



Correlation of the Principal's Assertive Leadership Style with the Performance of School Administrative Staff

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Abstract

The role of administrative staff in schools is significant in supporting the effectiveness of school operations, and a leader, namely the school principal, with his leadership style, significantly impacts the school organization's climate and performance. Although much research has been conducted on leadership styles and employee performance in various organizational contexts, there still needs to be a greater understanding of the impact of a school leader's assertive leadership style on work outcomes for administrative staff at the school. Therefore, research is needed to fill inequalities, gaps, and insight into knowledge by investigating the relationship between a school principal's assertive leadership style and administrative staff's work results in senior high schools throughout Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency. This research was presented with a quantitative experimental method using correlation product moment with a questionnaire in data collection. These data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The population was all school administrative staff in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, consisting of seven senior high schools with a total sample of 41 people. This research showed that a school principal with an assertive leadership style would be more aggressive and pay more attention to personal control. It impacts the motivation and final performance of administrative staff who can carry out their duties well and contribute to achieving the program, vision, mission, and school goals.

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I. Introduction

The principal has a role vital and strategic in ensuring the effectiveness of the education system in schools so those who lead need to have a leadership style in managing all elements in the school so that they have an impact on the climate and performance of the school organization can run well (Hanim & Wazir, 2022). One of the elements is the administrative staff, even though they need to be more actively involved in learning. However, they support the smooth running of administrative processes and learning and teaching activities by Minister of National Education Regulation Number 24 of 2008 (Sukiyanto & Maulidah, 2020). Thus, the expertise and skills of

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administrative staff are needed to support various processes in school administration services efficiently and effectively (Latifah et al., 2023; Van Elsen et al., 2023). The school principal directs the implementation of educational activities with his leadership style, one of which is an assertive leadership style (Agfariza, 2023; Yuliani & Kristiawan, 2017). Therefore, it is essential to understand the relationship between a school principal's assertive style and the performance of administrative staff in the educational context.

The following are some previous research regarding the assertive style of a school principal and the performance of administrative staff, such as research conducted by Rozali & Sitasari (2017) and Pranansa & Putra (2018) on the performance results of educators. Nugroho & Sunarto (2022) believe that an assertive style influences classroom management. Budi's (2022) research focused on female school principals and assertive style influenced the performance of educators. Purwanto's research (2012) shows that the school principal's assertive leadership style influences teaching staff performance. Bashori et al. (2021), the administration head's assertive leadership style can improve the school administration staff's performance. Rofiki et al. (2022) and Suryana et al. (2018) that a school principal who uses an assertive style can build professional administration staff. Research from Koh et al. (2023) and Mardiyanti & Setyaningsih (2020) shows that it is essential to develop administrative staff by school principals.

The various studies above show that research results mostly measure the leadership style of a school leader with the performance of teaching staff, so research that focuses on administrative staff using performance measurements that are more specific and relevant to administrative tasks is needed. So, this research makes it possible to find a relationship between an assertive leadership style and the performance of administrative staff that is more varied, measured by school, geography, and gender. For this reason, in-depth research is needed to understand the contextual factors that influence it. Previous research may have needed to pay more attention to factors that could moderate the relationship between these two variables, so an in-depth study is needed to explore various things as potential moderators. Furthermore, in previous research, no intervention was found in the form of training in the assertive style of a school principal. Therefore, further research is needed to explore long-term effects by bridging various gaps to enrich educational management study references.

We used quantitative methods to study this problem to systematically evaluate the relationship between assertive leadership style and administrative staff performance. We used appropriate statistical analysis to provide empirical evidence on whether assertive leadership style significantly influences administrative staff performance. This method allowed data to be collected from a representative sample, and the findings were generalized to a larger population, which provided broader insight. Furthermore, the results of this study make it possible to explore various influences, such as mediating and confounding variables, to test whether there is a mediating variable and evaluate the direct influence of these two variables without any confusion from other variables. In the end, this research can present an in-depth and objective picture and understanding of the influence of the relationship between the assertive style of a leader in a school and the performance of administrative staff in the school.

