



THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND WORK DISCIPLINE ON COMPETENCY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PAGELARAN DISTRICT, PANDEGLANG REGENCY

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Abstract

Teachers are very important for the welfare of the nation because they have a clear goal for the progress and intelligence of the nation's people, thus forming the personality of the people into individuals who are advanced and responsible for the development of the nation's educators. This study explores the influence of leadership and work discipline on competence and the mediating role of teacher performance among SDN teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency. The purpose of this study was to identify the direct and indirect effects of these variables with a quantitative approach, involving 171 teacher respondents.

The results of the first hypothesis test showed no influence of leadership on teacher performance at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result does not support the proposed hypothesis (rejected). The results of the second hypothesis test showed a significant positive influence of work discipline on teacher performance at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result supports the proposed hypothesis (accepted). The results of the third hypothesis test showed no influence of competence on teacher performance at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result does not support the proposed hypothesis (rejected). The results of the fourth hypothesis test showed a positive and significant influence of leadership on competence at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result supports the proposed hypothesis (accepted). The results of the fifth hypothesis test showed a significant positive influence of work discipline on competence at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result supports the proposed hypothesis (accepted). The results of the sixth hypothesis test showed that competence could not mediate the influence of leadership on teacher performance at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result does not support the proposed hypothesis (rejected). The results of the seventh hypothesis test showed that competence could mediate the influence of work discipline on teacher performance at SDN Teachers in Pagelaran District. This result supports the proposed hypothesis (accepted). This study provides important insights for improving the performance of teachers at SDN Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency by emphasizing the importance of humanistic leadership, improving teacher performance and creating a better work environment. This strategy can create more productive teacher performance.

Keywords: Leadership, Work Discipline, Competence, Teacher Performance

INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of basic education in Indonesia is highly dependent on the quality and performance of teachers. Teachers are required to possess pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies, as well as discipline in carrying out their duties. In Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency, principals are still predominantly administrative, teacher discipline is inconsistent, and teacher competency is suboptimal, particularly in the integration of technology and creative learning methods. This situation directly impacts teacher performance and the quality of the teaching and learning process. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the role of principal leadership and teacher discipline to improve teacher competency and performance comprehensively.

Teacher performance is influenced by knowledge, attitudes, skills, and motivation, which drive the achievement of educational goals. According to Samhana et al. (2022), performance can be assessed through quantity, quality, loyalty, ability, and work results. Sari (2021) emphasizes that performance is the result of work, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to complete tasks. Teacher

competencies, which include knowledge, skills, and attitudes, form the basis for individual performance assessments. Each teacher has a different level of competency, so their abilities determine the effectiveness of task implementation. Dewi (2017) adds that leaders must organize work, create a conducive atmosphere, and monitor the performance of subordinates to achieve optimal results.

A leader is an individual who interacts with various other personalities within a group (Tedjo et al., 2021). Leaders must understand the differences in motivation between themselves and their group members, both in building togetherness and carrying out their respective duties and responsibilities. In educational institutions, leaders exert significant influence over their subordinates, as evidenced by their attitudes and behaviors at work. Leadership plays a central role in organizations because through leadership control, members' differing desires, needs, and feelings can be directed toward achieving common goals, thus leveraging individual differences for the collective good. Furthermore, the competence of leaders and teachers is influenced by work discipline, namely adherence to rules and a willingness to accept consequences for violations (Fahmi, 2016). Work discipline reflects responsibility for tasks and is used by managers to shape employee behavior (Pranitasari & Khotimah, 2021). Developing discipline, both internally and externally, is essential for improving organizational effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity.

Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, comprises 13 villages, including Tegalpapak, Margagiri, Bama, and Pagelaran. In education, teachers play a strategic role as the spearhead of education, guiding students toward maturity, independence, and growth. Teachers are responsible for organizing the teaching and learning process, facilitating quality learning, and preparing competent human resources. Schools and education providers play a crucial role in developing teachers' professional skills, improving their performance, and directly contributing to improving the quality of education in the region.

