

Leadership, Motivation, and Discipline as Determinants of School Quality: A Study in Pekalongan Regency

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

School Principal Leadership;
Work Motivation;
Teacher Work Discipline;
School Quality.

Article history:

Received 2025-05-02
Revised 2025-06-12
Accepted 2025-07-08

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of school principal leadership, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality in SMP/MTs in the Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires administered to 100 teachers from five schools. The findings reveal that all three independent variables principal leadership, teacher motivation, and teacher discipline positively and significantly influence school quality. Principal leadership contributes 60.5%, teacher motivation 43.4%, and teacher discipline 38.2% to the variation in school quality. Collectively, these factors account for 93.2% of the variance in school quality, underscoring the critical role of leadership, motivation, and discipline in shaping educational outcomes. These results emphasize that strong leadership fosters a shared vision and instructional support, while motivated and disciplined teachers enhance the consistency and effectiveness of learning processes. Therefore, strengthening school leadership practices, cultivating teacher motivation, and maintaining professional discipline are essential strategies for improving the overall quality of education in the Tirto District.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in national development. As a planned and organized process, education aims to develop the potential of individuals, which in turn contributes to the improvement of human resource quality. Education in Indonesia, as outlined in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, emphasizes the importance of enhancing the nation's life and developing Indonesians in a holistic manner. This law also serves as the foundation for the implementation of education at all levels in Indonesia. Schools, as formal educational institutions, bear significant responsibility in realizing these objectives. As stated by Sakdiah et al. (2023), schools function as educational units that aim to shape individuals with character and personality. To achieve

this, schools must implement high-quality educational processes. School quality can be understood as an overall depiction of the educational services provided, reflecting the school's ability to meet the needs and expectations of the community.

In this context, the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 28 (2016) stipulates that the quality of primary and secondary education is measured by the degree of alignment between the implementation of education and the National Education Standards. These standards serve as the primary reference for educational management and quality assurance in schools. Devi (2021) adds that school quality can be analyzed through three dimensions: input, process, and output, which interact to achieve quality educational outcomes.

Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency, faces challenges in improving the quality of education at the junior high school (SMP/MTs) level. Although several schools in this district have demonstrated good results, some schools still need to enhance their quality, particularly in terms of teacher competence, facilities, and the learning process. According to initial data, several SMP/MTs in Tirto District are experiencing various limitations in these aspects, including suboptimal teacher competence, inadequate facilities, and students' low preparedness. Junindra et al. (2022) state that input factors, such as teacher competence and the availability of facilities, significantly affect the success of the educational process.

Furthermore, the quality of the learning process is also a key factor in improving school quality. Supervisory results from several schools in Tirto District indicate that many teachers still do not independently prepare teaching modules and that the use of effective teaching media is low. Devi (2021) emphasizes that a learning process conducted according to procedures and accompanied by proper assessments will support the achievement of quality educational goals.

The low learning process aligns with the 2024 education report card, where the quality indicators of learning in SMP/MTs in Tirto District have not yet reached the good category. The results of the 2024 education report card show that none of the five schools have achieved the good category in learning quality. These achievements represent an average across classroom management, psychological support, and teaching methods. Below is the data from the 2024 education report card based on learning quality indicators.

Table 1. Learning Quality

No	School	Score	Achievement
1	SMP Negeri 1 Tirto	60,77	Medium
2	SMP Negeri 2 Tirto	57,38	Medium
3	SMP Negeri 3 Tirto	63,61	Medium
4	SMP NU Tirto	60,39	Medium
5	SMP Salafiyah Karanganyar Tirto	58,86	Medium

Source: Education Report 2024

Educational output is school performance, one of the school's performances is school achievement that can be seen from the process. School output can be said to be of high quality if the school's achievements achieved by students show high achievement in academic achievement and non-academic achievement (Liswiana et al., 2018)

The low output in SMP/MTs Tirto District is reflected in the 2024 education report card, as seen from the indicators of literacy, numeracy, and character. Below are the results of the education report for these schools.

