly influenced job commitment; and (3) job commitment served as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between servant leadership and work motivation on teacher performance. The coefficient of determination showed that the three independent variables explained 56% of the variance in teacher performance, with the remaining 44% influenced by other factors. These results emphasize that a servant leadership style and strong intrinsic motivation can significantly enhance teachers' job commitment and performance. Therefore, strengthening principals' leadership capacities and enhancing teachers' internal motivation are effective strategies for improving the quality of basic education.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Work Motivation, Job Commitment, Teacher Performance.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan melayani (*servant leadership*) kepala sekolah, motivasi kerja, dan komitmen kerja terhadap kinerja guru sekolah dasar negeri di Kecamatan Dusun Timur. Pendekatan korelasional kuantitatif digunakan, dengan analisis jalur sebagai teknik analisis utama. Sampel terdiri dari 169 guru yang dipilih secara proporsional dari populasi sebanyak 292 orang. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner skala Likert terstruktur. Temuan tersebut mengungkapkan bahwa: (1) kepemimpinan pelayan, motivasi kerja, dan komitmen kerja masing-masing memiliki pengaruh langsung yang signifikan terhadap kinerja guru; (2) kepemimpinan pelayan dan motivasi kerja secara signifikan mempengaruhi komitmen kerja; dan (3) komitmen kerja berperan sebagai variabel mediasi yang signifikan dalam hubungan antara kepemimpinan pelayan dan motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja guru. Koefisien determinasi menunjukkan bahwa ketiga variabel bebas tersebut menjelaskan 56% varians kinerja guru, sedangkan sisanya 44% dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain. Hasil ini menekankan bahwa gaya kepemimpinan yang melayani dan motivasi intrinsik yang kuat dapat secara signifikan meningkatkan komitmen kerja dan kinerja guru. Oleh karena itu, penguatan kapasitas kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dan peningkatan motivasi internal guru merupakan strategi yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan dasar.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan Pelayan, Motivasi Kerja, Komitmen Kerja, Prestasi Guru

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of a nation is fundamentally determined by the quality of its human resources, particularly the younger generation, which plays a critical role in ensuring national continuity and progress. Education is widely recognized as one of the most crucial factors in improving human resource quality, as it provides individuals with structured guidance to develop into independent, responsible, creative, knowledgeable, healthy, and morally upright individuals both physically and spiritually (Mulyasa, 2022). Therefore, improving the quality of education is essential to producing high-quality human capital, which in turn contributes to national advancement. In the formal education system, the success of schools as organizations relies heavily on the quality of key actors: teachers, principals, and school supervisors. Among these, teachers hold a strategic position as the frontline implementers of education, directly responsible for student achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. According to the Ministry of Education Regulation (Permendikdasmen) Number 11 of 2025 on the Fulfillment of Teachers' Workload, the principal duties of teachers comprise planning and implementing instruction or guidance, assessing learning outcomes, providing supervision and training to students and carrying out additional responsibilities related to their primary functions. Optimal teacher performance is therefore key to achieving educational goals in schools (Marzano, 2013).

The quality of education is closely linked to teacher performance, as teachers are the primary agents in the delivery of education. Teacher performance is strongly related to classroom practices and is highly dependent on their preparedness to guide students through the learning process. Thus, the quality of teacher performance is a principal indicator of educational quality (Fauzi et al., 2022). Educational outcomes are significantly influenced by teaching quality, which is a major determinant of student learning achievement (Azizah et al., 2024). Teacher performance is not only shaped by pedagogical knowledge but also by motivation and commitment, which affect teachers' classroom engagement and professional dedication (Han & Yin, 2016; Darmawan & Mansur, 2019).

Observations and interviews conducted by the researcher with principals of several public elementary schools in Kecamatan Dusun Timur revealed that teacher performance still needs improvement. Identified issues include inadequate preparation of effective and student-centered learning plans, limited understanding of classroom

strategies, and poor implementation and evaluation of learning processes. For example, some teachers created lesson plans that did not align with student characteristics, often by simply copying templates from the internet or other schools. Many teachers apply the same teaching and assessment methods repeatedly, which reduces student engagement. As a result, student learning needs are unmet, and students show low motivation to participate actively. Furthermore, efforts to develop students' potential remain misaligned due to a lack of initial needs mapping. Teachers also face challenges in maintaining a conducive, orderly, and disciplined classroom environment, often resulting in noisy classrooms and students struggling to concentrate. Moreover, teachers show limited initiative in participating in professional development programs relevant to their field, ultimately impacting the quality of instruction delivered in the classroom. These findings align with the research by Agustin et al. (2023), which emphasized that leadership and motivation significantly affect teacher discipline and performance outcomes.

Teacher performance is influenced by both internal and external factors. Among the external factors, leadership plays a pivotal role. Their study underscores that principals not only act as administrators but also serve as motivators and facilitators in times of crisis. Servant leadership is an approach that emphasizes ethical behavior, empowerment, and prioritization of subordinates' development, which in the educational setting translates into the principal's dedication to supporting teachers (Greenleaf, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013). Empirical findings suggest that servant leadership significantly boosts employee organizational commitment and fosters a positive working environment (Chaudhry et al., 2015; Harwiki, 2016). Servant leadership is also associated with improving teachers' sense of belonging and their psychological attachment to the school (Godbersen et al., 2024). In the Indonesian context, Suaedy and Rajiman (2022) similarly, it is emphasized that principal leadership fosters teacher resilience and effectiveness, particularly during challenging circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Internally, motivation and work commitment are key drivers of teacher performance. Motivation drives teachers to deliver their best in the classroom and engage in continuous professional development (Han & Yin, 2016). Work commitment, on the other hand, reflects the psychological attachment and dedication of teachers to their institutions, often leading to enhanced effort and persistence in achieving educational

goals Graen & Uhl-Bien (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Research has found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are positively related to teacher performance and classroom effectiveness (Taryana et al., 2023; Hasanah & Suriansyah, 2019).