This research was conducted at 16 public elementary schools in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency, with a total of 197 active teachers (Dapodikdasmen, 2025). Based on the data, SDN Margasana 1 has the highest number of active teachers, namely 16, while SDN Bama 2 has the lowest number with 8 teachers. Many schools still employ honorary teachers to assist with tasks that have not been completed on time. The role of leadership is crucial in determining employee competence and performance, because supervision and motivation from leaders influence work discipline. If leaders do not supervise and motivate enough, employees tend to work inconsistently, attend at will, and performance declines. Low levels of discipline impact the delay in task completion and disrupt the achievement of organizational goals.

Problems often arise when subordinates are unable to complete tasks on time, requiring leadership to intervene. Leaders are required to be firm in encouraging subordinates to improve their competence and performance. Work discipline is a crucial factor in regulating the behavior of

organizational members, including punctuality, task completion, and adherence to rules. Effective leadership influences employee motivation, optimism, and commitment to organizational goals (Wirawan, 2022; Yukl, 2022; Katz & Khan in Mowday et al., 2023). Without leadership supervision and motivation, morale declines, errors increase, and the quality of teacher performance declines, thus disrupting the achievement of organizational goals.

Based on previous research, the influence of leadership and work discipline on competency and its implications for teacher performance still shows inconsistencies. Several studies, such as Marpaung (2022) and Sengkeh et al. (2022), found a positive and significant influence of leadership on competency, while Udayana (2023) stated no significant influence. This research was conducted in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency, specifically on elementary school teachers, to fill this gap. Factors such as ability, interest, acceptance of tasks, and employee motivation influence work performance, which is reflected in the quality and quantity of work results according to assigned responsibilities.

Previous research on the influence of work discipline on competence has shown inconsistencies. Wariati et al. (2022) and Ayer et al. (2023) found work discipline to have a positive and significant effect on competence, while Nawa and Kempa (2022) stated no significant effect. Work discipline reflects responsibility for tasks, encourages work enthusiasm, and supports the achievement of organizational goals. Employees with high levels of discipline tend to produce good performance, while low levels of discipline hinder organizational achievement. Competence is a stable individual characteristic that influences behavior, thinking, and acting in various situations (Sudibya & Utama, 2020).

Based on the above description, this study presents novelty by emphasizing the simultaneous relationship between leadership and work discipline on teacher competency and its implications for performance at SDN Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency. Previous research still shows inconsistent results regarding the influence of leadership and work discipline on competency. By examining both variables simultaneously and the local context in Pagelaran District, this study is expected to provide new empirical contributions, while also generating strategic recommendations for improving teacher quality, optimizing performance, and strengthening basic education in the area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance reflects a teacher's ability to carry out tasks at school and the behavior demonstrated during the learning process (Yamin & Maisah, 2019). Sudaryo et al. (2018) state that performance is the result of a person's work in carrying out tasks and their contribution to the organization. Ivancevich et al. (2019) emphasize employee performance as the foundation of organizational effectiveness, while Pradhan & Jena (2022) state that performance includes technical

knowledge, adaptation skills, and interpersonal relationships. According to Hasibuan (2019) and Nursam (2022), performance is the achievement of work results according to responsibilities. Robbins in Sulaksono (2022) mentions six performance indicators: quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, independence, and work commitment.

Leadership

According to Stuart & Morgan (2022), a leader is an individual capable of influencing, providing guidance, and setting the direction for members to achieve organizational goals. Spillane (2021) added that a leader is an agent of change who influences others to move towards improvement. Leadership plays a crucial role in employee performance success, particularly through the application of transformational leadership and work motivation (Taylor et al., 2019). Fahmi (2021) states that leadership includes direction, supervision, and influence over subordinates. Rivai (2021) describes five indicators of effective leadership: the ability to collaborate, good relationships, effectiveness, timely task completion, and participatory leadership through deliberative decision-making. Effective leadership encourages subordinates' awareness of the need to achieve organizational goals.

