

The Influence of Leadership Quality on Teachers' Performance through Soft Skills and Teaching Creativity

by PDTI Master Turnitin

Submission date: 28-Jun-2024 01:32PM (UTC+0800)

Submission ID: 2409722965

File name: 2861-21679-1-PB.pdf (594.25K)

Word count: 7840

Character count: 43714

The Influence of Leadership Quality on Teachers' Performance through Soft Skills and Teaching Creativity

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

quality of leadership;
teacher performance;
soft competencies;
teaching creativity.

Article history:

Received 2022-10-16

Revised 2023-03-29

Accepted 2023-07-20

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine and analyze the effect of leadership quality on teacher performance through soft competence and teacher teaching creativity at a state, Madrasah Aliyah, in Bulukumba. This type of research uses a quantitative approach. Sampling using total sampling, with a sample of 82 teachers. The data sources used in the study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from the distribution of questionnaires, while secondary data were obtained from journals, books, and previous studies. Primary data was obtained from the distribution of questionnaires consisting of 22 questions. The measuring scale used is the Likert Scale. Data analysis and processing in this study used multiple linear regression analysis and path analysis using the SPSS ver.26 for Windows program. The results concluded that leadership quality can improve teacher performance directly and indirectly through soft competence and teaching creativity. 1) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teachers' soft competence; 2) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teachers' teaching creativity; 3) Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teachers' teaching creativity; 4) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 5) Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 6) Teaching creativity has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 7) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through soft competence; 8) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through teaching creativity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance must be prioritized in its implementation because teachers are crucial in assisting with the advancement of educational quality. Although it also impacts the high quality of education, teacher performance is a crucial component of education. Teachers accomplish their tasks as educators by carrying out their duties as teachers. The quality of teacher performance determines the quality of educational outcomes because teachers are the figures who most often interact directly with students during the learning process. Teacher performance for schools is essential because it can show schools' success in achieving goals. Given the significance of teacher performance in schools, it is necessary for teachers to fulfill their roles and obligations as educators. Additionally, teacher performance must be developed professionally through the mastery of teaching competences. The professionalization of education personnel is controversial, but it must be interpreted as a way to improve teacher performance. The expectation of all parties is for ideal performance, but the reality on the ground reveals that some teachers' performance is still subpar (Guterres & Supartha, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to improve the quality of a teacher and the school must also try to empower its teachers to perform well and be professional in carrying out their duties.

Many factors affect teacher performance because the school is a collective organization consisting of many supporting elements, so the quality of leadership can affect teacher performance in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. As is known in the capacity of the Principal is responsible for the successful performance of teachers through the smooth implementation of the teaching and learning process at school, which is also responsible for improving student achievement. The school serves as a governing body for the learning process and an example of how the Principal must mature to execute education in schools. In light of this, the Principal must perform well. Pancasila's philosophy serves as the foundation of the state. Every good citizen, especially educational leaders, should live by and follow Pancasila. They occupy a key position in both society and education. So that their attitudes and behavior reflect Pancasila's ideals, they must have leadership that is founded on Pancasila (Hasibuan, 2012). Teacher performance in planning and implementing learning is a significant factor in achieving teaching objectives.

Teachers must have solid and soft skills because soft skills are the skills of teachers in dealing with other people (interpersonal skills) and skills in managing themselves (intrapersonal skills) that can develop maximum performance. As a teacher, interpersonal skills are essential to have. These skills include, among others, the ability to warm up relationships, make a straightforward approach, build relationships constructively, use diplomacy and techniques to defuse tense situations, and use styles that can stop hostility. Soft skills have relevance to one's personal and social abilities. Soft-skills education will show the ability to communicate and socialize in their social environment. (Karwati & Prians, 2013). With soft skills, a teacher can enrich his/her competence and can communicate it with students.

There are several reasons for the role of social and personality competencies as soft skills for teachers. First, personality and social are more substantive than pedagogical and professional competencies. If teachers own both competencies, then teachers automatically have soft skills competencies, and professional and pedagogical competencies will be resolved. This is because many teachers in the field do not have a background from graduates of the Educational Personnel Education Institution (LPTK), but are quite successful because they have a high learning spirit and can establish effective communication with other education stakeholders. However, this is not a reason not to require LPTK as an institution that produces Prospective teachers, but the logic must be changed. If non-LPTK alumni can successfully master social and personality competencies, then even more so for LPTK alumni because LPTK has materials and competencies related to education.