This study focuses on examining the influence of principals' servant leadership, teachers' work motivation, and work commitment on the performance of public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur. Specifically, this study aims to describe the levels of servant leadership, work motivation, and work commitment in relation to teacher performance; to examine the direct effects of principals' servant leadership, work motivation, and work commitment on teacher performance; to investigate the direct effects of servant leadership and work motivation on work commitment; and to analyze the indirect effects of servant leadership and work motivation on teacher performance through work commitment.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on several foundational theories that explain how leadership style, motivation, and commitment contribute to teacher performance. Servant leadership, introduced by Greenleaf (2014), underscores the leader's role as a servant who prioritizes the growth, development, and well-being of others, an approach highly relevant in education, where human-centered practices are essential for enhancing performance and engagement. Work motivation in this study is anchored in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Tan & Waheed, 2011), which differentiates between hygiene factors and motivational factors as key determinants of job satisfaction and performance. Teachers with higher intrinsic motivation are generally more engaged and effective in fulfilling their professional responsibilities. Work commitment is further informed by Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model (Meyer & Allen, 2015) which conceptualizes affective, continuance, and normative commitment as core dimensions influencing an individual's attachment to an organization. Collectively, these theoretical perspectives provide a concise yet comprehensive foundation for understanding how leadership, motivation, and commitment interact to shape teacher performance. Strong commitment fosters consistent, responsible, and high-quality performance. These theoretical perspectives provide the basis for understanding how leadership, motivation, and commitment interrelate and influence teacher performance in the educational context.

Servant Leadership

The leadership of school principals plays a crucial role in managing and leveraging all available resources within the school to ensure the effective implementation of learning activities (Aslamiah et al., 2023). Consistent with their responsibilities, principals are tasked with mobilizing individuals within the school organization to enable them to perform optimally (Zainuddin & Yuliana, 2024). In this regard, the practice of servant leadership becomes highly relevant, as it emphasizes prioritizing the needs of teachers and students, fostering trust, and encouraging shared decision-making. Principals who adopt servant leadership are more likely to inspire commitment, enhance motivation, and build a supportive environment where teachers can thrive. Such leadership not only strengthens the professional capacity of teachers but also contributes to sustainable improvements in instructional quality and student achievement.

Various leadership styles can be implemented by school principals to support the achievement of organizational goals. The leadership style adopted by school principals in carrying out their duties and responsibilities significantly influences teacher performance (Suriansyah, 2023). Among these, servant leadership is particularly suitable for the educational sector. This is because servant leadership fosters humanistic individual performance improvements, cultivating leaders who are concerned with their own development, that of others, and the surrounding environment.

Servant leadership originates from a sincere desire to serve (Greenleaf, 2014). This service-oriented leadership model focuses on serving others, including teachers, students, and the entire school community. Consequently, the principal's role extends beyond mere manager or administrator, emphasizing a human-centered approach. Their responsibilities encompass not only academic achievement and school management but also the well-being and personal growth of teachers and students (Hasra et al., 2024). Servant leadership can be measured based on its conceptual construct. Dennis & Bocarnea (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005) stated that servant leadership can be assessed using the Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI), which includes indicators such as: (1) love/compassion, defined as leadership rooted in love and compassion; (2) empowerment, involving delegating authority to others and listening to staff suggestions; (3) vision, where leaders must possess a clear objective guiding the organization's direction; (4) humility, characterized by leaders maintaining modesty, respecting and valuing staff, and acknowledging their contributions to the organization; and (5) trust,

denoting leaders as chosen individuals whose specific qualities earn them the trust of their followers.

Research findings indicate that school principals' servant leadership has a positive and significant impact on teacher performance (Pala'langan, 2021; Rohana et al., 2024). The servant leadership demonstrated by leaders positively affects teacher performance (Liana & Hidayat, 2021). Servant leadership was chosen for investigation as a factor influencing teacher performance due to a lack of prior research in the East Dusun District. Based on this rationale, the researcher believes this leadership style is appropriate for the conditions of public elementary school teachers in the East Dusun District.

Work Motivation

Mangkunegara (2019) defines work motivation as a condition involving efforts to arouse, direct, and sustain work-related behavior within the work environment. Teacher work motivation represents an intrinsic drive originating from within teachers to perform their duties optimally and responsibly. Highly motivated teachers not only fulfill their obligations but also demonstrate a strong dedication to intellectually developing their students. Furthermore, this motivation impels teachers to continuously enhance their performance optimally based on their roles and functions (Kastawi et al., 2021).

Numerous motivation theories have been proposed, one of the most influential being Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivation Theory. This theory categorizes the determinants of work motivation into motivational factors and hygiene factors (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Hygiene factors refer to external conditions such as salary, organizational policies, relationships with supervisors and colleagues, working conditions, and job security, which primarily function to prevent dissatisfaction. In contrast, motivational factors relate to intrinsic aspects of the job, including achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and opportunities for personal growth. These intrinsic factors are considered the primary drivers of increased work motivation, while hygiene factors merely maintain satisfaction without directly enhancing motivation. Research findings (Janiah et al., 2023) indicate a direct and significant influence of work motivation on teacher performance. Teacher motivation is a factor that enhances teachers work towards achieving educational goals, and it can positively influence performance (Fau et al., 2022).

Work Commitment

Work commitment refers to a state where individuals align with an organization and its objectives, possessing a desire to maintain their membership within that organization (Robbins & Judge, 2024). Commitment signifies an employee's desire to remain a member of an organization (Colquitt et al., 2022). High work commitment is essential within a school organization, as its presence fosters a professional work environment (Muslimin et al., 2019).