II. Methods

The sampling method uses random techniques based on proportional random sampling. With this technique, the population is all the administrative staff of senior high schools (SMA) and public senior high schools (SMAN) in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, consisting of seven public and private high schools, namely 11 people from SMAN Leuwiliang, six people from SMA Mandala, five people from SMA Alhusna, five people from SMA Mafajah, five people from SMA Muhammadiyah Puraseda, five people from SMA Liwaul Furqon, and five people from SMA PGRI Leuwiliang. The total number of school administration staff in senior high schools in Leuwiliang District is 41 people, as stated by Arikunto (2019). If there are less than 100 subjects, all of them are sampled. So, the entire population of 41 people was used as the sample, also called the total sample.

The quantitative experimental method using product moment correlation was used as a research method to prove whether there is a relationship between a principal who leads with an assertive style (Y) and the work results of school administration personnel (X). This research began by conducting a literature review to explore various relevant theories of leadership and organizational performance, as well as highlighting concepts such as assertive leadership style and performance indicators for school administrative staff. Next, field research should be carried out using techniques: 1) observation by directly visiting and closely observing the existence and condition of the school that is the research site and visiting the office of Service Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) of Leuwiliang District; 2) compiling a questionnaire or questionnaire to respondents or samples containing a list of questions and answer choices; 3) documentation by searching for existing data such as information about teaching staff and educational staff that has been recorded; and 4) interviews were conducted to collect necessary information such as personal data and work-related matters as a school administrative staff (Sulfemi, 2023b).

The instrument or questionnaire used was two questionnaires with a closed questionnaire model, so respondents were only allowed to choose the options the author had provided. For the principal's assertive style variable (Y), there are 30 questions; for the administrative staff performance variable (X), there are 33 questions. The questionnaire completed by respondents was tabulated and scored according to the items with a Likert scale, namely 4-3-2-1, with gradations starting from very negative up to very positive, namely a score of 4 often accompanied by a score of 3, rarely a score of 2, and never a score of 1. For the instrument regarding assessing the assertive leadership style of a school principal (X) with the following grid: 1) Multifactor Leadership or Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), 2) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), 3) Style Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership (SLT-II), 4) Transactional and Transformational Leadership Style (MLQ), 5) Adaptable Leadership Style (ALQ), and 6) Servant Leadership Scale (SLS) (Rahayu & Rozak, 2022). For the administrative staff performance variable (Y) with a grid, namely: 1) administrative compliance, 2) communication skills, 3) time management, 4) organizational ability, 5) problem-solving, and 6) customer service (Mardiyanti & Setyaningsih, 2020).

Descriptive and correlational analyses were used to analyze the data. Validity and reliability tests were conducted using the Alpha-Cronbach formula from the collected data. Next, a correlation test was carried out using product moment correlation. After the r_{xy} is value score known, an interpretation is made of the index values of the relationship 'r' product with the correlation index number of the product moment. To see the magnitude of the influence of X and Y, a search is carried out the coefficient of determination and continued to test the significance of the correlation coefficient by searching t_{count} . After that, hypothesis testing is carried out, namely comparing the magnitude of 'r' obtained from the data and then calculating the range of magnitude of 'r', which is confirmed in the table of "r" product moment values (r_{table}), by starting with finding the degrees of freedom (db). Then, the assessment criteria for each variable are expressed in a range of values between 1 and 100 with five assessment criteria, namely very low to very high. Additionally, data on date ranges, number of classes (BK), interval length (P), mode, median, and mean are presented. (Sulfemi, 2023a).

III. Results and Discussion

The instrument test of the principal's assertive leadership style (X) was carried out using 30 questions that were created to test the validity of each instrument, namely by using Bivariate Pearson, where this technique involves correlating or connecting the score of each item with the overall score or total value, if $r_{count} \geq r_{table}$ (2-sided test with sig. 0.05), then the instrument or question items weaken significantly in the total score (declared valid). Based on the test results, all 30 questions were declared valid. Next, the valid instrument was tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha formula. From the trial results, five questions dropped, namely items 14, 15, 20,

24 and 25. The reliability test results had a confidence level of 0.05, namely with table 0.316, and the reliability results (r_{count}) were found to be at a value of 0.8245. So, if the r_{count} is greater than the r_{table} , namely $0.8245 > 0.316$, then the data is reliable.