Another equally important factor in improving teacher performance is their teaching creativity, which significantly develops creativity in students. Teachers are an essential factor in education and can influence their students by first having to show their abilities creatively before delivering or giving to their students and in general creative teachers are teachers who have been educated with creative people before. Therefore, teachers must develop better creativity towards their students as a form of renewal of the

learning process. (Maqin et al., 2021). Teachers should have the foresight and positivity to encourage change and create better learning conditions and situations expected by students because the teacher has a direct involvement role in learning activities in the classroom.

Based on preliminary observations conducted in May 2022 at MAN 2 Bulukumba, teacher performance is still not optimal. The important thing that the author observes is that the quality of school leadership is still low; where the daily principal has not been able to inspire teachers on an ongoing basis to improve school learning, such as handing over more teaching responsibilities to teachers and also making less authoritative decisions so that delegation of tasks at school tends to be stagnant, the existing collaboration system has not been able to provide creative and innovative solutions fully.

The author also conducted interviews to determine how much of a role teachers have in displaying their personalities and originality while instructing. The author conducted a random interview with 10 teachers in 2 MANs of the Bulukumba-Bantaeng Region V Branch Office, and in general, they stated that few teachers were able to develop relationships with outside parties such as parents, professional associations, and other communities, which resulted in important information related to educational development, as well as teachers with varying levels of moral maturity making teaching difficult to control. Another thing about the form of creative teaching from teachers to prepare and design materials or learning materials, classroom arrangements, utilization and use of a variety of methods used in teaching, the use of attractive media to the development of instruments in assessment or evaluation has not been fully felt following school expectations.

An organization often faces problems with the performance of its human resources. The existence of targets to achieve the level of effectiveness and efficiency desired by the leadership, the organization must have a reasonable and adequate work system and human resources that have good performance. With this problem, a leader in the organization always strives for every activity that will be carried out to achieve maximum results. A leader is needed to build an organization's functions and goals. Leaders have a significant influence on improving human resource performance. Leadership is a relationship between one individual and another, organizational leaders can influence other human resources to be willing to work wholeheartedly together to achieve the desired goals of the organization. Juniarti et al. (2020) conducted research entitled *The Effect of Principal Leadership and Teacher Discipline on Teacher Performance*. The results showed a very significant positive influence between the leadership style of the head, and school job satisfaction on teacher performance and a positive influence between organizational commitment and job satisfaction together on teacher performance. Research conducted by Guterres & Supartha (2016). The results showed that the effect of leadership style (X1) on teacher performance (Y) was 0.571. The magnitude of the effect of motivation directly on performance (Y) is 0.313. The magnitude of the influence of leadership style (X1) and motivation (X2) has a combined effect of 73.5 percent while the remaining 26.5 percent is explained by other variables not included in this study. Research conducted by Dau (2020) The results showed that **leadership has a positive and significant effect on the quality of soft skills**. Furthermore, in Wijayanti's research (2020) The results showed that **soft skills proved to have a positive and significant effect on performance**. Fadlioli, (2019) The findings revealed that, at 0.622, the principal's leadership had a favorable and significant impact on the teachers of public elementary schools in the Ketahun sub-district. The organizational climate then has a good and large impact on the creativity of the Ketahun sub-district's public elementary school teachers, which is 0.528. The creativity of public elementary school teachers in the Ketahun sub-district is positively and significantly influenced by organizational commitment, as indicated by the coefficient of 0.781. Principal leadership, organizational climate, and organizational commitment taken as a whole have a more significant impact on primary school teachers' creativity in the Ketahun sub-district. Independent variables have an impact on teachers' creativity of 0.824.

As for what is the focus of this research is how the influence of leadership quality on teacher performance, besides that the difference in this research and previous research lies in the added

intermediate variables, which include soft skills and teaching creativity. The previous discussion of soft competence and teacher teaching creativity can be another aspect that needs to be researched on the effect of leadership quality on teacher performance.

2. METHODS

A quantitative technique is used in this research strategy. Eighty-two teachers were selected from a total sample for MAN 2 Bulukumba. From June to July 2022, this study was carried out. Both primary and secondary data were employed as data sources for the study. While secondary data came from journals, books, and other studies, primary data came from distributing questionnaires. By distributing questionnaires with 22 questions, primary data were gathered. The Likert Scale is the metric employed. Each instrument item's responses range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The descriptive analysis used in this study's data processing and analysis was supported by SPSS. Validity, reliability, path analysis, coefficient of determination test, and t-test are used to test hypotheses.