Work commitment can be observed through indicators adapted from Meyer and Allen's (Meyer & Allen, 2015). Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS), as cited in (Maydiantoro et al., 2021) which outlines three indicators for measuring work commitment. The success of a teacher's work is largely determined by their level of competence, professionalism, and commitment to their field. An individual's commitment to their workplace demonstrates their capacity to identify with and engage in that organization. Prior research indicates that commitment can significantly enhance teacher performance. This is because high work commitment towards the organization leads teachers to demonstrate high performance in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities (Taradifa, Suriansyah & Sulsityana, 2024).

Research Significance

Numerous studies have examined the influence of leadership, motivation, and commitment on teacher performance (Fau et al., 2022; Janiah et al., 2023; Rohana et al., 2024). These studies consistently highlight that effective leadership styles, strong work motivation, and high commitment levels significantly contribute to improve teacher performance. However, most of the existing literature tends to focus either on transformational or transactional leadership, with limited exploration of servant leadership in the context of public elementary schools. Furthermore, many studies are concentrated in urban or more developed educational regions, overlooking rural or less-researched areas. This research addresses that gap by investigating the role of servant leadership – a leadership model rooted in service and human-centeredness – alongside work motivation and work commitment in improving teacher performance. The novelty of this study lies in its integrated approach, examining the combined influence of these three factors in a specific public elementary school context, using a quantitative framework to generate empirical insights in an underrepresented geographical area.

This study contributes to the theoretical development of leadership and performance models in educational management by reinforcing the relevance of servant leadership in school settings. Practically, the findings provide school principals and education stakeholders with actionable insights on how leadership style, motivation strategies, and organizational commitment can be synergized to enhance teacher performance. Moreover, the study offers valuable implications for policy development, especially in optimizing teacher management strategies in rural public elementary schools.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. The aim of correlational research is to determine whether a relationship exists between variables, the strength of that relationship, and its statistical significance (Arikunto, 2019). The variables investigated in this study include school principals' servant leadership (X_1), work motivation (X_2), work commitment (Z), and teacher performance (Y). The population consisted of all public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur, totaling 292 individuals. Using Slovin's formula, a sample of 169 respondents was selected through proportional random sampling, whereby samples are drawn randomly and proportionally from the population.

Data were collected from November 14 to 20, 2024, in 27 public elementary schools in Dusun Timur District, Barito Timur Regency through questionnaires, observation, and documentation. The questionnaires were administered to 169 teachers as the research sample in both printed and online formats, while a pilot test was conducted on 30 teachers outside the sample. Observations were carried out during the preliminary study and throughout the research process to capture relevant teaching and learning activities. In addition, documentation was employed to obtain statistical data from the schools. The instrument used was a closed-ended questionnaire based on a Likert scale with five response options. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability to ensure its accuracy and consistency. The validity of the questionnaire items was tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation on a pilot sample of 30 respondents who were not part of the main study population. The results indicated that all items across the measured variables had correlation coefficients (r -count) exceeding the critical r -table value of 0.361 at a 5% significance level ($N = 30$), indicating that the items were valid and capable of accurately measuring the intended

constructs. Subsequently, the reliability of the instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha to determine internal consistency. The reliability analysis, conducted with the assistance of SPSS software, revealed that all variables demonstrated Alpha coefficients above the accepted threshold of 0.60, confirming that the instrument was reliable. In conclusion, the instrument used in this study met the required standards for both validity and reliability, and was deemed suitable for data collection. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to determine the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

The data analysis techniques included descriptive statistical analysis, tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and correlation and regression analysis. Hypothesis testing was conducted using partial t-tests, simultaneous F-tests, and the coefficient of determination (R^2). Path analysis was employed to examine the direct and indirect relationships among variables, based on the following structural model:

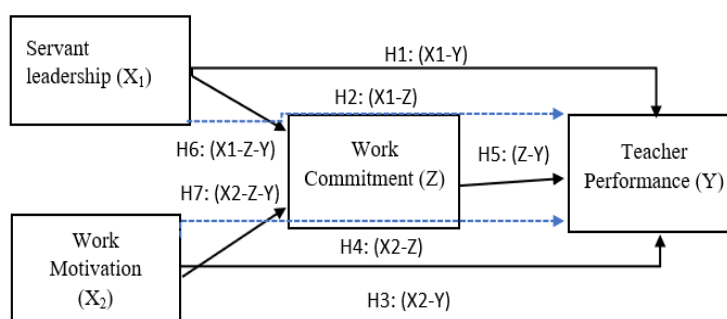


Figure 1. Path Analysis Model

Figure Notes:

- H1: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Teacher Performance
- H2: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Work Motivation and Teacher Performance
- H3: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Commitment and Teacher Performance
- H4: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Commitment
- H5: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Work Motivation and Commitment
- H6: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Servant Leadership and Teacher Performance through Work Commitment
- H7: Path Coefficient of the Relationship between Work Motivation and Teacher Performance through Work Commitment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data Description

Based on the descriptive analysis of the servant leadership variable, the highest observed score was 180 and the lowest was 132. The mean score for this variable was 158.13, with a standard deviation (SD) of 9.21 and a variance of 84.84. The frequency distribution was calculated using Sturges' formula, resulting in 8 class intervals with an interval width of 6. The complete frequency distribution of the servant leadership variable is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of servant leadership Variable

Class Interval	Frequency		Category
	Absolut (f)	Relative (%)	
> 151	122	72.19	Very High
122 – 151	47	27.81	High
94 – 121	0	0	Moderate
65 – 93	0	0	Low
< 65	0	0	Very Low
Total	169	100	

The level of servant leadership among principals of public elementary schools in Dusun Timur District falls within the very high category. A total of 72.19% of respondents indicated a very high level, while 27.81% fell into the high category. No respondents were found in the moderate, low, or very low categories, consistently indicating that servant leadership in this region is at a highly favorable level

For the work motivation variable, the highest score recorded was 150, while the lowest was 113. The mean score was 132.47, with a standard deviation (SD) of 6.75 and a variance of 45.63. The frequency distribution for this variable, divided into 8 class intervals with an interval width of 5, is presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Work Motivation Variable

Class Interval	Frequency		Category
	Absolut (f)	Relative (%)	
> 126	142	84.02	Very High
102 – 126	27	15.98	High
78 – 101	0	0	Moderate
54 – 77	0	0	Low
< 54	0	0	Very Low
Total	169	100	

The level of work motivation among public elementary school teachers in Dusun Timur District falls into the very high category. A total of 84.02% of respondents are classified as having very high motivation, while 15.98% are in the high category. No

respondents were categorized as moderate, low, or very low, confirming that teacher motivation in this area is consistently at a very high level.