Work Discipline

Work discipline is a crucial factor in organizational growth and success because it encourages employees to comply with regulations, procedures, and policies, thereby improving performance (Sutrisno, 2021; Agustini & Dewi, 2022). Ajabar (2020) states that managers use discipline to change behavior and increase awareness of norms. Sari (2020) emphasizes that discipline reflects respect for the organization and a willingness to accept sanctions. Sinungan (2009, cited in Syafrina, 2017) adds that discipline is self-control in accordance with norms and morals. Afandi (2022) states that the dimensions of discipline include adherence to timekeeping and work responsibilities, including arriving on time, using time effectively, complying with regulations, and completing work targets.

Competence

Competence is an individual characteristic related to effectiveness and performance excellence in specific work situations (Rahmat, 2021; Rachmaniza, 2020). Sinaga (2020) states that competence encompasses abilities arising from creativity and innovation, while Wibowo (2021) emphasizes skills, experience, and work attitudes. Triastuti (2019) states that competence can predict behavior and performance, while Agustian et al. (2021) emphasize that competence improves professional standards. Sugiyanto and Santoso (2021) divide competence into six aspects: knowledge, understanding, skills, values, attitudes, and interests. Thus, competence serves as a guideline for employees in carrying out tasks according to SOPs and effectively improving performance.

Thinking Framework

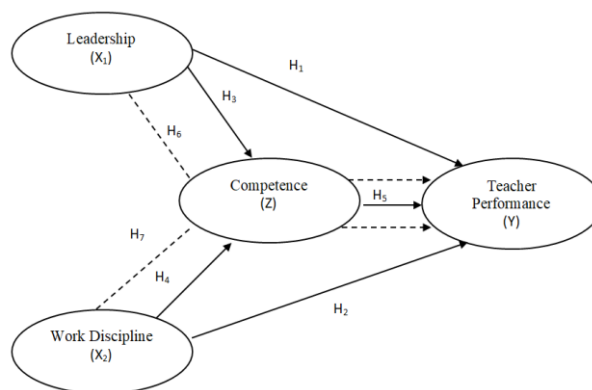


Figure 1 Thinking Framework

Research Hypothesis

According to Sugiyono (2016), a hypothesis is a temporary answer to a research problem, where the research problem is stated in the form of a question. Based on the explanation above, the hypothesis proposed by the author is as follows:

- H₁: It is suspected that there is an influence of leadership on the performance of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₂: It is suspected that there is an influence of work discipline on the performance of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₃: It is suspected that there is an influence of leadership on the competence of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₄: It is suspected that there is an influence of work discipline on the competence of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₅: It is suspected that there is an influence of competence on the work discipline of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₆: It is suspected that the influence of leadership mediates competence on the performance of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.
- H₇: It is suspected that the influence of work discipline mediates employee competence on the performance of Elementary School Teachers in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.

METHOD

Research methodology

This study employed a quantitative research method. According to Sugiyono (2016), quantitative research is a method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to examine specific populations or samples, generally using random sampling techniques. Data is collected using research instruments, then analyzed quantitatively or statistically to test established hypotheses. This study

employed a descriptive associative hypothesis, where the descriptive hypothesis addresses questions related to the independent variable, while the associative hypothesis evaluates the relationship between two or more variables.

Place and Time of Research

This research is planned to run from the research proposal development stage to the reporting of research results. The deadline is set for April 2025. This research timing is determined to ensure that the data collection, analysis, and report writing processes can proceed systematically according to the established schedule. With sufficient time, researchers can ensure that all research procedures are carried out completely and validly, ensuring that the results obtained can be scientifically accounted for.

The research was conducted at a public elementary school (SDN) in Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency. The location was chosen based on the high concentration of active teachers in the area and the research's relevance to efforts to improve teacher performance. The SDN in Pagelaran District represents the state of primary education in the regency, allowing the research to comprehensively describe the existing phenomenon.