Table 2. Achievement Numeracy, Literacy, and Character

No	School	Indicator	Score	Achievement
1	SMP N 1 Tirta	Literacy	82,22	Good
		Numeracy	66,67	Medium
		Character	53,21	Good
2	SMP N 2 Tirta	Literacy	75,56	Good
		Numeracy	60,00	Medium
		Character	48,31	Medium
3	SMP N 3 Tirta	Literacy	80,00	Good
		Numeracy	64,44	Medium
		Character	52,66	Good
4	MTs NU Tirta	Literacy	88,89	Good
		Numeracy	86,67	Good
		Character	52,69	Good
5	MTs Salafiyah NU Karanganyar Tirta	Literacy	86,67	Good
		Numeracy	73,33	Good
		Character	55,86	Good

Source: Education Report 2024

The results of the 2024 education report indicate that the achievement of literacy indicators in SMP/MTs Tirta is already good, but the numeracy indicators have not yet reached the good category, particularly in public schools. Students' character development also shows only a medium achievement. Although some indicators have already achieved good results, these outcomes can still be improved to enhance school quality, particularly in numeracy indicators.

On the other hand, educational output, which includes both academic and non-academic student achievements, also shows low figures. Data regarding championships won at the Pekalongan Regency level and the acceptance of graduates in public schools indicate unsatisfactory results. This suggests the need for greater efforts to improve school quality in Tirta District. The roles of the school principal, teacher motivation, and teacher work discipline are three variables that can influence the quality of education in schools. Based on research by Suminten et al. (2023) and Waliyah et al. (2022), the role of the school principal has been shown to significantly affect school quality. A principal who can effectively carry out managerial tasks, supervision, and entrepreneurship will contribute to the improvement of education quality in schools. In addition, teachers' high motivation also plays a role in creating a productive learning environment, as expressed by Fandholi et al. (2023) and Mariyam et al. (2023). Highly motivated teachers tend to be more proactive in developing teaching materials and innovating in the teaching process. Suryadi (2020) stated that teacher work discipline is also an important factor influencing the quality of learning, as disciplined teachers will carry out their duties more consistently and responsibly.

School quality is a concept that refers to the alignment between the input, process, and output of the school with the needs of stakeholders. Ridwan et al. (2020) explain that school quality can be measured by examining the alignment of these three elements with the needs of the education service recipients. Meanwhile, Triatna (2025) defines school quality as the level of satisfaction of service recipients with the quality of educational services provided, which must meet established standards. School quality is a systematic, continuous process aimed at improving the quality of teaching and related factors to achieve effective and efficient goals (Zamroni, 2013). School quality of life is considered as one of the indicators of general well-being, and it is considered also as well-being as a result of students' good connection with school life (Gündoğan & Özgen, 2020).

Other experts, such as Dzaujak, mention that school quality is determined by the school's ability to manage its components operationally and efficiently to produce added value that meets applicable

norms or standards (Umiarso & Gojali, 2010). School quality is the result of the school's performance in both academic and non-academic achievements, achieved through the optimal management of input, process, and output (Walayah et al., 2022). School quality reflects the level of excellence of a school in achieving the expected educational goals, with evaluations involving key components such as input, process, output, and educational outcomes (Fandholi et al., 2023).

Mulyasa (2013) argues that to achieve educational quality success, school quality indicators can be divided into four main dimensions: input, process, output, and outcome. Input indicators include teacher characteristics, facilities, educational equipment, and school management capacity. Process indicators focus on administrative behavior, teacher time allocation, and student time in learning activities. Output indicators measure the learning outcomes achieved by students, their attitude changes, and accomplishments in both academic and non-academic fields. Outcome indicators assess the number of graduates who continue their education to the next level or are accepted into the workforce. Triatna (2025) divides school quality dimensions into input, process, and output. Input quality includes factors such as student quality, facilities, and the supportive educational environment. Process quality refers to the quality of teaching services provided by teachers and how these processes enhance students' enthusiasm for learning. Outcome quality reflects students' success in aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and skills after undergoing the educational process.

