

The Influence of Instructional Leadership, Pedagogical Competence, and Organisational Climate on Teachers' Job Performance in Secondary Schools in Southeast Sabah

Shamsir bin Nureddin¹, Dr. Dg Norizah binti Ag Kiflee^{2*}

Faculty of Education and Sport Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200097>

Received: 06 February 2026; Accepted: 12 February 2026; Published: 25 February 2026

ABSTRACT

Teachers' job performance is a primary indicator of school effectiveness and the overall quality of an education system. This study examines the influence of principals' instructional leadership, teachers' pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate on the job performance of secondary school teachers in Southeast Sabah. A quantitative approach employing a survey research design was utilised, involving 509 secondary school teachers. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed through descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The findings reveal that the integrated regression model is statistically significant ($F = 100.183$, $p < .001$) and explains 37.3% of the variance in teachers' job performance. Pedagogical competence emerged as the most dominant predictor, followed by principals' instructional leadership and school organisational climate. These results indicate that teachers' job performance is shaped by an interaction of individual and organisational factors. The study highlights the importance of strengthening pedagogical competence, enhancing instructional leadership practices, and fostering a supportive organisational climate to improve overall school effectiveness.

Keywords: instructional leadership, pedagogical competence, organisational climate, teachers' job performance, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' job performance is a central determinant of teaching effectiveness, student learning outcomes, and overall school quality. Teachers who demonstrate high levels of job performance are not only effective in delivering instruction but are also capable of creating supportive learning environments, motivating students, and contributing to the holistic achievement of educational goals. In the Malaysian education system, enhancing teachers' job performance remains a critical agenda aligned with national education reforms that emphasise teacher professionalism and effective school leadership. However, empirical evidence indicates that teachers' job performance does not always improve in tandem with policy implementation or internal school evaluations. In several secondary school contexts, particularly in rural and semi-rural areas, teachers' job performance has been reported at a moderate level despite relatively high ratings of instructional leadership, pedagogical competence, and organisational climate. This inconsistency raises important questions regarding how these internal school factors interact to influence teachers' job performance.

The educational literature consistently identifies principals' instructional leadership as a key driver of school effectiveness through its focus on teaching and learning processes. Teachers' pedagogical competence, meanwhile, constitutes the professional foundation that enables effective instructional planning, implementation, and assessment. In addition, school organisational climate shapes the working environment that influences teachers' motivation, commitment, and professional behaviour. Although these variables have been widely examined, most previous studies have explored them independently or in contexts that differ from the realities of secondary schools in Sabah. Empirical studies that integrate these factors into a single analytical model remain limited. In response to this gap, the present study empirically examines the combined influence of principals' instructional leadership, teachers' pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate on

teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Southeast Sabah. By employing multiple regression analysis, the study identifies not only the relationships among the variables but also their relative contributions in predicting teachers' job performance. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for school leaders and policymakers in designing contextually relevant strategies to enhance teacher effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Teachers' Job Performance

Teachers' job performance refers to the extent to which teachers effectively fulfil their professional responsibilities, including instructional planning, classroom management, assessment practices, and participation in school-related tasks. Within educational organisations, job performance extends beyond students' academic achievement to include professional commitment, pedagogical quality, and contributions to school improvement initiatives. The job performance model proposed by Porter and Lawler emphasises that individual performance is influenced by the interaction of ability, motivation, and work environment. Applied to the school context, this model suggests that teachers' job performance is shaped by leadership practices, individual competence, and organisational conditions.

Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance

Instructional leadership focuses on principals' actions that directly support teaching and learning, including setting academic goals, supervising instruction, and promoting professional learning. Research consistently shows that instructional leadership contributes positively to teachers' job performance by providing clear instructional direction, enhancing role clarity, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Principals who actively engage in instructional supervision and feedback encourage reflective practice and professional accountability among teachers, thereby strengthening overall job performance.

Pedagogical Competence and Teachers' Job Performance

Pedagogical competence encompasses teachers' mastery of subject matter, instructional strategies, classroom management, and assessment techniques. Teachers with high pedagogical competence are better equipped to respond to diverse learners' needs and to adapt instruction to contextual constraints. Previous studies highlight pedagogical competence as a core determinant of teachers' job performance because it directly influences the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction.

Organisational Climate and Teachers' Job Performance

School organisational climate refers to shared perceptions of the working environment, including leadership support, collegial relationships, and institutional norms. A positive organisational climate promotes trust, collaboration, and professional support, which enhance teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Although its effects may be indirect, organisational climate plays a stabilising role that supports sustained teacher performance.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on existing theories and empirical evidence, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which principals' instructional leadership, teachers' pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate function as integrated predictors of teachers' job performance. These variables are analysed simultaneously using multiple regression analysis to determine their relative contributions within a unified analytical model. This framework provides a basis for understanding how individual and organisational factors interact to influence teachers' job performance in secondary schools. This conceptual framework is grounded in job performance theory, particularly the model proposed by Porter and Lawler, which emphasises the interaction between individual competence, leadership practices, and organisational context in shaping performance outcomes. The conceptual framework is presented narratively rather than diagrammatically, focusing on the analytical integration of variables through multiple regression analysis.