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of 197 active teachers at SDN Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency. According to Sugiyono (2016), a population is a generalized area that has certain characteristics and an equal opportunity to be selected as a sample. In this study, the population serves as the primary data source for analyzing the relationship between leadership, work discipline, competence, and teacher performance. The research sample is a representative portion of the population to facilitate data collection. This study used a simple random sampling method, in which sample members were randomly selected without considering certain strata (Sugiyono, 2016). The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula proposed by Umar (2013) as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

The population used by the researcher was 197 people.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2} = \frac{197}{1 + 197 (0,05)^2} = \frac{197}{1 + 197 (0,0025)} = \frac{197}{1,4925} = 132$$

The results of this calculation show that the number of samples used in the study was 132 respondents.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques in this study were conducted through library research and field research. Library research was conducted by reading and studying literature, reports, scientific papers, lecture notes, and library documents related to the research. Field research was conducted through direct observation of the research objects and distributing questionnaires to respondents to obtain primary data related to the research variables.

Data analysis

1. Descriptive Statistics Methods

Descriptive statistical methods were used to describe the characteristics of the research variables. Data obtained from questionnaires and observations were tabulated and then analyzed narratively. Descriptive analysis presented data in numerical or percentage form to provide an overview of teacher behavior and performance.

2. Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM allows research to determine predictive effects between variables, works on non-normally distributed data, and is suitable for models with a theoretical foundation that is still developing (Ghazali & Latan, 2014). The variables in the study consist of latent variables and manifest variables. Exogenous latent variables include teacher competency, certification, and leader-member exchange, while the endogenous latent variable is teacher performance. Manifest variables are indicators that measure latent variables reflectively. The PLS stages include conceptualizing the structural model (inner model) and measurement model (outer model), creating path diagrams, estimating the model using bootstrapping, and evaluating the model to ensure fit between variables.

3. Statistical Analysis and Test Tools

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software version 3.2.7. PLS was used because it is able to model multiple variables, overcome multicollinearity, is valid for missing or anomalous data, produces latent variables directly, and is suitable for small samples and non-normal data (Jogiyanto & Abdillah, 2015). This technique allows simultaneous testing of indicator measurements and structural models to obtain valid research results and can be used as a basis for decision-making related to improving the performance of elementary school teachers in Pagelaran District.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research result

Description of Research Variables

The description of the research variables was compiled based on the average of respondents' answers to the questions in the research instrument. The average value of each indicator was

calculated to reflect the condition of the research variable, which was then analyzed using descriptive statistics so that it could be interpreted through the index value. Based on the analysis results, the variables of leadership, work discipline, competence, and teacher performance showed different score variations, but all were in the good category. In the leadership variable, the indicator "providing guidance and training in decision-making" obtained the highest index of 139.4, while the lowest indicator was "completing tasks according to targets" with an index of 136.6. The highest work discipline variable was obtained in the indicator "making daily work reports" with an index of 139.6 and the lowest was "use of time effectively" at 132.8. The highest teacher competence was in the indicator of honesty with an index of 140.6, while understanding of the job was the lowest indicator at 135.0. For teacher performance, the indicator "amount produced" obtained the highest index of 143.2 and the indicator "work commitment to the agency" the lowest at 139.8.

Table 1 Research Variable Index Values

Variables	Highest Indicator	Index Value	Lowest Indicator	Index Value
Leadership (X1)	Providing guidance & training	139,4	Complete tasks according to target	136,6
Work Discipline (X2)	Make daily work reports	139,6	Effective use of time	132,8
Competence (Z)	Honesty	140,6	Understanding of the job	135,0
Teacher Performance (Y)	Amount produced	143,2	Work commitment with the agency	139,8