The role of the school principal is crucial in leading and managing education in schools. The principal's main task is to drive the implementation of education so that educational goals are achieved effectively and efficiently (Makawimbang, 2012). According to Supardi, the principal's role is to lead and motivate individuals to achieve results that align with the established educational goals. The principal is not only responsible for managerial tasks but also plays a role in inspiring and motivating teachers and staff to perform their duties responsibly (Karwati et al., 2016).

In the ever-evolving world of education, the role of leaders is becoming increasingly crucial in facing complex challenges and dynamics. Leadership is not only about leading, but also creating a vision, motivating, and building a culture that supports learning. Leadership, in the field of education, is an important tool to improve the function of educational institutions and student learning. For this, trained leaders are required to carry out the most appropriate changes and manage work with workers, in order to meet the proposed goals. (Huangal-Scheineder et al., 2024)

The principal's role can be divided into three main dimensions: managerial, entrepreneurial development, and supervisory (Kemendikbud RI, 2018). According to Kadarsih et al. (2020), the role of the principal cannot be separated from the main tasks as a manager, supervisor, and entrepreneurial leader. The managerial dimension includes the principal's ability to plan and manage school programs and to carry out supervision and evaluation. As an entrepreneurial developer, the principal must be able to plan, implement, and evaluate entrepreneurial programs that can foster an entrepreneurial spirit among teachers and students. As a supervisor, the principal's task is to plan and carry out supervision of teachers and follow up on the results of supervision to improve the quality of learning in schools.

Teacher work motivation is a factor that significantly affects their performance in carrying out tasks in schools. Mulyasa (2020) states that motivation is the desire that drives someone to act with strength. In the context of teachers, this motivation drives them to perform their teaching tasks well. Robbins suggests that motivation is a process that influences the intensity, direction, and effort of an individual to achieve a goal. The stronger the motivation a teacher has, the greater the effort they will exert to achieve learning objectives (Wibowo, 2016).

According to McClelland's theory, several important dimensions of teacher motivation include the need for achievement, the need for power, the need for affiliation (Robbins & Judge, 2017). In addition, Herzberg's two-factor theory is used to explain how teacher motivation is shaped by intrinsic factors such as achievement and recognition and extrinsic factors such as working conditions and policies (Hoy & Miskel, 2014). These theories are combined to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how and why these variables affect school quality. Internal factors that are considered to influence teaching motivation are related to the fulfillment of basic psychological needs and self-concept. External factors

that are considered to have an influence on teacher motivation in teaching are related to school climate. School climate as an external factor has a strong influence on teacher motivation (Utomo et al., 2019).

In addition to the role of the principal and work motivation, teacher work discipline is also an important variable that affects school quality. Research by Suminten et al. (2023). shows that there is a significant influence of work discipline on school quality. According to Ramdhona et al. (2022), work discipline is the awareness that grows from within a person in fulfilling responsibilities and obeying regulations according to the place where he works. Darajat (2015) defines work discipline as the attitude of consistently desiring to comply with established rules. Work discipline involves awareness and willingness to comply with regulations and norms that apply in the workplace, including in carrying out teaching duties. Hartatik (2014) mentions that work discipline also functions as a managerial tool to modify employees' behavior to align with the applicable rules.

Teacher work discipline can be measured through several dimensions, including time discipline, responsibility discipline, service discipline, and behavioral discipline. Time discipline includes punctuality in attendance and the execution of learning activities. Responsibility discipline measures how well teachers prepare, implement, and evaluate the learning process responsibly. Service discipline measures teachers' consistency in providing guidance to students, while behavioral discipline includes teachers' professional attitudes toward superiors, colleagues, and students (Sagala, 2013).