Research results from 41 respondents: the overall score was 4208, the lowest was 83, with the highest score being 118, the data range score was 35, the multiple class score was 6, the interval length score was 6, the mode score was 104.166, the median score was 105.612, and the mean was 103.939. The following are the accurate score results for variable X, which are presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Principals' Assertive Leadership Style

Class Intervals	F	Real Value
83 – 88	1	82.5 – 88.5
89 – 94	3	88.5 – 94.5
95 – 100	6	94.5 – 100.5
101 – 106	17	100.5 – 106.5
107 – 112	10	106.5 – 112.5
113 – 118	4	112.5 – 118.5
Sum	41	

Based on the data from the table above, the perception of administrative staff regarding the assessment of the school principal's assertive leadership can be conveyed. The following is a table of the results of the school administration staff's assessment criteria regarding the assertive leadership style of a school principal in leading.

Table 2. Criteria for the Principal's Assertive Leadership Style

Intervals	Frequency	Percentage	Criteria
0 – 54	0	0 %	Very low
55 – 69	0	0 %	Low
70 – 89	2	4.878 %	Currently
90 – 104	19	46.341%	Tall
105 – 120	20	48.780%	Very tall

The research results (table 2) prove that the perception of school administration staff regarding principals who lead with an assertive style in senior high school in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, is very high, namely 20 respondents with a percentage of almost 48.780%. Based on this, the senior high school administrative staff's perception of the assertive leadership style of school principals in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, is classified as very high.

Instrument validity test results performance of school administrative staff (Y), which consisted of 33 questions, for questions no. 7, 13, and 29 turned out to be invalid, so they had to be discarded and not used so that 30 questions could only be used. Next, a reliability test was carried out, and the 30 questions were reliable enough to use.

Based on the results of research testing, an overall score of 4480 was obtained; the lowest score was 97, with the highest score being 119, the data range score was 22, the multi-class score was 6, the interval length score was 4, the mode score was 112.944, the median score was 93.62, and the mean was 84.43. As for calculating the actual value for each value listed in the table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Performance of School Administrative Staff

Class Intervals	f	Real Value
97 – 100	3	96.5 – 100.5
101 – 104	6	100.5 – 104.5

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105 – 108	8	104.5 – 108.5
109 – 112	10	108.5 – 112.5
113 – 116	11	112.5 – 116.5
117 – 120	3	116.5 – 120
Sum	41	

Criteria for the performance of school administrative staff are created based on the [table 3](#). [Table 4](#) presents the description of the percentage trend criteria to clarify.

[Table 4](#) shows that the performance of the School Administration staff is a very high criterion. Namely, there were 32 respondents, a percentage of 78.049%. Based on the data, the performance of senior high school administrative staff in Leuwiliang District is included in the very high criteria. Once the results of these two variables are known, the next step is to do the Pearson product-moment correlation test to determine the effect of the variable.

[Table 4](#). Performance Criteria for School Administrative Staff

Intervals	Frequency	Percentage	Criteria
0 – 54	0	0 %	Very low
55 – 69	0	0 %	Low
70 – 89	0	0 %	Currently
90 – 104	9	21.951%	Tall
105 – 120	32	78.049%	Very high

[Table 5](#). Summary of the Results of the Assertive Style of School Leaders and the Performance of School Administrative Staff

Respondent	Questionnaire Value		XY	X2	Y2
	Assertive Style (X)	Performance (Y)			
41	4208	4480	460516	433964	490872

Based on the [table 5](#), connection second variable in on entered to in correlation product Pearson with use statistics Products Moments Pearson as following:

$$r_{xy} = 0.426742 = \frac{41 \times 460516 - (4208)(4480)}{\sqrt{\{(41 \times 433964) - (4208)^2\} \{(41 \times 490872) - (4480)^2\}}}$$

The result of the contribution of variable X to Y or the determinant coefficient or KD is 18.21%. Based on the results, the influence of the principal's assertive leadership style is 18.21%, and the remaining 81.79% is determined by several other variables or variations in the performance of senior high school school administrative staff in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency. So, in reality, the performance of school administration staff is 18.21% influenced by the school principal's assertive leadership style.