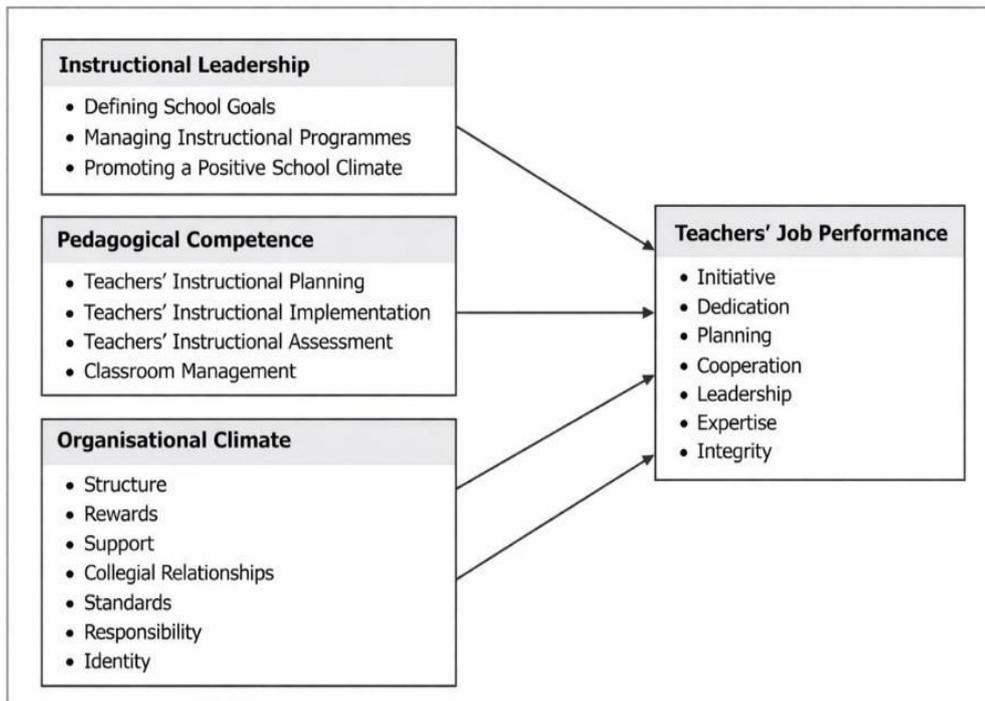


Figure 2.5: Conceptual Framework of the Study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Analytical Model

This study adopted a quantitative approach using a survey research design to test an integrated model of teachers' job performance that incorporates principals' instructional leadership, teachers' pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate as predictor variables. This research design was selected because it is appropriate for examining the relationships and relative contributions of multiple independent variables simultaneously to a single dependent variable, namely teachers' job performance. To achieve this objective, multiple regression analysis was employed as the primary analytical technique to test the strength of the proposed integrated model. This approach allows for the determination of the unique contribution of each predictor variable, in addition to assessing the overall effectiveness of the model in explaining variance in teachers' job performance. The use of multiple regression analysis is consistent with the objectives of the study, which seek to identify the dominant factors influencing teachers' job performance in the context of secondary schools in Southeast Sabah.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised secondary school teachers in the Southeast Sabah region. Respondents were selected using a stratified sampling technique to ensure adequate representation of teachers from different districts and school types. Subsequently, simple random sampling was applied within each stratum to minimise selection bias. The sample size was determined based on the requirements of multiple regression analysis, which necessitates a sufficient number of respondents to produce stable and reliable parameter estimates. The obtained sample size satisfied the recommended ratio of respondents to predictor variables for regression analysis, thereby enabling valid inferences to be made about the study population.