School quality greatly determines the success of education implementation in schools, therefore knowledge is needed regarding the variables that influence the improvement of school quality. The role of a good principal, high teacher work motivation, and good work discipline are considered to be able to influence the improvement of school quality. While previous studies have explored these variables, most have done so separately or focused on only one factor. Thus, this study offers an integrative approach by examining the influence of principal leadership, teacher motivation, and teacher discipline simultaneously on school quality.

2. METHODS

This study employs a quantitative associative approach, grounded in the philosophy of positivism. This approach was selected because the data collected are analyzed using statistical techniques to examine relationships among variables. According to Sugiyono (2022), quantitative research is used to study a specific population or sample through random sampling techniques. Data are collected using standardized research instruments, and the data analysis is conducted quantitatively with the primary goal of testing hypotheses. This research is associative and causal in nature, aiming to examine the relationship and influence between independent and dependent variables. Specifically, the study investigates the influence of school principal leadership, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality both partially and simultaneously using correlational and regression-based methods. The research was conducted at junior secondary schools (SMP/MTs) in Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency.

The study consists of one dependent variable and three independent variables: school quality (Y) as the dependent variable, and the role of the school principal (X1), teacher work motivation (X2), and teacher work discipline (X3) as the independent variables. The operational definitions are as follows. School Quality (Y) is conceptually defined as a composite characteristic of educational services through the dimensions of input, process, and output that contribute to the satisfaction of educational stakeholders and society. Operationally, school quality is measured using specific indicators under each dimension: input (teacher qualifications, learning resources, infrastructure), process (teaching quality, professional attitudes, classroom management), and output (student achievement, character outcomes, literacy and numeracy results). The Role of the School Principal (X1) is the ability of a principal to lead, manage, and inspire school personnel in achieving educational objectives effectively and efficiently. Operationally, this is measured through managerial, entrepreneurial, and supervisory dimensions. Teacher Work Motivation (X2) is defined as the psychological and external factors that

drive teachers to perform their duties enthusiastically, consistently, and sincerely. The dimensions used include achievement needs, self-development needs, social/affiliation needs, and existence needs, drawing from Herzberg's two-factor theory to capture both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Teacher Work Discipline (X3) reflects the teacher's compliance with rules and norms in a responsible and orderly manner. This variable is operationalized through dimensions of time discipline, responsibility discipline, and behavioral discipline or work attitudes.

The population in this study includes all teachers in SMP/MTs located in Tirto District, totaling 134 individuals. The sampling technique used is disproportionate stratified random sampling, followed by cluster sampling based on geographical school grouping. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula at a 5% margin of error, resulting in a sample of 100 teachers, ensuring representativeness of the population.

The data collection instrument is a structured questionnaire developed based on the operational indicators of each variable. It employs a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Prior to implementation, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability using data from 30 teachers not included in the research sample. The validity test used the Pearson Product Moment correlation technique via SPSS, where an item was considered valid if the r -count exceeded the r -table value at a 0.05 significance level. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient value greater than 0.60 considered acceptable (Prayitno & Utami, 2017). Each questionnaire item was reviewed to minimize potential bias, particularly social desirability bias. This was addressed by maintaining respondent anonymity, using neutral item wording, and emphasizing that there were no right or wrong answers.

The data analysis process involved several stages using SPSS software. These included descriptive statistical analysis, validity and reliability testing, and regression analysis. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to validate indicator groupings and ensure construct validity. Simple linear regression was conducted to assess the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, while multiple linear regression and ANOVA testing were used to determine the combined effects of the role of the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality. Before regression analysis, assumptions such as normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were verified to ensure the robustness of the model.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Result

a. Data Description

This study aims to examine the influence of the role of the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality in SMP/MTs Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency. Based on data obtained from 100 respondents consisting of teachers from SMP/MTs in Tirto District, it can be concluded that the respondents' perceptions of the research variables show significant variation. Table 4.1 presents the descriptive statistics for the variables of school quality (Y), the role of the school principal (X1), work motivation (X2), and teacher work discipline (X3). The average scores for the school quality variable are 93.81, the role of the school principal is 135.71, work motivation is 151.89, and teacher work discipline is 112.38, showing significant differences in perception among respondents regarding the education quality at these schools. The range values for the school quality variable are 121, the role of the school principal is 20, work motivation is 17, and teacher work discipline is 15, reflecting considerable variation in the assessment of these variables.