Source: Processed Data, 2025

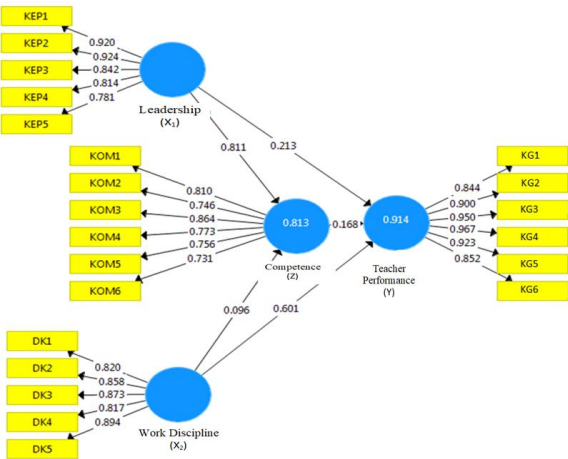
From the table, it can be seen that all research variables have good scores, reflecting respondents' perceptions of leadership conditions, work discipline, competence, and teacher performance at SDN Pagelaran District, Pandeglang Regency.

Evaluation of Measurement Model (*Outer Model*)

The outer model test is used to assess the weight of each indicator in measuring the construct. Indicators with high factor loadings indicate dominant measurement of the variable. This test measures validity using convergent and discriminant validity, and reliability using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. The model evaluation results are presented below.

1. Testing the Validity of Research Results

The results of testing or analysis of the empirical model of this research will be presented in the following figure:



Picture 2 Outer Model

Outer model testing was conducted to ensure that each indicator used in the study accurately measured the latent variables. One of the initial tests was a convergent validity test using the PLS algorithm, which assesses the strength of indicators through factor loading values. In this study, indicators for the variables of leadership, work discipline, competence, and teacher performance showed factor loading values above 0.7, thus being considered valid. The results of data processing using SmartPLS version 3.0 are shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 2 Results of Outer Loading of Research Model Indicators on Variables

Indicator	Competence (Z)	Teacher Performance (Y)	Leadership (X ₁)	Work Discipline (X ₂)
KEP1			0.920	
KEP2			0.924	
KEP3			0.982	
KEP4			0.814	
KEP5			0.781	
DK1				0.820
DK2				0.858
DK3				0.873
DK4				0.817
DK5				0.894
KG1		0.844		
KG2		0.900		
KG3		0.950		
KG4		0.967		
KG5		0.923		
KG6		0.852		
KOM1	0.810			
KOM2	0.746			
KOM3	0.864			
COM4	0.773			
COM5	0.756			
KOM6	0.731			

Source: Processed Data, 2025

Based on the table, all indicators show factor loadings above 0.7, indicating good convergent validity. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all constructs exceeds 0.5, thus fulfilling discriminant validity. Reliability testing using composite reliability showed values above 0.7 for all variables, supporting indicator consistency. Thus, all constructs in this study meet the criteria for good validity and reliability, allowing the data to be used for further analysis. These results are further supported by Cronbach's alpha, which is consistently above 0.7.

2. Inner Model Analysis Results

Inner model testing (structural model) was conducted to examine the relationship between constructs and the extent of the independent variable's contribution to the dependent variable using the R-square value (Ghozali, 2011). The hypothesis testing limit was determined by the T-table of ± 1.98 ; if the T-statistic value is greater than 1.98, the hypothesis is accepted; conversely, if it is less than 1.98, the hypothesis is rejected. Based on the analysis results, the following structural equation for the competency variable was obtained:

$$\text{Competence} = 0.811 \times \text{Leadership} + 0.601 \times \text{Work Discipline} + e.$$

Meanwhile, for the teacher performance variable, the following equation is obtained:

$$\text{Teacher Performance} = 0.213 \times \text{Leadership} + 0.496 \times \text{Work Discipline} + 0.468 \times \text{Competence} + e.$$

Table 3 Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values
Work discipline (X2) -> Competence (Z)	0.601	0.590	0.148	4.069	0.001
Work discipline (X2) -> Teacher performance (Y)	0.496	0.488	0.205	3.470	0.000
Leadership (X1) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.213	0.237	0.191	1.119	0.264
Leadership (X1) -> Competence (Z)	0.811	0.820	0.190	4.274	0.000
Competence (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.468	0.453	0.196	1.757	0.080