Table 1. Variables / Measurement Items

Variable	Code	Item / Construct	Major Reference
Leadership Quality (X)	• KK1	• Be fair in the organization	Fajar et al., (2020) ; Ningsih et al.
	• KK2	• Giving suggestions	
	• KK3	• Supporting the achievement of goals	
	• KK4	• As a catalyst	
	• KK5	• Source of inspiration	
	• KK6	• Be respectful	
Soft Competence (Y1)	• KL1	• Communication skills	Hermansyah, (2020)
	• KL2	• Emotional skills	
	• KL3	• Language skills	
	• KL4	• Group skills	
	• KL5	• Spiritual skills	
	• KL6	• Have ethics and morals	
Teaching Creativity (Y2)	• KM1	• Design and prepare teaching materials	Istianah, (2017)
	• KM2	• Managing the class	
	• KM3	• Using varied methods	
	• KM4	• Utilizing learning media	
	• KM5	• Develop evaluation instruments	
Teacher Performance (Z)	• KG1	• Develop a learning program	Iskandar, (2013) ; Jaliah et al., (2020)
	• KG2	• Learning implementation	
	• KG3	• Evaluation implementation	
	• KG4	• Evaluation analysis	
	• KG5	• Responsibility	

The validity test demonstrates the degree of agreement between the data the researcher collected and the data that are recorded on the object (Sugiyono, 2018). This validity test is run to determine the validity of the data collected after the research. The statement has passed the validity test because the r count was higher than the r table. The r table value is 0.266 with a 5% level of significance and a Df value of 58 = 60-2. The reliability test also determines the consistency of the data produced by measurements made with the same object. If a variable's Cronbach's Alpha value is higher than 0.6, it is considered to be good (Sugiyono, 2018). The following is a table of validity and reliability test results:

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables	Instrument	r-calculated	Cronbach Alpha	Result
Leadership Quality (X)	X.1	0.734	0,744	Valid and reliable
	X.2	0.664		Valid and reliable
	X.3	0.782		Valid and reliable
	X.4	0.493		Valid and reliable
	X.5	0.475		Valid and reliable
	X.6	0.428		Valid and reliable
Soft Competence (Y1)	Y1.1	0.562	0,738	Valid and reliable
	Y1.2	0.628		Valid and reliable
	Y1.3	0.642		Valid and reliable
	Y1.4	0.694		Valid and reliable
	Y1.5	0.379		Valid and reliable
	Y1.6	0.402		Valid and reliable
Teaching Creativity (Y2)	Y2.1	0.646	0,757	Valid and reliable
	Y2.2	0.782		Valid and reliable
	Y2.3	0.561		Valid and reliable
	Y2.4	0.722		Valid and reliable
	Y2.5	0.618		Valid and reliable
Teacher Performance (Z)	Z.1	0.546	0,783	Valid and reliable
	Z.2	0.656		Valid and reliable
	Z.3	0.818		Valid and reliable
	Z.4	0.827		Valid and reliable
	Z.5	0.807		Valid and reliable

Because each question item's value on the variables of Leadership Quality (X), Soft Competence (Y1), Teaching Creativity (Y2), and Teacher Performance (Z) has an r-count value more significant than the r-table 0.30, it is known that all of the question items in this study are valid. Each variable's valid question items can all be further examined. The reliability test findings then reveal that all research variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.60, indicating that all of the variables' indicators have historically had high reliability (Sugiyono, 2018). All indicators employed in this study are trustworthy and can be used for further investigation, it may be inferred from the analysis's findings.

Since there are numerous linear regression models used in this study, tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity are among the prerequisites for analysis. The t test, F test, and coefficient of determination tests will be used to test the hypothesis and will be used to determine the effect between variables both partially and simultaneously. The multiple linear regression model is used to determine the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable. This model's coefficient of determination test will also be applied because its result demonstrates the degree to which the independent variable affects the dependent variable. In addition, Path analysis is used in this study to assess the impact of mediator variables on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Sugiyono, 2018). SPSS version 25 was the program used to conduct the statistical calculations for this investigation. The following are the study's hypotheses: 1) Leadership quality positively and significantly influences soft teacher competence; 2) Leadership quality positively and significantly influences teacher teaching creativity; 3) Soft competency positively and significantly influences teacher teaching creativity; 4) Leadership quality positively and significantly influences teacher performance; 5) Teaching creativity has a positive and significant impact on student achievement; 6) teaching soft skills has a positive and significant impact on student achievement; 7) leadership quality has a positive and large impact on student achievement through soft skills; 8) Effective leadership boosts student achievement by encouraging creativity in the classroom.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Path Analysis