To test its significance, a t test was carried out, where the t_{count} was 2.947, the t_{table} was 2.021 with degrees of freedom or dk, namely N-2, and $\alpha = 0.05$. This means the t_{count} is greater than the t_{table} $2.947 > 2.021$. Based on the correlation coefficient test from the calculation results, r_{xy} is obtained at 0.426742. Therefore, H_0 is rejected, and H_a is accepted. This means there is a relationship between the assertive leadership style of a school leader and the work of administrative staff in high schools throughout Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency. The r_{count} is greater than the r_{table} based on the results. Therefore, the r product moment value shows the relationship between the school principal's assertive style (Y) and the work results of administrative staff (X).

The coefficient quoted from Sugiyono (2021) is used to express and determine the weight of the relationship between a school leader's assertive style and the performance of school administrative staff. The criteria are in the [table 6](#).

Table 6. Data Interpretation

Coefficient Interval	Relationship Level
0.000 – 0.199	Very low
0.200 – 0.399	Low
0.400 – 0.599	Currently
0.600 – 0.790	Strong
0.800 – 1,000	Very strong

Looking at the [table 6](#), the results of the interpretation level criteria are known that r_{count} is 0.426742, which means there is a value between 0.400 and 0.599. So, it can be said that the assessment of senior high school administration staff in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, regarding the principal's assertive leadership style and performance has a relationship with the medium criteria.

This research agrees with Yuliani & Kristiawan (2017) that the assertive leadership style possessed by a school principal will be more aggressive and will pay more attention to controlling each individual and personality. This is because a school principal with an assertive type will open himself up to problems that will cause conflict and accept any criticism conveyed to him. The results of each decision will be taken from the process by arguing from various points of view so that the conclusions obtained can be satisfactory (Aziz et al., 2022). In carrying out his duties, the school principal will receive and even want suggestions and input from various groups of subordinates in the organization he leads, including school administration staff (Smith et al., 2019).

Nellitawati (2023) states that school principals with administrative duties are responsible for various continuity and smoothness of the educational process, so they must understand various administrative activities. For this reason, school principals must guide the improvement of performance results, productivity, and morale of educators or teachers and educational staff, in this case, administrative staff in schools. Astuti & Suhartina (2023) and Yada & Savolainen (2023) said that a school principal must be able to encourage and provide direction to his subordinates so that they work by various existing regulations and policies and adapt to the program that has been established until achieving school goals. Likewise, Hamdan et al. (2021) stated that school leaders with an assertive style can build on their subordinates and accept it as a conclusion to produce a satisfactory decision because administrative staff can carry out their duties in a focused and responsible manner responsible for all the work.

The presence of a school principal's leadership style with this assertive style makes it easier for administrative staff in a school to do a job that, in reality, is very heavy and difficult if one refers to Minister of National Education Regulation Number 24 of 2008. With these regulations, school administrative staff must be able to manage various information in taking actions and decisions. Using accurate data collected, school administration staff will correctly take attitudes, actions, and decisions (Yusof et al., 2023).

The decisions taken by the senior high school administrative staff in Leuwiliang District, Bogor Regency, with the school principal's assertive leadership style, have an impact on their performance by being able to carry out their obligations, namely 1) responsible for managing student and employee data, including new student registration, maintaining student databases, and archiving employee documents; 2) manage essential documents such as student report cards, financial reports, and correspondence, as well as archiving them; 3) assist with school financial bookkeeping, including payment of teacher honorariums, operational costs, and financial reports; 4) plan and organize school activity schedules and room placement; 5) handle reception, receive telephone calls, and answer questions from parents, teachers, or outside parties; 6) responsible for

managing inventory and office supplies; 7) provide administrative support to teachers and school staff; 8) assist the principal in setting up meetings, compiling reports, or coordinating specific projects; 8) arrange student transportation, school security, and care and maintenance of school facilities; and 9) providing assistance with computer hardware and software, network systems, and information technology equipment (Suripatty, 2021).

