

Impact of Principal Communication and Psychological Climate on Enhancing Teacher Performance

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ABSTRACT

Effective school leadership relies heavily on communication, which plays a crucial role in shaping teacher performance. Additionally, a school's psychological climate significantly influences teacher motivation, satisfaction, and professional engagement. While prior studies have explored these factors separately, limited research has examined their combined effect, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study investigates the joint impact of principals' communication effectiveness and psychological climate on teacher performance in state high schools in Rumbai District, Pekanbaru City. Using a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from 93 teachers across three schools through Likert-scale questionnaires. Variables measured included principal communication effectiveness, psychological climate, and teacher performance. Data analysis employed descriptive statistics, t-tests, F-tests, and regression analysis. Results show that both principal communication ($t = 16.631, p < 0.001$) and psychological climate ($t = 4.171, p < 0.001$) significantly influence teacher performance. Together, these variables account for 86.2% of the variance in teacher performance (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.862$), indicating a strong predictive relationship. Descriptive findings also revealed moderate achievement levels (66%–73%) across all indicators. The study concludes that effective communication and a positive psychological climate are essential for fostering teacher engagement, performance, and a collaborative school culture. These findings highlight the strategic role of school principals as communicative leaders and underscore the need to prioritize communication and climate in leadership development programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human life, particularly in social interactions that serve various purposes (Henry & Woody, 2013). Through communication, individuals can express their thoughts, emotions, and needs, enabling mutual understanding and connection. In daily life, it functions not only as a means of interaction but also as a vital tool for building and maintaining relationships, fostering cooperation, and achieving shared goals.

In organizational settings—especially schools—communication plays a critical role in ensuring the smooth operation of activities and the alignment of all members toward common educational objectives. Effective communication within the school environment facilitates harmonious relationships among principals, teachers, staff, and students. As educational institutions rely on structured and purposeful communication (Balcan et al., 2016; Halawah, 2005; Henry & Woody, 2013), the school principal becomes central in leading and sustaining these interactions.

As a strategic leader, the principal bears the responsibility of fostering an environment where communication is open, respectful, and productive. The ability to clearly convey information, offer direction, and inspire teachers significantly influences the quality of teaching and learning. Communication between the principal and teachers not only serves as a coordination mechanism but also fosters mutual respect, motivation, and professional growth (Bastian et al., 2022). In this context, the principal acts not just as an administrator but also as a communicator who shapes a positive work climate and enhances teacher performance.

Effective communication directly impacts teacher performance. When teachers feel supported and understood, they are more motivated and committed to their roles (Herdiana et al., 2021; Mailool et al., 2020). Conversely, poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, dissatisfaction, and even conflict, all of which can hinder performance. Therefore, a two-way communication model between principals and teachers is essential to building a collaborative and trusting work environment.

In addition, the psychological climate within a school—marked by feelings of safety, trust, and comfort—also influences communication success. Principals play a key role in shaping this climate by practicing active listening, maintaining transparency, and valuing teachers' input (Safrul, 2022). A supportive environment encourages teachers to perform at their best and nurtures a sense of belonging.

Strong leadership anchored in communication can significantly enhance teacher performance. Principals who communicate effectively are better equipped to articulate vision, build motivation, resolve conflict, and create a cohesive team. Such leadership is essential for sustaining a productive school culture and elevating the quality of education.

To communicate effectively, principals must understand the core components of communication: the sender, the message, the medium, the receiver, and the feedback process (Rhodes et al., 2009; Stamatis & Chatzinikolaou, 2020). Managing each component ensures that messages are conveyed and understood as intended. Within schools, communication becomes the bridge for aligning goals, sharing policies, and strengthening a sense of community. Principals, as communicative leaders, are responsible for fostering this system—ultimately cultivating a positive work climate and supporting teacher excellence.

School meetings serve as vital opportunities for principals to implement and model effective communication. These gatherings allow all school members to contribute ideas, share input, and engage in collective decision-making. To ensure productive outcomes, principals must facilitate meetings with clear direction while encouraging open and respectful dialogue. Well-managed communication during meetings not only prevents misunderstandings but also fosters stronger organizational cohesion and supports the achievement of educational goals.