3.1.1. Path Analysis 1

Table 4. Effect of X on Y1

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	9,157	1,838		6,721
	Leadership Quality_X	,363	,076	,446	4,619

a. Dependent Variable: Soft Competence_Y1

Table 4 demonstrates that the path coefficient value (1) = 0.446 with a significant level of 0.000 indicates that the result is both happy and significant (Sig 0.05). Thus, Soft Competence (Y1) is positively and significantly influenced by the Leadership Quality variable (X). The standardized coefficients beta, which are 0.437, indicate the strength of the relationship between Variable X and Y1, indicating that for every one point rise in Leadership Quality (X), Soft Competence (Y1) will increase by 0.446 points. As a result, variable X can affect the high and low of variable Y1 by 0.446 points.

3.1.2. Path Analysis 2

Table 5. Effect of X on Y2

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	6,454	1,727		4,471
	Leadership Quality_X	,289	,077	,490	5,184

a. Dependent Variable: Teaching Creativity_Y2

Using Table 5, we can infer that the path coefficient value (2) = 0.490 and the significant level (Sig 0.05) is 0.000, which suggests that the result is positive and significant. Thus, Teaching Creativity (Y1) is positively and significantly influenced by the Leadership Quality variable (X). The standardized coefficients beta, which are 0.549, indicates the size of the effect of variable X on Y2, increasing Teaching Creativity (Y2) by 0.490 points for every unit increase in Leadership Quality (X). As a result, variable X can affect the high and low of variable Y2 by 0.490 points.

3.1.3. Path Analysis 3

Table 6. Effect of Y1 on Y2

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2,147	1,720		3,121
	Soft Competence_Y1	,627	,062	,615	7,484

a. Dependent Variable: Teaching Creativity_Y2

Based on Table 6, the value of the path coefficient (3) = 0.615 with a significant level of 0.000 indicates that the result is both happy and significant (Sig 0.05). Thus, the Soft Kopmetensi variable (Y1) significantly and positively influences the Teaching Creativity Quality (Y2). The standardized coefficients beta of 0.615, which indicates that for every one point increase in Soft Competence (Y1), Teaching Creativity (Y2) will increase by 0.615 points, show the degree of the influence of variable Y1 on Y2. As a result, variable Y1 can affect the high and low of variable Y2 by 0.615 points.

3.1.4. Path Analysis 4

3.1.4.1 Probability plot normality test

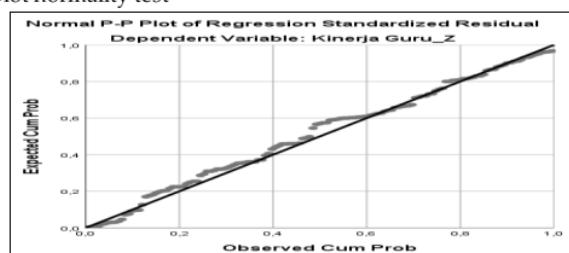


Figure 1. P-Plot normality test

The Teacher Performance variable (Z), the dependent variable, has a distribution of standardized regression residuals that is evenly distributed along the diagonal line, as seen in the image above. It establishes that the points are distributed normally since they do not deviate too much from the diagonal line drawn from point zero. However, there is unquestionably an irregular distribution if the point deviates off the diagonal line. Thus, it demonstrates that the study's data satisfied its normalcy assumptions. As a result, it might be used as an indicator for measuring variables where the findings of this normalcy test are in question.

3.1.4.2 Multicollinearity test

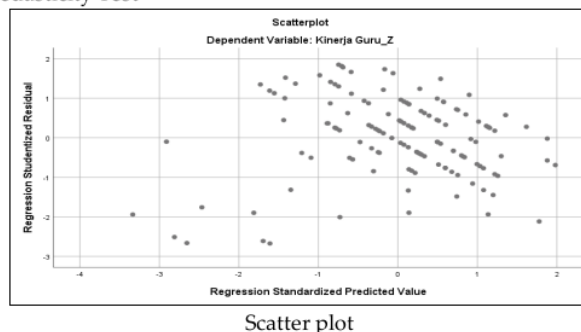
Table 7. Multicollinearity test results

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)		
Leadership Quality_X	.584	1.570
Soft Competence_Y1	.573	1.564
Teaching Creativity_Y2	.518	1.852

Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance (Y1)

As seen in the table above, the regression model's tolerance value increases, and the three independent variables each show tolerance values above 10%, indicating that there is no correlation between the independent variables of greater than 95%. The VIF calculation's findings also demonstrate that none of the model's independent variables have values above 10, indicating that multicollinearity is not a problem. It can be concluded from this examination of the tolerance and VIF calculations that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables in the model that was created.