The data for the work commitment variable shows a score range from 101 (lowest) to 130 (highest). The mean score was 117.06, with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.49 and a variance of 0.175. Based on Sturges' formula, the data were grouped into 8 class intervals with an interval width of 4. The complete frequency distribution for the work commitment variable is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of the Work Commitment Variable

Class Interval	Frequency		Category
	Absolut (f)	Relative (%)	
> 109	163	96.45	Very High
88 – 109	6	3.55	High
69 – 87	0	0	Moderate
54 – 69	0	0	Low
< 54	0	0	Very Low
Total	169	100	

Based on the results of descriptive analysis, the work commitment level of public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur is in the very high category, with 96.45% of respondents showing scores in that category. Meanwhile, 3.55% of respondents are in the high category, and no teachers are classified into the medium, low, or very low categories. This finding indicates that, in general, teachers in the region have a very strong level of loyalty and attachment to their duties and institutions.

The teacher performance variable data shows a score range from 126 (lowest) to 169 (highest). The measured average score (mean) is 149.95, with a standard deviation (SD) of 8.707 and a variance of 75.813. Based on calculations using the Sturges formula, this data is grouped into 8 class intervals with a length of 5. The complete frequency distribution of the teacher performance variable is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of the Teacher performance variable

Class Interval	Frequency		Category
	Absolut (f)	Relative (%)	
> 143	134	79.28	Very High
117 – 143	35	20.72	High
87 – 116	0	0	Moderate
61 – 87	0	0	Low
< 61	0	0	Very Low
Total	169	100	

The teacher performance level in public elementary schools in Kecamatan Dusun Timur is predominantly in the very high category, encompassing 79.28% of respondents. The remaining 0.72% of respondents are in the high category. No respondents were found in the medium, low, or very low categories. Thus, it can be concluded that the teacher performance level in the region is very high.

Furthermore, a normality test was conducted to examine whether the independent and dependent variables in this regression model have a normal distribution. In this study, the normality test used was the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. If the significance value (Sig tailed) > 0.05, then the data are normally distributed. The detailed results of the normality test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Interpretation of Normality Test Results

<i>One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test</i>		
		<i>Unstandardized Residual</i>
<i>N</i>		169
<i>Normal Parameters^{a, b}</i>	<i>Mean</i>	.0000000
	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	5.19726518
<i>Most Extreme Differences</i>	<i>Absolute</i>	.036
	<i>Positive</i>	.035
	<i>Negative</i>	-.036
<i>Test Statistic</i>		.036
<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</i>		.200 ^{c, d}
<i>a. Test distribution is Normal</i>		
<i>b. Calculated from data</i>		
<i>c. Lilliefors Significance Correction</i>		
<i>d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.</i>		

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test results (Table 5) indicate that the significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) for the variables of school principal's servant leadership (X_1), work motivation (X_2), work commitment (Z), and teacher performance (Y) is 0.200. Since this significance value is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed.

The linearity test was conducted to determine the linearity of the data, i.e., whether two variables have a linear influence or not. More detailed results of the linearity test in this study can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Linearity Test Results

No.	Variable	Linearity	Defiation From Linearity	Interpretation
Teacher Performance Function: $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 Z + e$				
1.	Servant Leadership (X_1)	0,017	0,318	Linear

2.	Work Motivation (X ₂)	0,027	0,213	Linear
3.	Work Commitment (Z)	0,000	0,195	Linear
Teacher Commitment Function: $Z = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$				
4.	Servant Leadership (X ₁)	0,019	0,142	Linear
5.	Work Motivation (X ₂)	0,004	0,500	Linear

Multicollinearity testing was conducted using Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The criterion for the absence of multicollinearity was established as a Tolerance value greater than 0.10 and a VIF value less than 10. Further results of the multicollinearity test are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Multicollinearity Test Results

No.	Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Remark
	X ₁ , X ₂ , Z -> (Y)			
1.	Servant leadership (X ₁)	0,826	1,211	No indication of multicollinearity
2.	Work Motivation (X ₂)	0,496	2,017	No indication of multicollinearity
3.	Work Commitment (Z)	0,439	2,278	No indication of multicollinearity
	X ₁ , X ₂ -> Z			
1.	Servant leadership (X ₁)	0,936	1,068	No indication of multicollinearity
2.	Work Motivation (X ₂)	0,936	1,068	No indication of multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test results for both Model 1 and Model 2 show that the Tolerance values for the variables of servant leadership, work motivation, and teacher commitment, concerning the teacher performance variable, are above 0.10, and the VIF values are below 10. Therefore, it is concluded that no multicollinearity exists within the regression mode.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted through two primary approaches: multiple linear regression analysis and path analysis, the latter being an extension of the regression model. Regression analysis was utilized to examine both the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership, work motivation, and commitment on teacher performance, considering both partial and simultaneous influences. The testing process encompassed linear regression tests, partial t-tests, and the calculation of the coefficient of determination (R²).

The first regression model was specifically employed to investigate the direct influence of servant leadership (X₁), work motivation (X₂), and work commitment (Z) on teacher performance (Y). This analysis was performed using multiple linear regression techniques, incorporating t-test analysis, F-test (simultaneous), and the coefficient of determination. The results of the first regression model test are presented in the Table 8.