By carrying out these duties and functions well, administrative staff in a school contributes to the smooth operation and success of the school as a whole, so this success cannot be separated from the success of a leader in managing existing resources to contribute to achieving school goals, including running learning (Sulfemi, 2023c; Dean & Forray, 2021). Clapp-Smith et al. (2019) and Sanyal & Rigg (2021) confirm that a school principal's leadership style as a leader's self-identity can improve and develop the organization. So, the leader's style has various influences on educational administration staff.

The following are some of the impacts of an assertive leadership style. First, leaders motivate and improve the performance of administrative staff because the principal shows clarity in the direction and goals of the school and provides support that can inspire them to work more effectively and productively. Second, an assertive leadership style encourages open and transparent communication between school principals and administrative staff, preventing miscommunication, increasing understanding of tasks and expectations, and building harmonious relationships. Third, school principals tend to strengthen feelings of empowerment in administrative staff, giving them space to take initiative in making decisions. Fourth, assertive leadership helps resolve conflicts effectively by balancing individual and organizational interests. Fifth, an assertive style can create a work culture with a positive work ethic in school institutions, strengthening mutual trust, reducing resistance, and making administrative staff feel appreciated.

The various positive aspects of the assertive leadership style of a school leader must also be understood: the nature of the leadership does not always determine the effectiveness of a leadership style but rather the context and characteristics of the individuals involved. Therefore, it is essential for school principals to understand the needs and preferences of individuals in their administrative team and to adapt their leadership style according to the situation. Thus, the success of a school institution in achieving its vision, mission, and goals is influenced by the ability of the school principal to manage the various resources available at the school, including administrative staff.

IV. Conclusion

The research results concluded that by having an assertive leadership style, a school principal will be more proactive in personal control of school administrative staff at the senior high school level in Leuwiliang District. Where they have motivation and performance with more effective communication, strengthen feelings of empowerment in administrative staff, provide space to take the initiative, make impactful decisions, and develop their skills, creating a positive workforce in schools. By carrying out these duties and functioning well, an administrative staff member in a school contributes to its success in achieving its goals.

Based on the conclusion presentation, there are several suggestions, namely 1) assertive leadership education and training must be a priority for school principals and administrative staff, including workshops, seminars, and training; 2) school principals and administrative staff need to improve the quality of their interpersonal relationships, including open communication, mutual support, and appreciation for each other's contributions; 3) adopt a collaborative leadership approach that strengthens the participation and involvement of administrative personnel in decision making and strategic planning; 4) empowering administrative staff by providing appropriate autonomy in carrying out their duties; 5) building a positive organizational culture based on values such as mutual respect, honesty, and justice; 6) school principals need to ensure that administrative staff receives sufficient support and resources to complete their tasks effectively; 7) regularly

recognize and appreciate the contributions of administrative staff through formal awards, public appreciation, or career development opportunities.

Each study has certain limitations that need to be considered. The following are the limitations of this study: 1) It is limited to a specific sample, namely, the senior high school level; 2) The research only uses one quantitative experimental method without combining other approaches; 3) Some of the data collected is subjective from the respondents, thus affecting the validity and reliability of the findings. 4) some variables may need to be measured more precisely. 5) some variables have yet to be considered. Furthermore, recommendations for further research directions are 1) conducting longitudinal research with a broader scope; 2) conducting comparative studies in various schools to compare the effectiveness of other leadership styles; 3) expanding the measurement to take into account other contextual factors; and 4) conducting multi-level research to understand more complex dynamics. By overcoming these limitations, we then conducted research with a more comprehensive approach, thereby providing deeper insight into the assertive style variables of a school leader and administrative staff in schools.

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VI. Author Contributions Statement

WBS contributes as a concept, drafter, analyzer, and interpreter, collecting data and critically revising the article.

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