3.1.4.3 Heteroscedasticity Test



The test for violations of the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity assumptions of the technique of least squares, also known as the technique of Ordinary Least Squares, reveals where in the model multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity do not occur. Since the data in this example was cross-sectional and this autocorrelation test is only applicable when using time series data, none was performed. This demonstrates that the obtained regression equation model has the best BLUE (linear unbiased estimator) characteristics. As a result, the model is a reliable estimator and does not exhibit bias.

3.2 Effect of Leadership Quality (X), Soft Competence (Y1) and Teaching Creativity (Y2) on Teacher Performance (Z)

Table 8. Effect of X, Y1 and Y2 on Z

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4,308	1,578		4,652	,000
Leadership Quality_X	,249	,078	,216	3,138	,000
Soft Competence_Y1	,314	,086	,212	3,016	,000
Teaching Creativity_Y2	,409	,078	,356	4,573	,000

Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance (Z)

3.2.1 Leadership Quality (X) to Teacher Performance (Z)

Based on Table 8, the path coefficient value (α_4) = 0.216 and a significant level of 0.000 which means cheerful and significant ($\text{Sig} < 0.05$). Therefore, the Leadership Quality variable (X) significantly positively affects Teacher Performance (Z). The magnitude of the influence of Variable X on Z can be seen from the standardized coefficients beta which is 0.216, which means that everyone point increase in Leadership Quality (X), will increase Teacher Performance (Z) by 0.216 points. Thus, the high and low of variable Z can be influenced by variable X1 by 0.216 points.

3.2.2 Soft Competency (Y1) on Teacher Performance (Z)

Based on Table 8, the path coefficient value (α_5) = 0.282 and a significant level of 0.000 which means cheerful and significant ($\text{Sig} < 0.05$). Therefore, the Soft Competency variable (Y1) significantly positively affects Teacher Performance (Z). The magnitude of the influence of variable Y1 on Z can be seen from the standardized coefficients beta which is 0.282, meaning that every onepoint increase in Soft Competence (Y1), will increase Teacher Performance (Z) by 0.282 points. Thus, the high and low of variable (Z) can be influenced by variable (Y1) by 0.282 points.

3.2.3 Teaching Creativity (Y2) on Teacher Performance (Z)

Based on Table 8, the path coefficient value (α_6) = 0.356 and a significant level of 0.000 which means cheerful and significant ($\text{Sig} < 0.05$). Therefore, the Teaching Creativity variable (Y2) positively and

significantly affects Teacher Performance (Z). The magnitude of the influence of variable Y2 on Z can be seen from the standardized coefficients beta which is 0.356, meaning that every one point increase in Teaching Creativity (Y2), will increase Teacher Performance (Z) by

0.356 points. Thus, the high and low of variable Z can be influenced by variable Y2 by 0.356 points.

3.2.4 Determination Test (R2)

Table 9. Determination test results (R2)
Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.714 ^a	.568	.554	1,838

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching Creativity_Y2, Leadership Quality_X, Soft Competence_Y1

b. Dependent Variable: Teacher Performance_Z

3.3 Direct effect, indirect effect and total effect

3.3.1 Direct Effect

- The direct effect of the Leadership Quality variable (X) on Soft Competence (Y1) = 0.446, meaning that every increase in Leadership Quality (X) will be able to increase Soft Competence (Y1) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.446 points (Proven).
- The direct effect of the Leadership Quality variable (X) on Teaching Creativity (Y2) = 0.490, meaning that every increase in Leadership Quality (X) will be able to increase Teaching Creativity (Y2) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.490 points (Proven).
- The direct effect of the Soft Competency variable (Y1) on Teaching Creativity (Y2) = 0.615, meaning that every increase in Soft Competence (Y1) will be able to increase Teaching Creativity (Y2) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.615 points (Proven).
- The direct effect of the Leadership Quality variable (X) on Teacher Performance (Z) = 0.216, meaning that every increase in Leadership Quality (X) will be able to increase Teacher Performance (Z) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.216 points (Proven).
- The direct effect of the Soft Competency variable (Y1) on Teacher Performance (Z) = 0.282, meaning that every increase in Soft Competency (Y1) will be able to increase Teacher Performance (Z) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.282 points (Proven).
- The direct effect of the Teaching Creativity variable (Y2) on Teacher Performance (Z) = 0.356, meaning that every increase in Teaching Creativity (Y2) will be able to improve Teacher Performance (Z) in MAN 2 bulukumba teachers by 0.356 points (Proven).