Numerous studies have examined factors influencing teacher performance. Herdiana et al. (2021) identified several key elements, including fair compensation, safe working conditions, opportunities for skill development and career growth, a sense of belonging, work-life balance, and the social relevance of work. Similarly, Gibson (1985) emphasized the pivotal role of school leadership—particularly that of principals—in shaping teacher performance, in addition to institutional and

organizational factors. Principals are entrusted with guiding teaching and learning processes, overseeing school administration, managing educational resources, and ensuring that school operations align with national educational objectives (Rahmatullah et al., 2022). Among the various competencies required of school leaders, communication remains one of the most critical. According to Bashshur (2011), no leader can succeed without effective communication skills, as they are essential for fostering teamwork, clarity, and trust within an organization. Effective communication requires a comprehensive understanding of its core components: the sender, message, medium, receiver, and feedback. Principals who master these elements are more capable of delivering clear information, actively listening, and utilizing communication tools that enhance engagement and understanding across the school community.

Despite widespread acknowledgement of the importance of communication and leadership in schools, there remains a lack of empirical studies exploring the combined effect of effective communication and psychological climate on teacher performance—especially within the context of Indonesian schools. Much of the existing literature tends to treat leadership, communication, and school climate as separate domains, without fully examining their interrelated impact on teacher outcomes. This study seeks to address that gap by exploring how principals' communication effectiveness and the psychological climate they help foster contribute to teacher performance. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative perspective, examining these two variables as interconnected factors that influence teacher motivation, satisfaction, and effectiveness.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the extent to which school principals' communication practices and the school's psychological climate affect teacher performance. By investigating the relationship between these variables, the research intends to provide deeper insights into the strategic role of school principals in shaping a supportive and high-performing educational environment. This study focuses on understanding how communication and climate function together to enhance teacher effectiveness and contribute to the overall quality of education.

2. METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a type of correlation study, aiming to test the relationship between variables using correlation coefficients (Sugiyono, 2019; Yusuf, 2016). This correlational research was conducted on State High School teachers in Rumbai District, Pekanbaru City, Riau Province. The variables studied include the effectiveness of principal communication (X1) and psychological climate (X2) as independent variables, as well as teacher performance (Y) as bound variables. The relationship between these variables is analyzed to see the significance and positive or negative direction.

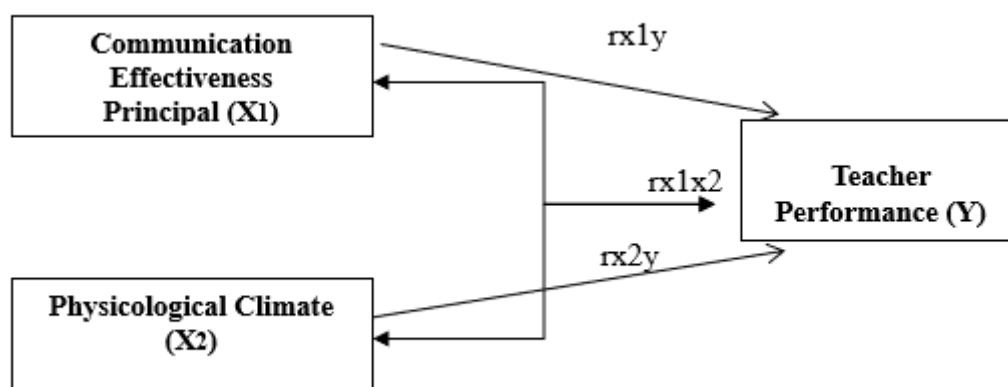


Figure 1. Research Flow

The population is all teachers at State High Schools in Rumbai District, namely SMAN 3, which has a total teacher population of 69 people, of which 16 people are used for trials and 53 people are used as research samples. SMAN 13 has 32 teachers with 7 people for the trial and 25 as a sample. Meanwhile, SMAN 16 has a population of 19 teachers, with 4 people for trials and 15 as research samples. Overall, the total teacher population in these three schools is 120 people, with 27 teachers used for the trial and 93 teachers as the main research sample. Sampling in this study was carried out using cluster and stratified purposive random sampling techniques, where samples were randomly selected to represent each group. The number of samples was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula, with a degree of accuracy of 0.05, which resulted in a sample of 93 teachers; the rest were used for trials.