Table 8. Summary of Regression Analysis Results – Model 1

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.634	12.343		1.510	.133
	Servant Leadership (X ₁)	.161	.049	.177	3.263	.001
	Work Motivation (X ₂)	.633	.088	.491	7.221	.000
	Work Commitment (Z)	.506	.137	.261	3.688	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance (Y)						

The results from Regression Model 1 indicate that the constant (intercept) value is 18.634, projecting teacher performance at 18.634 when all independent variables are zero. The variables of servant leadership (X₁) with a significance (Asymp. Sig) value of 0.001, work motivation (X₂) with 0.000, and work commitment (Z) with 0.000, all demonstrate a significant influence on teacher performance (Y), as their respective significance values are less than 0.05.

Furthermore, the results of the coefficient of determination (R²) test provide crucial information regarding the regression model's ability to explain data variability. The R² value of 0.568 (Table 9) indicates that 56.8% of the variation in teacher performance (Y) can be simultaneously accounted for by the variables of servant leadership (X₁), work motivation (X₂), and work commitment (Z). The remaining variance is explained by other variables or factors not included in this research model.

Table 9. Coefficient of Determination Result – Model 1

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.754 ^a	.568	.560	5.772
a. Predictors: (Constant), Work commitment, Servant Leadership, work motivation				

Based on Table 9, the R² value is 0.560, indicating that 56.0% of the contribution or explanatory power of X₁, X₂, and Z towards Y can be attributed to these variables. The remaining variance is influenced by other factors (variables) that might play a role but are not included in this study. To formulate the regression equation, the 'e' (constant) value was first calculated, considering the R² value using the appropriate formula:

$$e_1 = \sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0,560} = \sqrt{0,440} = 0,663$$

Thus, the regression path obtained is:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 Z + e_1$$

$$Y = 18,634 + 0,161X_1 + 0,663X_2 + 0,506Z + 0,663$$

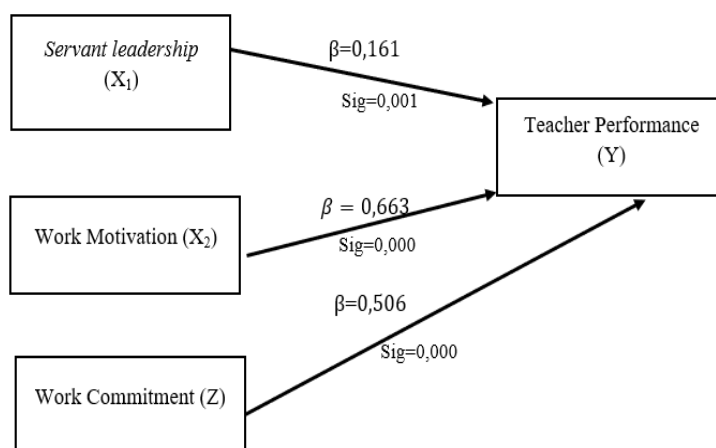


Figure 2. Regression Analysis Diagram I

Based on the diagram above, the analysis shows a positive and significant relationship among the variables examined. First, school principals' servant leadership demonstrates a positive effect on teacher performance, as indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.161. This suggests that an increase of one unit in servant leadership corresponds to a 0.161-unit improvement in teacher performance when other variables are held constant. Furthermore, work motivation also has a positive and significant relationship with teacher performance, reflected in a regression coefficient of 0.633. This means that every one-unit increase in work motivation contributes to a 0.633-unit increase in teacher performance, assuming all other variables remain unchanged. In addition, teacher commitment likewise exhibits a positive and significant influence on performance. With a regression coefficient of 0.506, the findings indicate that a one-unit rise in teacher commitment is associated with a 0.506-unit increase in teacher performance under constant conditions. Together, these results highlight that servant leadership, work motivation, and teacher commitment each play an important role in shaping teacher performance.

Regression Model 2 examines the direct influence of servant leadership (X_1) and work motivation (X_2) on teacher commitment (Z) among public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur. The results of the regression equation for this stage is in Table 10.

Table 10. Results of Regression Analysis – Model 2

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	46.127	5.988		7.703	.000
	Servant Leadership (X ₁)	.103	.027	.220	3.862	.000
	Work Motivation (X ₂)	.412	.038	.620	10.901	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work Commitment (Z)						

The output from Regression Model 2 reveals that the constant (intercept) value is 46.127, suggesting that if the values for servant leadership and work motivation are zero, the projected average work commitment would be 46.127. The servant leadership variable (X₁) shows an Asymp. Sig value of 0.000, and work motivation (X₂) also has a value of 0.000. This indicates that both independent variables, X₁ and X₂, have a highly significant influence on the work commitment variable (Z), as their significance values are less than 0.05.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R²) provides a clearer description of the magnitude of the contribution made by the independent variables (X₁, X₂) towards the teacher commitment variable (Z). The results of the Stage 2 regression's coefficient of determination test are presented in the Table 11.