3.3.2 Indirect Effect

- The Effect of Leadership Quality on Teacher Performance Through Soft Competencies
 $X \rightarrow Y1 \rightarrow Z = 0.216 \times 0.282 = 0.060$ points
- The Effect of Leadership Quality on Teacher Performance through Teaching Creativity
 $X \rightarrow Y2 \rightarrow Z = 0.216 \times 0.356 = 0.076$ points

Table 10. Decomposition of path coefficients

No.	Path Coefficient	Direct (Direct)	Indirect (Indirect)	Total
1	X against Y1	0.446	-	0.446
2	X to Y2	0.490	-	0.490
3	Y1 against Y2	0.615	-	0.615
4	X against Z	0.216	-	0.216
5	Y1 against Z	0.282	-	0.282
6	Y2 against Z	0.356	-	0.356
7	X to Z through Y1	0.216	0.060	0.012
8	X to Z through Y2	0.216	0.076	0.016

Based on the results of path analysis on all independent, intervening and dependent variables, a full path analysis model can be made as follows:

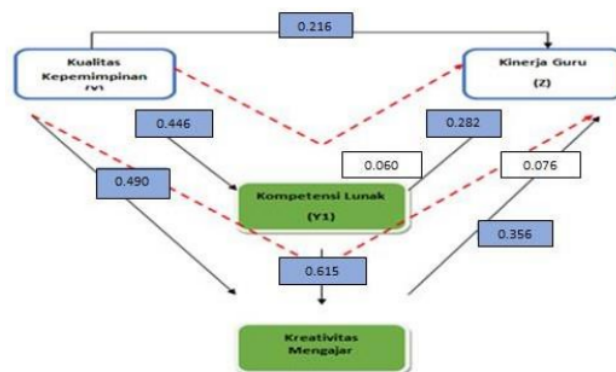


Figure 5. Full Model Path Analysis

Thus, based on the results of the analysis and hypotheses that have been stated previously, the following hypothesis test results can be summarized:

Table 11. Summary of hypothesis test results

No.	Hypothesis	Value	Sig	Conclusion
1	Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on the soft competence of teachers at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.437	0.000	Accepted
2	Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher teaching creativity at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.549	0.000	Accepted
3	Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher teaching creativity at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.631	0.000	Accepted
4	Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.210	0.003	Accepted
5	Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.292	0.000	Accepted
6	Teaching creativity has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at MAN 2 Bulukumba	0.385	0.000	Accepted
7	Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through soft competence at MAN 2 bulukumba	0.216	0.012	Accepted
8	Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through teaching creativity at MAN 2 Bulukumba	0.216	0.016	Accepted

First, there is a positive and significant relationship between leadership quality variables and soft competence, which means that the stronger the leadership quality, the more it enhances the soft

competence of instructors at MAN 2 Bulukumba. The principal overseeing school education must possess strong leadership qualities and sound judgment to fulfill educational objectives. The principal holds a position of authority within the educational system. The principal is in charge of overseeing all organizational resources and working with teachers to help kids learn in order to attain academic objectives. The professional development of educational staff is simple to do with the principal's professionalism because it is by its function. The effectiveness of teacher professionalism depends on the principal's understanding of the demands of the school he leads, which ensures that the teacher's competence grows and develops in addition to relying on his prior competencies. The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Dau (2020). The results showed that leadership had a positive and significant effect on the quality of soft skills. At MAN 2 Bulukumba, a fair leadership attitude is shown and reflects on improving the quality of teacher skills, teachers have respect and authority for the leadership of their principals, and the principal gives something non-discriminatory and equal treatment to teachers. The results of this study also demonstrate how leadership that recognizes the importance of teachers has inspired them to feel morally responsible for carrying out their mandates and upholding the standards of their profession. Compliance and loyalty in performing teacher duties in the classroom and educational duties outside of the classroom are examples of this. This mindset is also accompanied by a sense of obligation to set up all instructional materials prior to beginning the learning process.