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing Results (2025)

The test results show that work discipline and leadership have a significant influence on competence, while work discipline and competence also contribute to teacher performance. The R-square value for teacher performance of 0.914 and competence of 0.813 indicates the model's ability to explain the variance of the dependent variable is relatively high, so the structural model is quite strong. The Stone-Geisser Q^2 value of 0.681 for teacher performance and 0.441 for competence confirms that the model has predictive relevance, which means the predictor variables are able to provide good predictions of the endogenous variables.

Furthermore, the GoF index of 0.791 indicates that the designed structural model has high validity. Thus, the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables in this study is strong, statistically valid, and predictively relevant, supporting the conclusion that leadership, work discipline, and competence collectively play a significant role in improving teacher performance.

Tabel 4 AVE & R Square

	AVE	R Square
Leadership (X ₁)	0,736	
Work discipline (X ₂)	0,727	
Competence (Z)	0,610	0,813
Teacher Performance (Y)	0,823	0,914
Average	0.724	0.864

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing Results (2025)

Results of Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Based on the test results with *software smart PLS 2.0*, the t-statistic value can be seen on the direct influence of each variable. In the hypothesis testing, it consists of the influence of the Leadership variable (X₁) on Competence (Z), Work Discipline (X₂) on Competence (Z), Leadership (X₁) on Teacher Performance (Y), Work Discipline (X₂) on Teacher Performance (Y), and Competence (Z) on Teacher Performance (Y). The results of the explanation of the direct influence can be seen from the path coefficient value, t-statistic, and *p-value*, which can be seen in the following table.

Table 5 Results of Direct Effect Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work discipline (X ₂) -> Competence (Z)	0.601	0.590	0.148	4.069	0.001
Work discipline (X ₂) -> Teacher performance (Y)	0.496	0.488	0.205	3.470	0.000
Leadership (X ₁) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.213	0.237	0.191	1.119	0.264
Leadership (X ₁) -> Competence (Z)	0.811	0.820	0.190	4.274	0.000
Competence (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.468	0.453	0.196	1.757	0.080

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Hypothesis 1 (H₁) examines the influence of leadership on teacher performance. The results show a path coefficient of 0.213 with a t-statistic of 1.119 and a p-value of 0.264, smaller than the t-table of 1.98, so that leadership does not have a significant effect on teacher performance. Hypothesis 1 is rejected. Hypothesis 2 (H₂) examines the influence of work discipline on teacher performance, with a coefficient of 0.496, a t-statistic of 3.470 > 1.98,

and a p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$, so that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Hypothesis 2 is accepted. Hypothesis 3 (H3) assesses the influence of competence on teacher performance, obtaining a coefficient of 0.468, a t-statistic of $1.757 < 1.98$, and a p-value of $0.08 > 0.05$, so that competence does not have a significant effect. Hypothesis 3 is rejected. Hypothesis 4 (H4) and Hypothesis 5 (H5) show that leadership (coefficient 0.811; $t=4.274$) and work discipline (coefficient 0.601; $t=4.069$) have a positive and significant effect on competence, so both hypotheses are accepted.

Hypothesis Testing Through Mediating Variables (Indirect)

Path analysis is used to test the influence of intervening variables, extending multiple linear regression. Exogenous variables influence endogenous variables directly and indirectly, while endogenous variables can influence other endogenous variables. The total influence is calculated by subtracting the direct influence from the indirect influence through the intervening variable (Ghozali, 2011).