The results of the frequency distribution for perceptions of school quality show that the majority of respondents (48%) rate the school quality as "fairly high," although 21% of respondents rate the school quality as "low" and 6% rate it as "very low." This indicates differing views on the quality of education provided at these schools. Regarding the perception of the role of the school principal, the majority of respondents rate the principal's role as "fairly high" (38%), followed by "high" (35%) and "low" (17%). This result shows that the majority of respondents feel the principal plays an adequate role

in managing the school, although some respondents feel that the principal still needs to improve the effectiveness of their role.

In the variable of teacher work motivation, 36% of respondents rate the teachers' motivation as "high" and another 36% rate it as "fairly high." Meanwhile, 13% of respondents rate it as "low," indicating that most respondents perceive the teachers' motivation to be at a good level, although there is still room for improvement. Perceptions of teacher work discipline show that the majority of respondents rate teacher discipline as "high" (36%) and "fairly high" (32%), although 15% of respondents rate it as "low."

To better illustrate the relative contributions of each variable to school quality, a diagrammatic model of the regression coefficients was developed (see Figure X). This visualization clearly shows the dominant influence of the school principal's role compared to teacher motivation and discipline, aiding in interpreting the statistical findings.

Furthermore, brief interviews with selected teachers revealed that the principal's leadership style significantly shapes the school climate, which aligns with the quantitative findings. Teachers emphasized that a top-down culture in school decision-making often amplifies the principal's influence over school quality outcomes.

To test the construct validity of the research variables, a dimensional test was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The dimensional test results show that the "process" dimension in the school quality variable has the largest contribution with a coefficient of 0.981, followed by the "input" dimension (0.977) and the "output" dimension (0.976). This indicates that the process dimension is the most influential factor in determining school quality. Meanwhile, for the role of the school principal variable, the "supervisor" dimension shows the highest contribution with a coefficient of 0.729, while the "entrepreneurial developer" dimension has the lowest contribution (0.688). For the teacher work motivation variable, the "social/affiliation needs" dimension has the largest contribution with a coefficient of 0.679, while the "achievement needs" dimension has the lowest contribution (0.540). In the teacher work discipline variable, the "responsibility discipline" dimension has the highest contribution with a coefficient of 0.988, while the "service discipline" dimension has the lowest contribution (0.756).

Prerequisite tests were conducted to ensure that the data met the assumptions required for regression analysis. The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method showed that the data is normally distributed with a significance value of 0.200. The linearity test for the relationship between the independent and dependent variables showed that the relationships between all the variables tested met the linearity assumption. The multicollinearity test results indicated no multicollinearity problems as the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for each independent variable were less than 10, namely 1.006 for the role of the school principal, 1.043 for teacher work motivation, and 1.048 for teacher work discipline.

b. The Role of the School Principal (X1) Affects School Quality (Y)

The first hypothesis test aims to examine whether the role of the school principal affects school quality. The correlation test between the role of the school principal (X1) and school quality (Y) shows a significant and strong relationship, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.777 at a significance level of 0.000. This value indicates a positive correlation between the role of the school principal and school quality, meaning that the higher the role of the school principal, the better the school quality. The results of the determination test, measured by the coefficient of determination (R^2), show that the role of the school principal contributes 60.5% to school quality. This means that 60.5% of the variation in school quality can be explained by the role of the school principal, while the remaining 39.5% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. The influence of the role of the school principal on school quality is classified as strong, indicating a very significant relationship. The results of simple linear regression also show that the role of the school principal has a positive and significant effect on school quality. The regression coefficient for the role of the school principal is 4.486, with a t-statistic of

8.171 and a significance value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic is greater than the t-table ($8.171 > 1.661$) and the significance value is less than 0.05, this indicates that a higher role of the school principal significantly improves school quality.

