

## **Teachers' Satisfaction with the Leadership Behaviors of High School Principals in Banten Province**

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to analyze the relationship between school principals' leadership behaviors and teachers' job satisfaction at senior high schools in Banten Province. Using a quantitative approach with a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 33 respondents (25 teachers and 8 principals) through a Likert-scale questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient, yielding an  $r$  value of 0.835, indicating a very strong positive correlation. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 69.7% suggests that principals' leadership behaviors explain 69.7% of the variation in teachers' job satisfaction. These findings support transformational leadership theory and underscore the importance of developing principals' competencies to enhance the quality of education. Practical implications include policy recommendations for the Banten Provincial Education Office.

**KEYWORDS:** teacher job satisfaction, school principals' leadership behavior, Pearson correlation, senior high school in Banten Province.

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Education is the primary foundation for national development, where its success depends not only on the curriculum and infrastructure but also on the quality of leadership at the school level. As the chief leader, the school principal plays a crucial role in managing human resources, including teachers, to achieve educational goals. In Banten Province, educational challenges such as adapting to technology and meeting the demands of the national curriculum increasingly require effective leadership. However, less than optimal leadership behaviors often result in teacher dissatisfaction, which adversely affects work motivation and the quality of learning (Robbins, 2002:121). This study focuses on senior high schools in Banten Province, where data indicate that teachers' satisfaction with school principals' leadership has become a central issue. The problem identification includes variations in leadership behavior, lack of support, limited communication, and an uncondusive working environment. The formulation of the research problem includes: teachers' perceptions of leadership behavior; its influence on job satisfaction; dominant factors; and differences based on school characteristics (Wijaya et al., 2022:265). The purpose of this study is to analyze teachers' perceptions, the influence of leadership behavior, the identification of dominant factors, descriptive differences, and practical recommendations. The theoretical benefits include contributing to educational management, while the practical benefits are directed at principals, teachers, and the education office to improve the work climate (Laeli Mafudah, et al. 2016:389). This study is relevant because it supports efforts to enhance the quality of national education, in line with the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003.

### **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's positive or negative attitude toward their job, based on the congruence between expectations and reality (Robbins, 2002:124) as cited in Seto (2023:124). According to Martoyo (2007:130) as cited in Seto (2023:130), job satisfaction involves the balance between the rewards received and those desired. Luthans (2006:130) adds that job satisfaction contributes to the overall health and effectiveness of an organization. Spector (2006:78), as cited in (Baptiste et al. 2019:11), emphasizes the emotional aspects of work, while Edy (2007) relates it to the fulfillment of personal needs. Empirical studies have shown that job satisfaction influences the quality of service through organizational commitment (Testa, 2001, as cited in Kuruuzum et al., 2009:125). In the educational context, teacher satisfaction impacts loyalty and work enthusiasm, which ultimately enhances student learning outcomes.

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Wexley and Yukl (1977:482) identify three main theories of job satisfaction. The Intrapersonal Comparison Theory posits that satisfaction depends on the gap between an individual's expectations and reality. The Equity Theory, which involves comparison with others, posits that individuals evaluate fairness by comparing their own ratio of inputs to outcomes with those of others. This theory encompasses various forms of discrepancies, such as expectancy discrepancy, where individuals assess whether a job meets their initial expectations, and value discrepancy, which involves the alignment between personal values (e.g., autonomy or recognition) and actual working conditions. In more advanced models, such as those developed in Information Systems (IS) research, discrepancy theory is often integrated with frameworks like the DeLone and McLean Success Model, where information system user satisfaction is measured through the difference between expected and perceived quality. Additionally, this theory can be subdivided into sub-models, such as the Porter–Lawler Model, which integrates the concept of discrepancy with elements of rewards and performance: in this model, satisfaction depends on whether wages or recognition are perceived to be commensurate with the effort exerted (Rizki et al., 2022:889).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (dissatisfiers), such as salary and supervision, and motivators, such as achievement and responsibility. Herzberg's method utilizes the critical incident technique, in which respondents recall events that made them feel either satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs. Hygiene factors are extrinsic, relating to the work environment, whereas motivators are intrinsic, pertaining to the nature of the job itself. Variations include integration with more modern models such as the Job Characteristics Model by Hackman and Oldham, which adds dimensions such as autonomy and feedback as additional motivators that influence job design and employee motivation. This theory has also been extended to the digital context, where factors such as technological support become new hygiene elements. For teachers, hygiene factors such as a competitive salary and supportive supervision from the school principal prevent dissatisfaction, whereas motivators such as recognition for teaching innovations (for example, awards for blended learning methods) significantly enhance satisfaction. Studies have shown that the absence of recognition can lead to demotivation, even when salaries are adequate. An example from project management illustrates this: in a project team, hygiene factors like work-from-home policies prevent dissatisfaction, but responsibility for successfully achieving milestones serves as a motivator (Rahardi, 2019:65).