Table 11. Coefficient of Determination – Regression Model 2

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.692 ^a	.479	.472	3.263
a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Motivation, Servant Leadership				

Based on Table 11, the R² value is 0.472, leading to the conclusion that the contribution or explanatory power of X₁ and X₂ on Z is 47.2%. The remaining variance is influenced by other factors (variables) that might also play a role but are not included in this study. To formulate the regression equation, the 'e' (constant) value was first calculated, taking into account the R² value using the appropriate formula:

$$e_1 = \sqrt{1 - R^2} = \sqrt{1 - 0,472} = \sqrt{0,528} = 0,727$$

Hence, the regression path obtained is

$$Z = \alpha + \beta_{x1z} \cdot X_1 + \beta_{x2z} \cdot X_2 + e$$

$$Z = 1,472 + 0,103X_1 + 0,412X_2 + 0,727$$

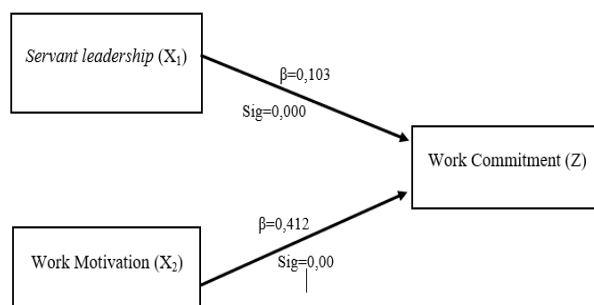


Figure 3. Regression Analysis Diagram II

Significance testing was performed using the t-test to determine the magnitude of each independent variable's influence on the dependent variable partially. The criterion for significance was set at a Sig. value < 0.05 and a T-value > T-table (1.974), indicating a significant influence.

- Servant Leadership (X_1) → Teacher Performance (Y): A regression coefficient of 0.161 (positive), T-value = 3.263, Sig. = 0.001. These results indicate a positive and significant influence.
- Work Motivation (X_2) → Teacher Performance (Y): A coefficient of 0.633, T-value = 7.221, Sig. = 0.000. This indicates a positive and significant influence.
- Teacher Commitment (Z) → Teacher Performance (Y): A coefficient of 0.506, T-value = 3.688, Sig. = 0.000. This shows a positive and significant influence.
- Servant Leadership (X_1) → Teacher Commitment (Z): A coefficient of 0.103, T-value = 3.862, Sig. = 0.000. This indicates a positive and significant influence.
- Work Motivation (X_2) → Teacher Commitment (Z): A coefficient of 0.412, T-value = 10.901, Sig. = 0.000. This shows a positive and significant influence.

The causal relationships among these variables were also analyzed through a path model that structurally illustrates both direct and indirect influence.

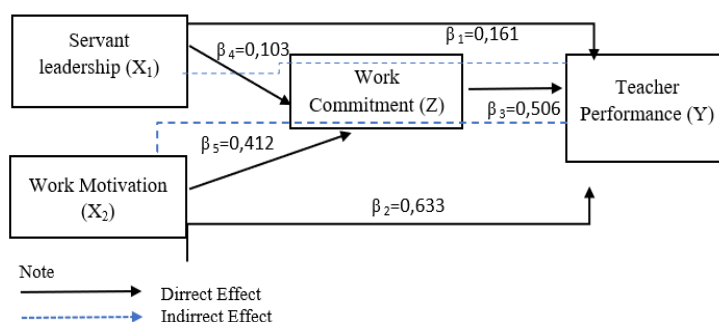


Figure 4. Path Analysis Diagram

An indirect effect represents the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable mediated by an intervening variable. Specifically, the indirect effect of servant leadership (X_1) on teacher performance (Y) through work commitment (Z) is calculated as the product of the beta value of school principal's servant leadership (X_1) on work commitment (Z) and the beta value of work commitment (Z) on teacher performance (Y).

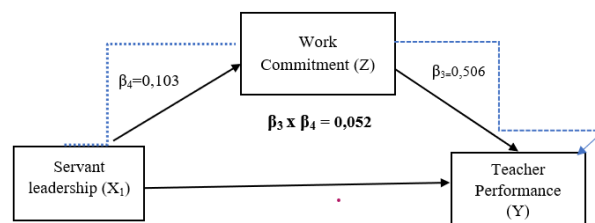


Figure 5. Path Analysis Diagram – Indirect Effect 1

Based on Figure 5, it is known that school principal's servant leadership directly influences teacher performance by 0.161, teacher commitment by 0.103, and work commitment influences performance by 0.506. Consequently, the indirect effect of servant leadership on teacher performance through work commitment is calculated as $0.103 \times 0.506 = 0.052$, indicating a positive influence. The Sobel test was performed to examine the significance of the mediating effect, based on the regression coefficient (B) values and the standard error of each variable. The mediating relationship can be measured based on the z-score using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{P_3 P_4}{Se_{34}} = \frac{0,052}{0,01998} = 2,602$$

The calculation results show that the T-value is 2.602, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.654. The Sobel test result, with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05), leads to the conclusion that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This indicates a significant mediating effect of work commitment on the influence of servant leadership on teacher performance in public elementary schools in Kecamatan Dusun Timur.

The indirect effect of the teacher work motivation variable (X_2) on teacher performance (Y) through work commitment (Z) is calculated as the product of the beta value of the teacher work motivation variable (X_2) on work commitment (Z) and the beta value of the work commitment variable (Z) on teacher performance (Y).

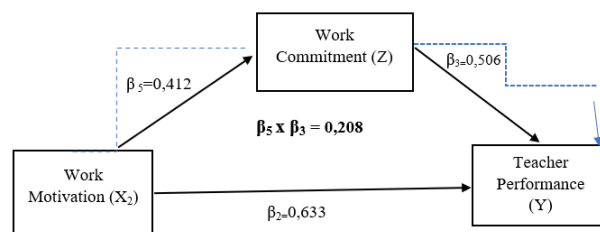


Figure 6. Path Analysis Diagram – Indirect Effect 2

Based on Figure 6, it is known that work motivation directly influences teacher performance by 0.633, work commitment by 0.412, and teacher commitment influences performance by 0.506. Consequently, the indirect effect of work motivation on teacher performance through commitment is calculated as $0.412 \times 0.506 = 0.208$, which indicates a positive influence. The Sobel test was performed to examine the significance of this mediating effect, based on the regression coefficient (B) values and the standard error of each respective variable.