Data collection in this study was carried out using ordinal scales that were processed to meet the assumptions of parametric statistics, as suggested by (Creswell, 2007). Data measurements were performed with the Likert Scale, which converts qualitative responses into quantitative, with score weights from 1 to 5 for each choice: "Strongly Agree" was given a score of 5, "Agree" was given a score of 4, "Disagree" was given a score of 3, "Disagreement" was given a score of 2, and "Strongly Disagreement" was given a score of 1. Data analysis involves descriptive statistics to describe the data conditions of each variable, such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distribution. The quantitative data obtained was assessed based on the category of respondents' achievement level, ranging from "Very Good" (90-100%) to "Not Good" (0-54%) according to the criteria of (Sudjana, 2010). In addition, the t-test and the F-test were performed together with the determination coefficient (R^2) to assess the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable, with the R^2 value ranging from 0 to 1, where the greater the R^2 value, the better the independent variable explained the dependent variable.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The normality test was carried out with the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* test, because the data type used was an ordinal scale. The purpose of this normality test is to check/find out whether the population data is normally distributed. The guideline in decision-making using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* test is if the Sig. value or significance or probability value (p) < 0.05 is concluded that the population is not normally distributed. Meanwhile, if the Sig. value or significance or probability value (p) > 0.05 the population is normally distributed.

Tabel 1. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Effectiveness of principal communication	Psychological climate	Teacher Performance
N		93	93	93
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	66.02	54.00	61.73
	Std. Deviation	10.846	10.219	11.195
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.066	.106	.083
	Positive	.066	.106	.083
	Negative	-.055	-.085	-.047
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.637	1.024	.797
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.812	.245	.549
a. Test distribution is Normal.				
b. Calculated from data.				

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed with P Values greater than 0.05, namely 0.812, 0.245, and 0.549. It can be interpreted that the regression model meets the assumption of normality.

Table 2. Linearity Test Results

		Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Teacher performance * the effectiveness of principal communication	Deviation from Linearity	11530.280	16.038	1.255	.222
Teacher Performance * Pshycological Climate	Deviation from Linearity	11530.280	59.763	1.481	.093

From the table above, it is known that each independent variable with a dependent variable obtained a significance value of Deviaton from Linearity (0.222; 0.093 > 0.05). It can be concluded that each independent variable with a dependent variable meets the assumption of linearity.

3.1 Description of Research Results

This data description presents the data state of each research variable, such as mean score, median, mode, standard deviation, frequency distribution table, histogram image of data frequency distribution, and the level of achievement of respondents for each research variable using ideal score analysis. An overview of the level of achievement of respondents quantitatively for each research variable is described in the following table:

Table 3. Recapitulation Description of Overall Research Results Variables

No	Variabel	Indicator	F	%	Interpretation
1	Teacher Performance	Quality of Work	326	70	C
		Work Accuracy	324	70	C
		Initiatives at Work	316	68	C
		Communication	324	70	C
2	Principal's Communication Effectiveness	Understanding	317	68	C
		Pleasure	339	73	C
		Attitude	320	69	C
		Relationship	323	69	C
		Action	337	72	C

3	Pshycological	Belief	328	70	C
	Climate	Openness	309	66	C
		Collaborate	315	68	C
		School Achievement	310	67	C

Judging from the recapitulation table, the average of all indicators in the three variables obtained a fairly good score. It is characterized by the level of achievement of the indicator, which is in the range of 66%-73% of the ideal score.

3.2 Statistical Hypothesis Testing

The following are the results of the t-test and the F-test. The t-test is used to determine the contribution of each independent variable to the partially bound variable. While the F test is to see the contribution of the two independent variables to the dependent variable.

3.2.1 Partial Coefficient Test (t-test)

Table 4. Results of Partial Regression Coefficient Test

Model		Coefficients a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	20.138	3.897		5.168	.000
1	keef.kom.kepsek	.938	.056	.908	16.631	.000
	Physucological climate	.451	.108	.377	4.171	.000

a. Dependent Variable: kinerja.guru

It is known that the t-value of the table is at the level of significance of 5% (2-tailed) with the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned}
 t \text{ tabel} &= n - k - 1: \alpha / 2 \\
 &= 93 - 2 - 1: 0.05 / 2 \\
 &= 90 : 0,025 \\
 &= 3,6
 \end{aligned}$$

Description: N : Number of samples
k : number of independent variables
1 : constant

1. The effectiveness of the principal's communication. It is known that t count (16.631) > t table (3.6) and Sig. (0.000) < 0.05. This means that the variable Effectiveness of principal communication has a significant effect on teacher performance. So that the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted and (Ho) is rejected.
2. Psychological Climate. It is known that t count (4,171) > t table (3.6) and Sig. (0.000) < 0.05. This means that the Pshycological Climate variable has a significant effect on teacher performance. So, the second hypothesis (H1) is accepted, and (Ho) is rejected.