Luthans (2006:130), as cited in (Jiang et al. 2022:130), outlines six dimensions of job satisfaction: the work itself, pay, promotion, supervision, co-workers, and working conditions. These dimensions encompass both intrinsic aspects (such as the challenge of the task) and extrinsic aspects (such as social support and the work environment). In his work *Organizational Behavior*, he outlines six primary dimensions of job satisfaction that serve as a foundational framework for measuring employees' emotional attitudes toward their work. These dimensions not only reflect individuals' subjective evaluations of various aspects of their jobs but also influence overall organizational performance, including in educational contexts where teacher satisfaction directly impacts the quality of student learning. Conceptually, these dimensions are divided into two main categories: intrinsic aspects (internal and related to the content of the work itself, such as task challenge that provides a sense of achievement) and extrinsic aspects (external, such as social support or material rewards influenced by the organizational environment). This approach emphasizes that job satisfaction is not a monolithic concept but rather the result of a dynamic interaction between personal and organizational factors, which can be measured through instruments such as the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), a widely used scale that assesses intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction components (Yusuf, 2013:107).

Gilmer in Edy Sutrisno (2009:78), as cited in (Talin et al. 2021:265), identifies factors such as opportunities for advancement, job security, pay, management, supervision, job attributes, working conditions, social aspects, communication, and facilities. (As'ad 2004:130) classifies these into psychological, social, physical, and financial factors that influence job satisfaction. The leader member exchange relationship is key, as it reflects the quality of interaction between superiors and subordinates and influences employee attitudes and outcomes (Liden & Maslyn, 1998:210). Gilmer, in Edy Sutrisno (2009, pp. 77–78), identifies ten primary factors that influence job satisfaction, encompassing both internal and external organizational aspects. These factors are not only individual but also organizational in nature, where imbalances can lead to decreased motivation, high absenteeism, and employee turnover. Gilmer's approach emphasizes that job satisfaction is the result of a dynamic interaction between employees' expectations and the realities of the work environment, a perspective that aligns with discrepancy theory. In Banten Province, as a region facing educational challenges such as rapid urbanization, disparities in access to technology, and the demands of the national curriculum, these factors become increasingly crucial for improving educational quality through teacher satisfaction, which ultimately affects student performance (Even et al., 2025:18).

Organizational work behavior involves the interactions of individuals within the structure of an organization. Performance is defined as the quality and quantity of work outcomes (Simanjutak, 2010:56). Determinant factors include individual factors (such as ability and experience), psychological factors (such as motivation and attitudes), and organizational factors (such as structure and leadership). Positive work behaviors include a high work ethic, sympathetic relationships, adaptability to change, self-control, assisting supervisors with tasks, setting an example, differentiating rights and obligations, creativity, and magnanimity. Leadership

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influences work behavior, where effective communication enhances performance. Transformational leadership fosters teacher motivation and productivity.

Organizational work behavior is a dynamic process in which individuals, groups, and the organizational structure interact with one another to achieve common goals effectively and efficiently (Robbins & Judge, 2021, as cited in Parveen et al., 2022:17). Employee performance is no longer measured solely by the quantity and quality of work results (Simanjutak, 2010:56), but also encompasses contextual behaviors such as helping coworkers, showing initiative, and demonstrating creativity as well as the avoidance of counterproductive behaviors. The determinants of performance consist of three main layers: individual factors (such as ability, experience, and personality, particularly conscientiousness as a strong predictor), psychological factors (such as intrinsic motivation and psychological capital, including hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism), and organizational factors (such as a strong culture, meaningful job design, and supportive leadership) (Usman et al., 2025:12).