The mediating relationship can be measured using the z-score via the following formula:

$$t = \frac{P_3 P_5}{Se_{35}} = \frac{0,208}{0,0598} = 3,478$$

The calculation results show that the T-value is 3.478, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.654. The Sobel test result, with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05), leads to the conclusion that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This indicates a significant mediating effect of work motivation on teacher performance through commitment in public elementary schools in Kecamatan Dusun Timur.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the four main variables - school principals' servant leadership, work motivation, work commitment, and teacher performance - are all within the very high category. This suggests that, overall, public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur perceive the presence of effective leadership practices, strong work enthusiasm, high professional loyalty, and optimal task implementation. Zhu (Zhu, 2024) showed that improving elementary education requires context-sensitive approaches, such as the Montessori method in minority regions of China, highlighting the universal role of leadership and teacher engagement.

The level of servant leadership among school principals in the district was found to be in the very high category, with a mean score of 4.39 on a 1–5 scale, and 72.19% of

respondents rating it as very high. This finding aligns with Robert K. Greenleaf's theory (Pala'langan, 2021) which posits that effective leaders are servants first. The concept emphasizes empathy, listening, compassion, and empowerment, which together foster a collaborative and ethical work environment (Eva et al., 2019). The indicator of "compassion" received the highest score (mean = 4.50), reflecting principals' emotional support and moral concern (Hunter et al., 2013; van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). However, the "vision" indicator received the lowest score (mean = 4.29), suggesting that teachers perceive interpersonal aspects of servant leadership more strongly than strategic vision articulation. This implies a need for principals to strengthen strategic communication and actively involve teachers in shaping the school's long-term direction (Salim et al., 2024; Haekal et al., 2025). This is consistent with Liden et al. (Liden et al., 2014), who found that servant leadership cultivates a serving culture that significantly enhances individual and unit performance. Similarly, Shekari and Nikooparvar (2012) argue that servant leaders, through trust-building and empowerment, increase organizational effectiveness by aligning personal growth with institutional goals.

The level of work motivation among public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur was also classified as very high (mean = 4.40), with 84.02% of respondents falling in the very high category. This finding is consistent with Herzberg's two-factor theory (Tan & Waheed, 2011) which differentiates between motivator (intrinsic) and hygiene (extrinsic) factors. While both forms of motivation were rated high, extrinsic factors -particularly "salary"- received the highest score (4.62), underscoring its role as a primary driver of work motivation. This stands in contrast to Herzberg's argument that hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction rather than foster long-term satisfaction. Studies by Xie (2023); kumari & Kumar (2023) reinforce the importance of intrinsic motivation in enhancing engagement and commitment, while research by Teresia et al., (2022) and Zulfa & Nugraha (2024) emphasizes the role of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in improving teacher performance. The lowest-rated sub-variable was "autonomy" (mean = 3.90), suggesting a need to enhance teachers' professional independence through targeted training and delegated authority (Bytyqi, 2020). These findings resonate with those of Sulaxono, Sulaiman and Suriansyah (2020), who demonstrated that work motivation, mediated by discipline, significantly impacts teacher performance. Likewise, Syalwa, Suriansyah and Aslamiah (2021) confirmed that

work motivation, when supported by a positive school culture and instructional leadership, enhances teacher productivity.

Teachers' work commitment was also found to be very high in the study area (mean = 4.50), with 96.45% of respondents categorized as having a very high level of commitment. This reflects strong loyalty, emotional attachment, and a heightened sense of responsibility. These findings are consistent with the three-component model of commitment by Meyer & Allen (Meyer et al., 2015). The "continuance commitment" dimension scored the highest (mean = 4.53), particularly on the indicator "optimism about remaining at the school" (mean = 4.71). This implies that teachers perceive job security, economic stability, and organizational support, which rationally encourage their retention. Supporting studies by Meyer et al. (2019) and Xie (2023) highlight the role of a secure and supportive work environment in fostering continuance commitment. However, the lowest scores were found in "work involvement" (4.38) under affective commitment and "reluctance to leave" (4.38) under normative commitment, suggesting the need to reinforce active participation and a stronger collective identity among teachers. Relatedly, Pazetto et al. (2024) found that affective commitment is a key mediator between empowering leadership and performance, emphasizing the importance of perceived organizational support in shaping commitment levels.

The level of teacher performance in public elementary schools in Kecamatan Dusun Timur is categorized as very high (mean = 4.40), with 79.28% of respondents falling into the very high category. This indicates that teachers are performing their roles optimally. High performance in this context is explained by Campbell's performance behavior theory (Boset et al., 2017), which conceptualizes performance as the result of interactions between ability, motivation, and role perception. The highest indicator was found in the social sub-variable, specifically "sense of service" (mean = 4.59), reflecting a strong moral value to serve (Han & Yin, 2016). However, the lowest sub-variable was "understanding and applying the curriculum" (mean = 4.27), under professional competence. This suggests challenges in adapting to the relatively new curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*), even though teachers still demonstrate high overall performance. These findings support the OECD's view that curriculum reform must be accompanied by intensive and continuous teacher training. Normianti et al. (2019) similarly demonstrated that principal leadership, when coupled with high teacher motivation and commitment, significantly boosts teacher performance, particularly in public primary schools.

There is a positive and significant relationship between school principals' servant leadership and teacher performance. In other words, the higher the level of servant leadership practiced, the better the teachers' performance. This leadership style - particularly the element of compassion (mean = 4.50), attention to teachers' rights and responsibilities, and appreciation of their contributions - directly influences teacher effectiveness. These findings align with Greenleaf's (2014) concept and are reinforced by studies from Eva et al. (2019), Santosa et al. (2019), Bakry & Syamril (2020) and the meta-analysis conducted by Godbersen et al. (2024) all of which highlight servant leadership's ability to enhance performance through emotional support, empathy, and empowerment. Liden et al. (2014) further emphasize that servant leadership not only improves individual performance but also fosters a serving culture that cascades through the organization, leading to sustainable outcomes.