Second, the influence of leadership quality variables on teaching creativity is positive and significant, meaning that the better the quality of leadership, the better the teaching creativity of teachers at MAN 2 Bulukumba. The quality of leadership with indicators as a catalyst has the highest response among other indicators, and is associated with teaching creativity the better the teacher's ability to develop evaluation instruments. The capacity of operational staff, specifically teachers, to lead an institution or school to mobilize all of its resources so that they can be used most effectively to achieve predetermined goals is known as principal leadership. In this regard, the leader is crucial to what he leads. The school's forward or backward quality depends on the leader, much like with the principal. The leader in this scenario needs to possess strong leadership qualities. Every principal will encounter issues that call for the improvement of the school's quality, therefore consistency in the principal's leadership will have an impact on the quality of the school as a whole. In this manner, the teacher will be able to resolve. A number of things prevent a school principal from developing their leadership skills, including the opaque appointment process, the principal's low mentality, which results in frequent tardiness and a lack of motivation and enthusiasm, and the principal's still limited perspective. This study's results align with previous research conducted by Mukhtar (2020); Mukhtar (2020). The results showed that leadership affects teacher creativity. MAN 2 Bulukumba is highly aware of the importance of creativity in teaching. Creative teachers exist with the principal's leadership who supports it. The creativity teachers apply to shows the ability to create a new product, either completely new or a modification or change by developing existing things. When this is associated with the creativity of MAN 2 Bulukumba teachers, the teacher concerned has created an entirely new and original teaching strategy. Some even modify existing strategies to produce a new form of fun in teaching and learning activities. Teaching is no longer an effort to convey knowledge but to create an environmental system that teaches students so that teaching objectives can be achieved optimally.

Third, the effect of soft competence variables on teaching creativity is positive and significant, meaning that the better the soft competence, the better the teaching creativity of teachers at MAN 2 Bulukumba. The findings of soft competency indicators that get the highest response from respondents are the teacher's spiritual skills, teachers know and understand both themselves and others, this has a good impact on improving teacher performance at MAN 2 Bulukumba. It cannot be denied that in line with current conditions, where the world of education must teach the correct reality, to produce noble karakter not only for students but also teachers, not teaching the reality of opinions presented through virtual media or many audiovisuals. In the current era, there is a concept called soft skills education, which means education that has relevance to a person's personal and social abilities. Through soft skills education, a person is taught to have the ability to communicate and socialize with their social environment, or in other words, interaction is more prominent. This aligns with research conducted by Fernandes et al. (2021) soft skills as a significant educational trend and a necessary component for the continuous professional

development of a professional education teacher. This research further strengthens the role of soft competencies (soft skills) of teachers in implementing creative learning methods, teacher skills emotionally, communication, language, spiritual and ethics are a great asset in supporting productive learning activities at MAN 2 Bulukumba, and also most of the teachers in this school are very friendly with their students, considering that every student should not be punished for ignorance but should be approached emotionally so that the cause or problem they face is known. Ways and concepts like this prove the better application of soft competencies so that teachers become more creative in their approach to learning.

Fourth, there is a positive and significant relationship between leadership quality characteristics and teacher performance, so the more effective the leadership at MAN 2 Bulukumba, the better the instructors perform. Teachers are thought to play a crucial role in the learning process, particularly in helping students reach their full potential in terms of their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Teachers also work to pique students' curiosity, promote independence and the accuracy of their intellectual reasoning, and establish favorable learning environments. This aligns with previous research by Jaya (2022); and Ningsih et al. (2020) The results showed that leadership style has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The right principal leadership style is needed to develop a conducive work environment and improve teacher performance so that it is expected to produce high work productivity.

Fifth, the effect of soft competency variables on teacher performance is positive and significant, meaning that the better the soft competence, the better the teachers' performance at MAN 2 Bulukumba. A teacher or educator's character (personality) must reflect his work; a capable teacher in person can reflect a good attitude towards his work. It cannot be denied that in a public organization such as a school, intellectual ability does not always guarantee better quality, but the role of soft competence forms a noble character and can be an essential element of creating quality or performance. This aligns with previous research by Rina & Games (2022); Putra & Anita (2021) showed that soft skills positively and significantly affect teacher performance. High soft skills ability will certainly optimize teacher performance so that the teaching and learning process can run effectively. The findings in this study indicate that in the soft competencies that affect the performance of MAN 2 bulukumba teachers, the spiritual skills indicator is the indicator with the highest number of responses from respondents' answers. Teachers' spiritual skills are part of soft competencies, this is a challenge faced by teachers where changes appear in every learning activity concerning teacher performance, many things have been done to improve teacher performance including training, upgrading, workshops, but in reality it has not been seen significantly with improving the quality of student learning outcomes.