3.2.2 Regression Equation:

$$\text{Teacher Performance} = 20.138 + 0.938 \text{ Principal communication effectiveness} + 0.451 \text{ Pshycological Climate} + e$$

The meaning of the numbers in the regression equation above:

1. The value of the constant (a) is 20.138. This means that if the independent variable is assumed to be zero (0), then the teacher's performance is 20.138.
2. The value of the regression coefficient variable of the Effectiveness of communication of the principal was 0.938. This means that every increase in the effectiveness of the principal's communication by 1 unit will increase the teacher's performance by 0.938 assuming that other variables are fixed.
3. The value of the regression coefficient of the Psychological Climate variable was 0.451. This means that every increase in Psychological Climate by 1 unit will increase teacher performance by 0.451, assuming other variables are fixed.
4. Standard error (e) is a random variable and has a probability distribution that represents all factors that have an influence on Y but are not included in the equation.

3.2.3 Simultaneous Coefficient Test (Test F)

The simultaneous regression coefficient test using the F test, which is the accuracy of the model in the research conducted. The results are as follows.

Table 5. Results of Analysis ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9940.863	2	4970.431	281.448	.000 ^b
	Residual	1589.417	90	17.660		
	Total	11530.280	92			

a. Dependent Variable: kinerja.guru

b. Predictors: (Constant), iklim.kerja, keef.kom.kepsek

Thus it is known that Sig. (0.000) < 0.05. So the third hypothesis (H1) Accepted and (Ho) rejected means that the independent variables together have a significant effect on the dependent variables.

3.2.4 Determination Coefficient Test (R2)

The determination coefficient (R2) aims to measure how far the independent variable is able to explain the variation of the dependent variable. The value of the determination coefficient is between zero and one.

Table 6. Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.929 ^a	.862	.859	4.202

a. Predictors: (Constant), psychological.climate, the.effectiveness.of.principal.communication

b. Dependent Variable: teachers.performance

It is known that the Adjusted R Square value is 0.862. This means that the contribution of the influence of independent variables on dependent variables is 86%. While the remaining 14% is influenced by other variables that are not included in this regression model. The magnitude of the determination coefficient is between zero and 1 ($0 \leq r^2 \leq 1$). In this regression model is 0.862. This means that the determination coefficient is very strong.

Discussion

Judging from the recapitulation table of the results of the study with descriptive statistical analysis, the average level of communication effectiveness, Psychological Climate and teacher performance is quite good. It is characterized by the level of achievement of the indicator, which is in the range of 66%-73% of the ideal score. However, the category is quite good to be in the middle or average range of the ideal score. Furthermore, the effectiveness of communication between school principals. Through t calculation ($16.631 > t$ table (3.6) and Sig. (0.000) < 0.05). This proves that there is a significant contribution between the effectiveness of the principal's communication and the teacher's performance. As according to Soeprihanto (1998), school principals are one of the components of education that play a role in improving the quality of education. The principal is responsible for the implementation of educational activities, school administration, the development of other educational personnel, and the empowerment and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure. Meanwhile, communication effectiveness is an informative and persuasive ability to carry out interpersonal, informational, and decisive *roles* to coordinate teachers to jointly achieve organizational goals that must be possessed by a school principal.

Then, in the Psychological Climate variable, t count (4,171) $> t$ table (3.6) and Sig. (0.000) < 0.05 . This means that the Psychological Climate variable has a significant effect on teacher performance. Because the organizational climate is the overall expectations, opinions, and experiences felt by teachers related to their work situation which includes physical conditions and school facilities, work methods and leadership style of the principal, expectations of school achievement, work relationships, and order/discipline.

Effective communication from school leadership is essential for setting expectations and maintaining an organized environment. Teachers rely on the principal's guidance and direction to align their teaching methods and classroom management with the school's objectives. As this study confirms, principals who communicate effectively not only improve teacher morale but also positively influence student outcomes by supporting the teachers who directly impact them. (Redianis et al., 2020) emphasizes that principals play a strategic role in the educational process, a point corroborated by the significant t-value (16.631) found for the communication variable, which far exceeds the critical threshold of 3.6.

The psychological climate within a school is equally important for creating a positive working environment. A supportive climate can reduce stress, enhance job satisfaction, and foster a sense of belonging among teachers. When teachers feel respected and valued, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work. In this study, the psychological climate variable also showed a significant impact on teacher performance, with a t-value of 4.171 and a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that the climate set by the leadership style and overall school environment plays a significant role in influencing how teachers perform.