Work motivation also has a positive and significant impact on teacher performance. High motivation - both intrinsic (e.g., responsibility, achievement) and extrinsic (e.g., salary) - drives higher quality performance. This finding is supported by Herzberg's two-factor theory which states that both motivators and hygiene factors contribute to productivity (Tan & Waheed, 2011). The results are also in line with studies by Fitriani et al (2022), Wabibah et al. (2024), Janiah et al. (2023) and Nopiyana et al. (2024) which confirm a strong and significant link between motivation and teacher performance. Similarly, Putriningsih et al. (2023) emphasize that both work motivation and commitment are integral in enhancing teacher work discipline, which in turn strengthens overall performance. As Mokoagow (2021) notes, motivated teachers are also more capable of fostering student engagement and learning motivation, thereby extending the impact of their motivation beyond personal performance.

Work commitment has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance. A high level of commitment (mean = 4.50) reflects teacher loyalty and dedication to their responsibilities. Continuance commitment (mean = 4.53) stood out, indicating that teachers feel secure and supported in their roles. This aligns with Meyer and Allen's (2015) framework and studies which found a positive correlation between organizational/professional commitment and the quality of educational services and performance (Rossiandy & Indradewa, 2023). The mediating role of commitment in converting organizational support into performance outcomes has also been affirmed by Pazetto et al. (2024).

A significant positive relationship was also found between school principals' servant leadership and teachers' work commitment. As the implementation of servant leadership increases, so does the level of teacher commitment. Principals who attend to teacher needs, support professional development, and demonstrate empathy are able to foster loyalty and emotional attachment among teachers. This finding is consistent with Greenleaf's (2014) perspective and is supported by research from Wijaya, et al (2024) and the meta-analysis by Godbersen et al. (2024), which emphasize that servant leadership builds commitment through trust and appreciation. Similarly, Searle & Barbuto (2011) argue that servant leadership instills hope and organizational virtuousness, thus nurturing a sense of shared purpose and deeper engagement.

Work motivation contributes positively and significantly to increasing teachers' work commitment. Highly motivated teachers - whether by internal or external factors - are more likely to show enthusiasm, dedication, and loyalty to their institutions. These findings align with Self-Determination Theory (Van den Broeck et al., 2016), which posits that satisfying basic psychological needs through intrinsic motivation strengthens emotional attachment to work. This relationship is further supported by studies from Yuliarni et al. (2021), which confirm that work motivation significantly affects the level of teacher commitment to their professional roles. Normianti et al. (2019) and Syalwa et al. (2021) also provide evidence that motivation and organizational commitment together determine teacher performance outcomes in the Indonesian educational context.

There is also a positive and significant indirect effect of school principals' servant leadership on teacher performance through work commitment as a mediating variable. Although the direct effect is stronger, the role of work commitment remains essential in strengthening this relationship. Principals who apply servant leadership effectively help build a supportive work climate and foster teacher responsibility and loyalty, ultimately improving performance. These findings are supported by Yanto et al. (2020) and Godbersen et al. (2024), who show that servant leadership fosters trust and engagement, which in turn enhances performance. This mechanism is also reflected in Liden et al. (2014) who found that servant leadership enhances performance both directly and through mediating variables such as commitment and perceived support.

Furthermore, work motivation indirectly and significantly affects teacher performance through work commitment. This indirect pathway is stronger than that of servant leadership. Intrinsic motivators such as achievement and responsibility

strengthen job satisfaction and emotional attachment, which subsequently enhance commitment and performance. These results are consistent with Herzberg's (Tan & Waheed, 2011) theory and the mediation model by Baron & Kenny (Iqbal et al., 2020) and are supported by studies from Nopiyana et al. (2024) and Suriansyah (2014). This highlights the role of work commitment as a stabilizing and reinforcing factor of long-term motivation, essential for consistent teacher performance. The role of sequential mediation through affective commitment and perceived organizational support is further supported by Pazetto et al. (2024) reinforcing the significance of fostering a psychologically supportive work environment.

Limitation of the Study

This study is subject to several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single district with 27 public elementary schools, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, its cross-sectional design, based on one week of data collection, does not capture changes over time. Third, reliance on self-reported questionnaires may have introduced social desirability bias, as teachers might provide favorable responses rather than actual behaviors. Finally, the study examined only servant leadership, work motivation, and work commitment, without considering other factors such as organizational culture, resources, or external policy pressures. These limitations warrant caution in interpreting the results and call for future research with broader samples, longitudinal approaches, and additional variables.

Practical Implication

The findings highlight the practical value of servant leadership in education. Principals who demonstrate empathy, compassion, and empowerment can strengthen teacher motivation and commitment, thereby enhancing performance. For policymakers, the results underscore the importance of leadership training and policies that promote professional autonomy and job security. Together, these measures can improve teacher effectiveness and student outcomes in public elementary schools.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates how servant leadership, work motivation, and work commitment influence the performance of public elementary school teachers in Kecamatan Dusun Timur. Using a quantitative correlational method and path analysis, data were collected from 169 teachers via a structured questionnaire. The results revealed that all three variables—servant leadership, motivation, and commitment—

have a significant direct impact on teacher performance. Additionally, servant leadership and motivation also significantly influence work commitment, which in turn mediates their effect on performance. Notably, work motivation had the strongest direct and indirect influence on teacher performance.

The findings emphasize that fostering a servant leadership approach among school principals and strengthening both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among teachers are critical strategies to enhance teacher performance. High levels of compassion, support, and professional recognition contribute to increased commitment and optimal classroom practices. This study highlights the need for targeted leadership training and motivation enhancement to improve educational quality at the elementary level.

Future research should broaden the scope beyond a single district to enhance generalizability and consider longitudinal designs to examine the evolution of servant leadership, motivation, commitment, and performance over time. Employing mixed-methods, such as interviews or classroom observations, may provide deeper insights and mitigate self-report bias. Additionally, investigating contextual factors, including organizational culture, resource allocation, and policy environments, could further elucidate influences on teacher performance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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