Table 6 Results of Testing Mediating Variables (Indirect)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Work discipline (X2) -> Competence (Z)	0.601	0.590	0.148	4.069	0.001
Work discipline (X2) -> Teacher performance (Y)	0.496	0.488	0.205	3.470	0.000
Leadership (X1) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.213	0.237	0.191	1.119	0.264
Leadership (X1) -> Competence (Z)	0.811	0.820	0.190	4.274	0.000
Competence (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.468	0.453	0.196	1.757	0.080

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

Path analysis was used to measure the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on teacher performance. The results showed that leadership had a direct effect of 0.213 on teacher performance, while the indirect effect through competence was 0.380, resulting in a total effect of 0.593. This indicates a greater indirect effect, but the Sobel test showed a t-test of $1.013 < t\text{-table of } 1.96$, so competence does not mediate the effect of leadership on teacher performance.

Meanwhile, work discipline has a direct effect of 0.496 and an indirect effect through competence of 0.281, totaling 0.777. The Sobel test yielded a t-test of $2.182 > t\text{-table of } 1.96$, indicating that competence can mediate the effect of work discipline on teacher performance. Thus, competence acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between work discipline and teacher performance, but does not mediate the effect of leadership. These results confirm the importance of

work discipline in improving teacher performance through increased competence, while leadership requires other factors to significantly influence performance.

Discussion

The better the leadership, the higher the teacher performance.

The results of the leadership test on teacher performance at SDN Pagelaran District showed a t-value of $1.119 < 1.98$ and a significance level of $0.01 < 0.05$, thus rejecting the first hypothesis (H1). This means that leadership does not significantly influence teacher performance. This finding differs from Rizky Putra's (2021) research, which showed that leadership influences employee performance. The lack of influence may be due to limitations in respondent characteristics, sample size, or variable measurement methods, as well as other factors that may have a greater impact on teacher performance.

Leadership remains a crucial issue in management because it influences the achievement of an organization's mission and goals. The role of strategic leaders is crucial to organizational success (Menon, 2022; Su'ud, 2021). Leaders who are able to formulate strategies and motivate employees will improve performance. However, if the organizational system is not supportive, the influence of leadership is limited. These results align with Ginting et al. (2021) and Nugroho (2018), who stated that leadership does not always have a significant impact on employee performance.

The higher the work discipline, the higher the teacher's performance.

The test of work discipline on teacher performance at SDN Pagelaran District shows a t-count of $3.470 > t\text{-table of } 1.98$ and a significance of $0.00 < 0.05$, so the second hypothesis (H2) is accepted. This means that work discipline has a significant positive effect on teacher performance. Discipline reflects compliance with rules and responsibilities, and is the basis for achieving organizational goals. Disciplined teachers demonstrate punctual attendance, responsible implementation of tasks, and quality work results, thus improving performance.

Work discipline is also an organizational communication tool for shaping employee behavior according to regulations (Hasibuan, 2018). Its main goals are to increase efficiency, prevent wasted time, and create employees who comply with procedures (Sinambela, 2021). This research is consistent with Nazir (2019), Arif et al. (2019), Sherlie and Hikmah (2020), and Handayani and Soliha (2020), which show that work discipline significantly influences teacher performance.

The higher the competence, the higher the teacher performance.

The results of the competency test on teacher performance at SDN Pagelaran District showed a t-count of $1.757 < t\text{-table of } 1.98$ with a significance of $0.08 > 0.05$, so the third hypothesis (H3) was rejected. This means that competency does not have a significant effect on teacher performance.

Although competency is very important in determining an employee's ability to carry out their duties, the results of this study indicate that other factors more dominantly influence teacher performance, such as attitude, motivation, and work environment.

Employee competency encompasses knowledge, skills, and the ability to effectively implement tasks (Spencer, 2018; Sriwidodo, 2021). Organizations need to adjust employee placement based on competency to optimize performance. Although high competency is expected to improve performance, this study shows an insignificant relationship. These results differ from Krisnawati & Bagia (2021), Heri & Andayani (2020), Rahayuningsih (2017), and Fauzi (2019), which emphasize the importance of competency in influencing teacher performance.

The higher the leadership, the higher the level of competence.