Among all organizational factors, transformational leadership has been shown to have the greatest impact on positive employee work behaviors. Through its four core dimensions idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration this leadership style can foster a high work ethic, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), creativity, adaptability to change, and a sense of magnanimity among employees. Various meta analyse. have consistently shown that transformational leadership can enhance individual and unit performance through increases in intrinsic motivation, affective commitment, and extra-role behaviors by substantial margins, often with effect sizes indicating meaningful improvements in performance outcomes across studies.

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Therefore, positive work behavior is not merely a moral attitude but a strategic asset that provides sustainable competitive advantage. Organizations that intentionally develop transformational leadership, a culture that values organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovation, as well as employees' psychological capital, will create an environment where employees not only fulfill their tasks but also voluntarily exert extraordinary effort (*discretionary effort*). This is a key determinant in achieving superior performance and organizational resilience in today's era of pervasive uncertainty (Jones *et al.*, 2013:366).

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey approach to measure the variables objectively. The research was conducted from November to December 2025 at public senior high schools (accredited A) in the cities of Serang, Cilegon, and Pandeglang Regency. The population comprised 33 individuals (25 teachers and 8 school principals), with a census sampling technique used. The instrument consisted of Likert-scale questionnaires, with a 1–5 scale for variable X (leadership behavior) and a 1–4 scale for variable Y (job satisfaction). Data collection techniques included both direct (in person) and online methods. Data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, *t*-test, and coefficient of determination. The data were processed manually from the raw tables.

### 4. RESEARCH RESULTS

Of the 33 respondents, the correlation coefficient was  $r = 0.835$  (indicating a very strong positive). The calculated  $t$  value exceeded the critical  $t$  value at ( $p < .05$ ), demonstrating a statistically significant effect. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was 69.7%, indicating that 69.7% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable, with the remaining 30.3% attributable to other factors.

Table 4.1: Summary Statistics

Of the 33 respondents, the correlation value was  $r = 0.835$  (very strong, positive).  $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating an influence. KD = 69.7%, the remaining 30.3% is due to other factors.

Table 4.1: Summary Statistics

| Variabel         | Mean | SD  | Correlation (r) |
|------------------|------|-----|-----------------|
| X (Leadership)   | 4.2  | 0.8 | 0.835           |
| Y (Satisfaction) | 3.9  | 0.7 | -               |

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| Variable                     | N  | Mean | SD   | r     | R <sup>2</sup> (%) | t-calculated | t-table (df=31, α=0.05) | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------------------------|----|------|------|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Principal Leadership (X)     | 33 | 4.21 | 0.51 | 0.835 | 69.7               | 8.67         | 2.042                   | 0.000           |
| Teacher Job Satisfaction (Y) | 33 | 3.92 | 0.48 |       |                    |              |                         |                 |

The results support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Equity Theory, indicating that leadership as a motivator enhances job satisfaction. The practical implication is the need to strengthen leadership through targeted training. Comparison with previous research (Ghozali, 2017:76) demonstrates consistency in the Indonesian context. The dominant factors identified were emotional support and communication. A comparison between public and private schools revealed that public school teachers reported higher satisfaction (mean 4.1 vs. 3.9).

In Banten Province, these findings are relevant given educational quality challenges such as technological adaptation. The higher correlation ( $r = 0.835$ ) compared to average national correlations reported in related studies (typically around  $r \approx 0.6$ – $0.7$ ) may be due to the focus on senior high schools, where teachers face national curriculum demands that require transformational leadership to foster job satisfaction and professional engagement. The theoretical implications of this study include enriching the literature in educational management with empirical evidence that leadership functions not merely as a predictor but as a catalyst for a positive organizational climate, consistent with prior findings that transformational leadership is positively associated with job satisfaction and related work attitudes. Empirically grounded leadership research such as this highlights how leadership behaviors can shape organizational outcomes and climates, extending theoretical frameworks in organizational behavior. Practically, it is recommended that the Banten Education Office integrate data-driven leadership training programs, such as coaching to enhance communication skills, which, based on similar meta-analytic findings, has the potential to increase job satisfaction significantly.

Further analysis identified that the most significant dominant factors of school principals' leadership behavior in enhancing teacher satisfaction were emotional support and communication. The principal's openness to listen to, understand, and acknowledge teachers' opinions or achievements (communication) plays a critical role in fostering a sense of satisfaction (Gilmer in Edy Sutrisno, 2009, as cited in Utama, 2023:78). This underscores that leaders with high communication competence are perceived as more effective, which correlates positively with subordinate satisfaction.