This finding supports Fullan's instructional leadership model, which highlights the principal's pivotal role in fostering school improvement through effective management and supervision. The dominance of the principal's influence may also be explained by the prevalent top-down educational culture in Indonesia, where principals often have centralized authority, reinforcing their impact on school quality.

c. Teacher Work Motivation (X2) Affects School Quality (Y)

The second hypothesis tests whether teacher work motivation affects school quality. The correlation test between teacher work motivation (X2) and school quality (Y) shows a significant positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.659 at a significance level of 0.000. This coefficient value indicates a fairly strong relationship between teacher work motivation and school quality, meaning that the higher the teacher work motivation, the better the school quality. The determination test reveals that teacher work motivation contributes 43.4% to school quality. This indicates that teacher work motivation has a significant impact on the quality of education at the school, although other factors also contribute to determining school quality. The influence of the teacher work motivation variable on school quality is classified as moderate. Regression results show that teacher work motivation positively affects school quality. The regression coefficient for teacher work motivation is 4.256, with a t-statistic of 7.007 and a significance value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic is greater than the t-table ($7.007 > 1.661$) and the significance value is less than 0.05, this shows that the higher the teacher work motivation, the higher the school quality.

However, the comparatively weaker contribution of teacher work discipline relative to the principal's leadership and teacher motivation warrants further exploration. One possible explanation is that while discipline ensures compliance, it may not sufficiently inspire innovation or commitment, which are more critical for improving school quality. Moreover, contextual factors such as organizational culture and resource

Despite the robust findings, this study acknowledges limitations such as the relatively small sample size and the focus on quantitative data. Future research should incorporate more extensive qualitative approaches to explore underlying social-organizational mechanisms affecting these relationships. Additionally, longitudinal studies could better capture the dynamic nature of how leadership, motivation, and discipline impact school quality over time. availability could moderate the impact of discipline on school outcomes.

d. Teacher Work Discipline (X3) Affects School Quality (Y)

The third hypothesis aims to test whether teacher work discipline affects school quality. The correlation test between teacher work discipline (X3) and school quality (Y) shows a significant positive relationship, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.617 at a significance level of 0.004. This indicates that teacher work discipline positively affects school quality, with the correlation coefficient showing a fairly strong relationship. The determination test shows that teacher work discipline contributes 38.2% to school quality, indicating a lower impact compared to the role of the school principal and teacher work motivation, but still significant. The influence of teacher work discipline on school quality is classified as weak. The regression test results show that teacher work discipline also positively and significantly affects school quality. The regression coefficient for teacher work discipline is 2.311, with a t-statistic of 2.965 and a significance value of 0.004. Since the t-statistic is greater than the t-table ($2.965 > 1.661$) and the significance value is less than 0.05, this indicates that higher teacher work discipline positively contributes to school quality.

e. The Role of the School Principal (X1), Teacher Work Motivation (X2), and Teacher Work Discipline (X3) Simultaneously Affect School Quality (Y)

The fourth hypothesis aims to examine the simultaneous effect of the role of the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality. The determination test results show that the three independent variables provide a very strong contribution to school quality, with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 93.2%. This means that 93.2% of the variation in school quality can be explained by these three variables, while the remaining 6.8% is influenced by other factors not included in this study. The simultaneous effect of the role of the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality is classified as very strong.