Sixth, the effect of teaching creativity variables on teacher performance is positive and significant, meaning that the better teaching creativity, the better teacher performance at MAN 2 Bulukumba. Creativity is related to discovering something that produces something new by using something that already exists. Teacher teaching creativity is usually defined as the ability to create a creative way of transferring knowledge to students, although it does not mean that all products are new. The product may be a combination of pre-existing elements. This is in line with previous research by Kasim (2020) The results showed that creativity has a positive and significant effect on teacher Performance. The findings in this study indicate that teacher creativity can improve the performance of MAN 2 bulukumba teachers. The most dominant indicator of teacher creativity variables that affect teacher performance is the teacher's ability to develop assessment instruments where the teacher can make objective assessments according to student achievement. It is so essential for a teacher to provide an objective evaluation to know how well his students can accept the lessons taught by the teacher, and of course it is an advantage for the teacher to provide a form of assessment that encourages their performance to be better. The creativity of teaching teachers with varied evaluation forms has motivated many students to develop their abilities and certainly improved the learning system in the classroom.

Seventh, there is a positive and significant indirect effect of leadership quality variables on teacher performance as measured by soft competencies. This means that better leadership will promote the development of soft competencies, which will then have an effect on the performance of MAN 2 bulukumba teachers. The level of leadership quality and teacher performance are both influenced by the leadership of the principal. The survival and success of schools today depend on the ability of their leaders

to anticipate external changes. In this case, schools must have principals who effectively carry out their leadership. The challenge for school principals is becoming a driver or pioneer of change in the schools they lead. This aligns with previous research by Jaya (2022); Ningsih et al. (2020) The results showed that leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.

Furthermore, in research by Rina & Games (2022); Putra & Anita (2021) the results showed that soft skills have a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The findings in this study show that leadership quality plays a role in shaping teacher character through soft competencies and improving performance. Leadership quality is more critical in line with the increasingly complex demands of the principal's duties which require increasingly effective and efficient performance support. Thus, the principal's leadership quality is seen based on the criteria that can empower teachers to carry out the learning process well, smoothly and productively. Principals can explain their tasks and work according to the time set, building harmonious relationships with teachers to realize school goals.

Eighth, the influence of leadership quality variables on teacher performance through teaching creativity is positive and significant, this can be seen in the indirect effect, meaning that the better quality of leadership will encourage the improvement of teaching creativity which then has an impact on improving the performance of MAN 2 Bulukumba teachers. Teaching creativity as an intervening variable in this study encourages improved teacher performance. The quality of leadership in this case the principal has shown its role in supervising the teachers of MAN 2 Bulukumba. This aligns with previous research by Jaya (2022); Ningsih et al. (2020) The results showed that leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. According to results from earlier research by Kasim (2020), creativity has a good and noticeable impact on teachers' performance. This is accomplished through the use of the principal's leadership's guiding principles, which prioritize goal achievement, foster teachers' creativity in the teaching process, and value their opinions and ideas as a breakthrough in resolving issues that occasionally arise in the teaching and learning process. The principal's function as one of the elements that promotes teacher creativity by allowing them to express their views and ideas without being inflexible, resulting in learning that is high-quality and in line with educational objectives.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on this study, it can be concluded that 1) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on soft teacher competence; 2) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher Teaching creativity; 3) Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher teaching creativity; 4) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 5) Soft competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 6) Teaching creativity has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance; 7) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through soft competence; 8) Leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance through teaching creativity. This indicates that teacher performance at MAN 2 Bulukumba can be directly and indirectly improved by leadership quality through soft competence and teaching creativity. The quality of leadership in schools has become an essential determinant in improving teachers' character, creativity and performance. In this case teachers become catalysts in schools that can filter external influences affecting teacher performance. Soft competence is also seen in the improvement of teachers' spiritual skills by understanding that good teaching must have sincerity and sincerity, as well as teaching creativity that improves teacher performance with teacher creativity in designing evaluation instruments making students more enthusiastic and productive in learning in class, teachers appreciate and provide objective assessments.

It is recommended for future research to add variables and analysis because there may be several other variables that affect lecturer performance. Second, this research was conducted in the school environment and should not be generalized to other industries. Therefore, it is recommended on this topic to conduct broader research and not stick to the school environment.

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