A positive psychological climate encompasses more than just physical conditions and resources; it includes interpersonal relationships, work methods, and the leadership style of the principal. Teachers benefit from an environment where they feel that their opinions are valued, their achievements are recognized, and their well-being is considered (Gavin & Howe, 1975; James & Sells, 1981; Koys & DeCotiis, 1991). A good psychological climate not only improves teacher performance but also encourages collaboration and innovation, creating a conducive environment for both teaching and learning.

The high determination coefficient (R^2) value of 0.862 found in this study indicates that the combined effects of communication effectiveness and psychological climate account for 86% of the variability in teacher performance. This high percentage suggests that these factors are indeed strong predictors of teacher success. It underscores the importance of school leadership practices, as they have a direct impact on how teachers perform, manage their classrooms, and contribute to the school's goals.

Furthermore, a supportive communication environment allows teachers to express their challenges, seek guidance, and contribute ideas. This fosters a collaborative environment where teachers feel comfortable and valued, leading to continuous improvement in their teaching practices. By involving teachers in decision-making processes and addressing their concerns openly, principals help build a culture of trust and respect. This aligns with previous research suggesting that when teachers feel they have a voice within the organization, their engagement and productivity improve. Leadership plays a multidimensional role, as principals must balance their administrative duties with the task of inspiring and supporting their teachers (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Effective communication allows principals to act as mentors and role models, demonstrating the behaviors they wish to see in their staff. Principals who engage in active listening, provide constructive feedback, and encourage open dialogue help create a school environment where teachers feel supported and are more likely to invest in their professional growth and commitment to student success.

The relationship between psychological climate and teacher performance suggests that teachers thrive in environments that promote positive interactions, well-being, and work satisfaction. A supportive climate reduces burnout and turnover rates among teachers, which are common challenges in the education sector (Huang & Wang, 2021; Rhodes et al., 2009). By fostering a psychologically supportive environment, school leaders contribute to a more stable and committed teaching staff, ultimately enhancing the quality of education that students receive. Additionally, teachers who feel part of a supportive school climate are more likely to collaborate with colleagues, share resources, and engage in professional development. This collaborative spirit, promoted by the principal's communication and leadership style, contributes to a cohesive school culture focused on continuous improvement and academic excellence. Thus, the role of the principal extends beyond administration, encompassing the responsibility to create an environment where all staff can thrive.

Psychological Climate arises because of the process of interaction between members of the organization which then gives rise to the characteristics of the organization and several important things that need to be noted. Psychological Climate, in detail, includes the teacher's work facilities, communication with peers, principal leadership, incentives, and rewards. Incentives or rewards can be given in various forms, not always having to be expressed in money (Carudin & Agus, 2022; James et al., 2008; James & Sells, 1981). Work facilities include workplaces, teaching equipment, equipment needed by teachers to develop processes and funds. The current working conditions where operational funds for a subject are only teachers' salaries or honorariums do not provide opportunities for teachers to develop initiative and creativity (Wahyuni et al., 2023, 2024). The working atmosphere with the principal that causes professional occurrence between teachers and colleagues in the same school or in other schools will provide opportunities for teachers to give their best abilities. Promotions or professional visits to other schools can function as incentives or rewards. Thus, it can be stated that the more positive the psychological climate is, the higher the performance.

According to (Chen et al., 1994; Gibson, 2011), a teacher can become a professional in his or her work determined by individual factors of the teacher himself and also by factors outside him". These external factors will concern institutions, leadership, and *group organizations*. Thus, the performance of teachers is closely related to the effectiveness of the principal's communication in communicating the work program of the school institution. Similarly, a conducive school organizational climate will encourage higher teacher performance, because a conducive organizational climate will give a feeling of comfort and create a conducive working atmosphere. This opinion strongly supports the third hypothesis, namely that there is a positive contribution of the principal's communication effectiveness variables and the organizational climate together to teacher performance.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the effectiveness of principals' communication and the psychological climate within schools significantly influence teacher performance. The findings reveal that both

variables not only contribute individually but also exert a strong combined effect, explaining 86.2% of the variance in teacher performance. Effective communication from school leadership fosters clarity, trust, and motivation, while a supportive psychological climate enhances teachers' sense of belonging, collaboration, and job satisfaction. These results underscore the pivotal role of school principals as communicative leaders in shaping a productive and empowering work environment. To improve teacher performance and overall educational quality, it is essential for school leadership development programs to emphasize strategic communication skills and the cultivation of a positive school climate. Future research may build on these findings by incorporating longitudinal data and exploring other contextual variables that mediate these relationships.

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