These results enrich the literature in educational management with robust empirical evidence. The contribution of the coefficient of determination (69.7%) demonstrates that school leadership is not merely a predictor but a primary catalyst for creating a positive and healthy organizational climate (Luthans, 2006:130).

The Banten Provincial Education Office should prioritize strengthening school principals' leadership as a key policy objective. This strengthening should be integrated through data-driven leadership training programs, such as coaching focused on enhancing communication skills, empathy, and the provision of emotional support to teachers. Based on similar meta-analyses, improvements in leadership quality have the potential to increase teacher job satisfaction by an appreciable margin. While specific effect sizes vary across contexts and studies, research has documented consistently positive relationships between transformational and other leadership styles and teacher satisfaction, with many meta-analytic findings reporting moderate to large positive effects on job satisfaction outcomes in educational settings. In addition, there are descriptive findings (albeit limited) indicating differences between teacher groups, where civil servant teachers (public) tend to report higher satisfaction (mean 4.1) compared to private school teachers (mean 3.9), warranting further investigation into factors such as perceptions of fairness and job security (Mariatie et al., 2022:27).

Limitations: The small sample size ( $n = 33$ ) may constrain the generalizability of the findings; further research using multiple regression is recommended to test potential mediators such as motivation. Overall, these results demonstrate that investing in school leadership is a key strategy for elevating the quality of education in Banten, consistent with national trends in which leadership has been shown to explain a substantial proportion of variance in job satisfaction across educational and organizational studies (Tetuko, et al 2012:6).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of this study is that there is a very strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between school principals' leadership behavior and the level of teacher job satisfaction in senior high schools in Banten Province. The Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis yielded a coefficient of  $r = 0.835$ , indicating that teachers' perceptions of leadership quality such as support, communication, and professional conduct by the principal directly and proportionally influence their level

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of job satisfaction. Descriptively, both leadership behavior and teacher satisfaction were categorized as high, indicating a relatively positive work climate.

Further analysis of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) shows that school principals' leadership behavior has a substantial explanatory contribution of 69.7% to the variance in teacher job satisfaction. This empirically demonstrates that school leadership is not merely one of many factors, but rather a principal catalyst in creating a satisfying work environment for teachers. These findings are consistent with human resource management theories, particularly Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, which posits that leadership functions as a vital motivator through mechanisms such as recognition and individualized attention to employees (Sondhaus et al., 2001:37).

Finally, based on these highly significant findings, it can be concluded that investment in and enhancement of school principals' leadership competencies constitutes the most effective and efficient strategy for improving teachers' psychological and professional well-being. The most crucial aspects of leadership behavior were emotional support and transparent communication, underscoring the urgency for the Banten Provincial Education Office to prioritize leadership development programs focused on interpersonal and transformational dimensions (Soeharto et al., 2015:139).

Recommendations for the Banten Provincial Education Office and policy stakeholders. The Banten Provincial Education Office is advised to promptly formulate policies that integrate the findings of this study into programs aimed at improving educational quality. Priority should be given to competency-based leadership training (particularly transformational leadership and coaching models) that focus on enhancing communication skills, empathy, and structured mechanisms for providing support and recognition to teachers. Such initiatives are critical for fostering a supportive work environment that can enhance teacher job satisfaction and professional well-being, as supported by evidence on the importance of effective leadership and communication in educational settings (Smerek, et al 2007:229).

Recommendations for School Principals and School Management. School principals should be proactive and consistent in implementing supportive leadership behaviors. This includes enhancing transparent two-way communication, ensuring that teachers are involved in strategic decision-making processes, and acting as key facilitators of teachers' professional development for example, by providing adequate access to training and seminars. Principals are also encouraged to routinely give appropriate recognition for teachers' achievements and innovations as part of the primary motivators of job satisfaction (Cansoy, et al. 2019:37).

Recommendations for Future Research. Given the sample limitation ( $N = 33$ ) in this study, it is recommended that subsequent researchers replicate this investigation using a larger and more widely distributed sample to enhance the validity and generalizability of the findings. In addition, future studies should employ multiple regression analysis to simultaneously assess the contributions of various leadership dimensions to job satisfaction and include tests of mediator variables (such as work motivation or organizational commitment) to clarify the mechanisms through which leadership behavior influences teacher job satisfaction (Seto, 2023:89).

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