Table 3. Result of Determination Test for Variable X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 on Y

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.965 ^a	.932	.930	6.449

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Work Discipline (X3), Role of the School Principal (X1), Teacher Work Motivation (X2)

The results of multiple regression analysis show that all independent variables the role of the school principal (X1), teacher work motivation (X2), and teacher work discipline (X3) have a positive effect on school quality, with regression coefficients of 4.629 for the role of the school principal, 4.840 for teacher work motivation, and 3.782 for teacher work discipline. The positive regression coefficients indicate that improvements in each independent variable will lead to improvements in school quality, suggesting that these three variables have a very significant influence on school quality.

To clearly illustrate the contribution of each independent variable to school quality, Figure 1 displays a model diagram showing the standardized regression coefficients obtained from the multiple regression analysis. The diagram visually represents the dominant influence of the role of the school principal (X1), followed by teacher work motivation (X2), and teacher work discipline. This visualization helps readers easily understand the relative impact of each factor on school quality (Y).

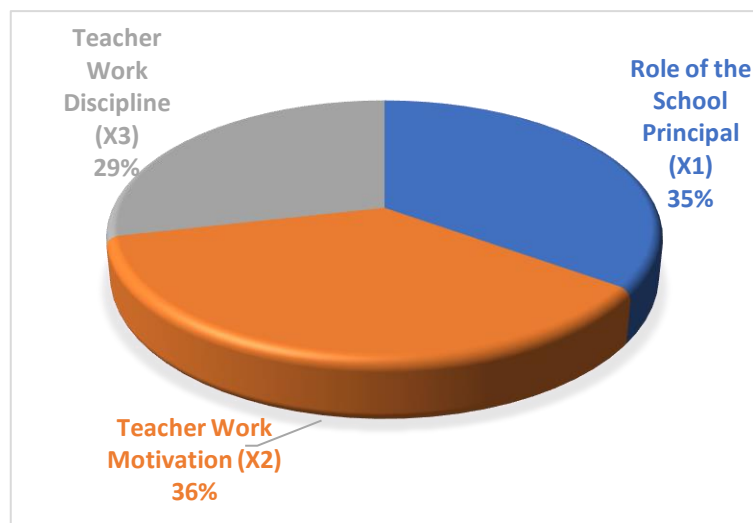


Figure 1. Contribution of Variables to School Quality.

Discussion

a. The Role of the School Principal (X1) Affects School Quality (Y)

The results of this study show that the role of the school principal has a significant impact on school quality. An effective principal who manages and directs the learning process can improve the

quality of education at the school. The principal's role in management, supervision, and school development has a significant contribution to improving school quality, as found in several previous studies. Asih et al. (2025) emphasized that the principal has a key role in improving the quality of education. The better the principal is in carrying out his duties, the higher the quality of education achieved. Suminten et al. (2023) also stated that a principal who is competent in carrying out his duties can improve the quality of learning and the quality of the school. Setiawati (2023) emphasized that the role of the principal has a positive and significant effect on the quality of the school.

From the qualitative data obtained through interviews, it is seen that principals who actively assist teachers in planning and reflecting on learning are able to create a positive work climate. Teachers feel appreciated, motivated, and more enthusiastic in carrying out their duties. This strengthens the quantitative findings that principal leadership directly affects school quality.

b. Teacher Work Motivation (X2) Affects School Quality (Y)

Teacher work motivation has been proven to positively influence school quality. This study found that the higher the teacher work motivation, the better the quality of education provided at the school. This is supported by Anwar et al. (2023) who stated that work motivation is one of the important instruments in improving school quality. With good work motivation, schools will be able to improve their school quality. Kristian et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of teacher work motivation in improving the quality of teaching, because motivated teachers will be more creative in delivering lessons. Mariam et al. (2023) added that the good or bad quality of a school is influenced by the work motivation of teachers. The better the teacher's work motivation, the better the quality of the school, and vice versa. The research results of Edy et al. (2021) show that teacher work motivation influences school quality.