The leadership test on competency at Pagelaran District Elementary School showed a t-value of $4.274 > t\text{-table of } 1.98$ and a significance level of $0.02 < 0.05$, thus the hypothesis was accepted. This means that leadership has a significant positive effect on teacher competency. Leadership competency helps organizations identify and develop superior leaders and maximize employee performance.

A competency-based approach allows organizations to determine the skills required at each leadership level. The right leadership style can motivate subordinates, increase work morale, and shape professional behavior (Anita, 2016). This research aligns with Sengkeh et al. (2020), Joni & Udayana (2021), and Faronsyah & Trisninawati (2020), which show that leadership significantly influences employee competency.

The higher the work discipline, the higher the competence.

The results of the work discipline test on teacher competency at SDN Pagelaran District showed a t-count of $4.069 > t\text{-table of } 1.98$ with a significance of $0.00 < 0.05$, so the fifth hypothesis (H5) was accepted. This means that work discipline has a significant positive effect on teacher competency. Disciplined teachers are able to use their skills and knowledge optimally, thereby improving the quality of individual contributions and the achievement of the organization's vision, mission, and goals.

Work discipline encourages employees to carry out their duties in an orderly, timely, and responsible manner (Wibowo, 2021; Hasibuan, 2019). Without discipline, competencies are difficult to implement effectively, and performance is suboptimal. This research aligns with Wariati et al. (2021) and Ayer et al. (2019) who stated that work discipline significantly influences employee competency development, making it a crucial factor in developing teacher competency in schools.

Competence Mediates the Influence of Leadership on Teacher Performance

The mediation test of competency on the influence of leadership on teacher performance showed a t-test of $1.013 < t\text{-table of } 1.96$, thus rejecting the alternative hypothesis. This means that competency is unable to mediate the influence of leadership on teacher performance. Although leadership plays an important role, teacher performance is not significantly influenced by increased competency. Other factors such as attitude, motivation, and work environment are likely more dominant.

Work competencies encompass employees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in completing tasks (Gate & Fatanah, 2020; Alvian, 2020). Leaders are responsible for motivating subordinates to perform their tasks optimally, but this study shows that the influence of leadership on performance does not occur through competency mediation. Therefore, improving teacher performance depends not solely on good leadership but also on external factors and the employee's own characteristics.

Competence Mediates the Influence of Work Discipline on Teacher Performance

The results of the competency mediation test on the influence of work discipline on teacher performance showed a t-value of $2.526 > t\text{-table of } 1.98$, thus accepting the alternative hypothesis. This means that competency can mediate the influence of work discipline on teacher performance. Disciplined teachers not only carry out their duties obediently but also improve their abilities and skills that contribute to more optimal performance.

Discipline reflects awareness and willingness to comply with organizational regulations and responsibility for work (Dihan & Hidayat, 2020; Nargis & Basri, 2020). With competence as a mediator, work discipline becomes more effective in improving teacher performance. This research is consistent with Hidayat (2018), who asserted that discipline coupled with competence will result in superior performance and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on elementary school teachers in Pagelaran District, it was found that leadership does not directly influence teacher performance. Although leadership is considered a strategic factor in organizations, the leadership style applied in this context has not been able to significantly improve teacher performance. In contrast, work discipline has been shown to have a positive and significant influence on performance. Teachers who are disciplined in terms of attendance, carrying out tasks according to schedule, and complying with regulations are able to achieve higher performance, indicating that discipline is a crucial factor in achieving organizational goals.

Teacher competence does not directly impact performance, but leadership and work discipline have been shown to positively influence it. This suggests that teacher competency development is more influenced by effective leadership guidance and consistent implementation of work discipline.

In other words, leadership and work discipline play a role in shaping competence, which can then indirectly influence the quality of teacher performance.

The results of the study indicate that competence does not mediate the influence of leadership on teacher performance, but it does mediate the influence of work discipline on teacher performance. This finding confirms that work discipline is a major factor driving increased competence, which in turn improves teacher performance. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of implementing work discipline and developing competence as key strategies for improving teacher performance, while leadership plays a more significant role in shaping competence than directly influencing performance.

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