Based on interviews with several teachers, it is known that teachers who are given space to innovate and receive recognition for their performance show high work enthusiasm. This shows that good work environment support also increases teacher motivation, which ultimately has an impact on school quality. According to Fitrah (2022), whether a school is of good quality or not depends greatly on the leadership style of the principal.

c. Teacher Work Discipline (X3) Affects School Quality (Y)

Teacher work discipline affects school quality. This study revealed that teacher discipline in terms of time, responsibility, and behavior is very important to maintain consistency and effectiveness in classroom learning. Jumali et al. (2023) stated that teacher work discipline affects school quality. With discipline, all provisions and actions, especially regarding the teaching and learning process in schools, can run well and smoothly. Sitorus et al. (2023) also stated that there is a positive relationship between the work discipline of principal teachers and the quality of education. Sari et al. (2025) also stated that teachers with strong work discipline show better classroom management, higher student engagement, and increased academic achievement. All of this encourages improved school quality.

Qualitative data supports these findings, showing that teachers who carry out their duties with discipline not only set an example, but also create a stable and quality learning system. This has a direct impact on student learning outcomes and community perceptions of school quality. Dewi (2020), one thing that is also important for a teacher to have is discipline towards their school organization/institution, in an organization high discipline is needed, because the realization of high teacher work discipline will be able to influence working conditions and professional work results. The professionalism of a teacher illustrates the quality of good education, because teachers are the main factor that provides the best service and education to students.

d. The Role of the School Principal (X1), Teacher Work Motivation (X2), and Teacher Work Discipline (X3) Simultaneously Affect School Quality (Y)

The results of the study indicate that the role of the principal, work motivation, and teacher work discipline simultaneously have a significant influence on school quality. The principal plays a strategic role as a director and manager, teacher work motivation triggers enthusiasm and creativity, while work discipline ensures consistency in carrying out tasks. The synergy of the three encourages continuous improvement in school quality. The implication is that it is necessary to strengthen the leadership capacity of the principal, a teacher development program based on motivation and discipline, and a holistic managerial system. Improving school quality must involve a comprehensive cross-sectoral approach. This study strengthens the relevance of the theory of educational leadership and work motivation, and provides empirical contributions to the development of school quality improvement policies in junior high schools/Islamic junior high schools in Tirto District. In conclusion, these three variables are the main pillars that must be managed in an integrative manner to realize optimal education quality.

4. CONCLUSION

The role of the school principal has a positive and significant impact on school quality. The principal's role in leading, managing, and providing clear direction in educational management plays a major part in improving the quality of education at the school. The results of this study show that the principal's role contributes 60.5% to school quality, indicating that the success of school management is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of the principal's leadership. Teacher work motivation has also been shown to have a significant effect on school quality. Teachers with high work motivation tend to be more committed to performing their duties and contribute to improving the quality of teaching. The results of the study show that teacher work motivation contributes 43.4% to school quality, indicating that high motivation can enhance teaching quality and student learning outcomes, which positively affects the overall quality of the school. Teacher work discipline has a significant impact on school quality. Discipline in terms of time, responsibility, and behavior contributes to creating an effective and orderly learning environment. This study shows that teacher work discipline contributes 38.2% to school quality, emphasizing the importance of discipline in improving the quality of teaching and the results achieved by students.

The simultaneous effect of the role of the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline on school quality is very strong, with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 93.2%. This indicates that these three variables together play a significant role in improving the quality of education at the school. The positive contributions of these three factors highlight the importance of the synergy between the school principal, teacher work motivation, and teacher work discipline in creating an environment that supports the achievement of better educational quality.

This study has limitations, including the use of cross-sectional data that only describes the relationship at one point in time so that it cannot see long-term changes, and a limited sample so that the results cannot be generalized to other schools with different characteristics. In addition, other external variables that influence school quality have not been discussed. Therefore, further research is recommended using a longitudinal design with a wider sample and considering additional variables and qualitative approaches to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence school quality.

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