Research Instrument and Development of the Integrated Model

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire developed and adapted from previous studies with established validity and reliability. It was specifically designed to support the testing of the proposed integrated model and comprised four main constructs. The first construct, principals' instructional leadership, measures principals' practices in setting academic direction, monitoring instruction, and supporting teachers' professional development. The second construct, teachers' pedagogical competence, assesses teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate instruction effectively. The third construct, school organisational climate,

captures teachers’ perceptions of the working environment, including administrative support and professional relationships within the school. The fourth construct, teachers’ job performance, functions as the dependent variable in the research model and encompasses instructional task implementation, classroom management, and professional commitment.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

Content validity of the instrument was established through expert review by specialists in educational leadership and research methodology to ensure that the developed items were aligned with the theoretical constructs under investigation. Construct validity was supported through statistical analyses indicating that the items loaded satisfactorily on their respective constructs, thereby confirming the suitability of the instrument for testing the integrated research model. Instrument reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficients, and all constructs recorded high reliability values that exceeded the recommended minimum thresholds. These findings indicate good internal consistency of the instrument and confirm its appropriateness for use in multiple regression analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted after obtaining approval from the relevant educational authorities and school administrators. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents in accordance with established procedures to ensure compliance with research ethics, including confidentiality of information and voluntary participation.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted in stages in accordance with the study objectives and the requirements for testing the integrated research model. Descriptive analysis was used to describe respondents’ profiles and the levels of each study variable. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted as a supplementary analysis to examine the preliminary relationships among the variables. Subsequently, multiple regression analysis was employed as the main analytical technique to test the proposed integrated model. This analysis aimed to determine the relative contributions of principals’ instructional leadership, teachers’ pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate to teachers’ job performance. Standardised regression coefficients (β), coefficient of determination (R^2), and significance levels were used to evaluate the strength and importance of each predictor variable. Regression assumptions, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and independence of errors, were examined to ensure the validity of the study findings.

FINDINGS

This section presents the main findings of the study based on inferential statistical analyses conducted to examine the influence of principals’ instructional leadership, teachers’ pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate on the job performance of secondary school teachers in Southeast Sabah. The primary analysis highlighted is multiple regression analysis based on the integrated model, in line with the study objectives and the requirements of ERA-indexed journals.

Integrated Multiple Regression Model

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the simultaneous contributions of principals’ instructional leadership, teachers’ pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate to teachers’ job performance.

Table 1 Summary of the Multiple Regression Model

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	Durbin-Watson
1	0.611	0.373	0.369	0.34878	1.948

As presented in Table 1, the multiple regression model explains a substantial proportion of the variance in teachers’ job performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.373$) indicates that 37.3% of the variance in teachers’ job performance is collectively explained by principals’ instructional leadership, teachers’

pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate. The Adjusted R² value (0.369), which is very close to the R² value, demonstrates the robustness and stability of the model. In addition, the Durbin Watson statistic of 1.948 indicates that there is no serious autocorrelation among the residuals, thereby confirming the appropriateness of the regression model for further interpretation.

Model Significance Test (ANOVA)

Table 2 ANOVA for the Regression Model

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	36.561	3	12.187	100.183	< .001
Residual	61.431	505	0.122		
Total	97.992	508			

As presented in Table 2, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that the multiple regression model is statistically significant, with an F value of 100.183 at the 0.001 significance level ($p < .001$). This result confirms that the overall regression model provides a good fit to the data and that the set of independent variables principals’ instructional leadership, teachers’ pedagogical competence, and school organisational climate collectively exert a significant influence on teachers’ job performance.

Relative Contribution of Predictor Variables

Table 3 Multiple Regression Coefficients

Predictor Variable	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
Instructional Leadership	0.123	0.033	0.172	3.687	< .001
Pedagogical Competence	0.355	0.035	0.457	10.075	< .001
Organisational Climate	0.067	0.031	0.081	2.147	0.032

As shown in Table 3, teachers’ pedagogical competence recorded the highest standardised beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.457$), indicating that it is the most influential predictor of teachers’ job performance. This is followed by principals’ instructional leadership ($\beta = 0.172$) and school organisational climate ($\beta = 0.081$), both of which also demonstrate statistically significant contributions to the model. These findings suggest that teachers’ professional capacity to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate teaching and learning processes constitutes the primary determinant of job performance. At the same time, instructional leadership and organisational climate function as important contextual and managerial factors that support and enhance overall teaching effectiveness.

Summary of Key Findings

The findings demonstrate that teachers’ job performance is significantly influenced by an integrated combination of pedagogical competence, instructional leadership, and organisational climate. Pedagogical competence emerged as the most influential predictor, while instructional leadership and organisational climate served as important supporting factors. The regression model was statistically significant and stable, confirming the suitability of the integrated approach in explaining teachers’ job performance.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the key findings indicate that pedagogical competence is the strongest predictor. This finding is consistent with previous studies which reported that pedagogical competence is a strong predictor of teacher effectiveness and job performance (Hallinger, 2019; Yusof & Ibrahim, 2023). The findings of this study highlight the importance of examining teachers’ job performance through an integrated framework that incorporates both individual and organisational factors. Pedagogical competence was identified as the most dominant predictor, underscoring the central role of teachers’ professional skills in determining instructional

effectiveness. This finding aligns with the Malaysian Teacher Standards and previous empirical research that emphasises pedagogical quality as a fundamental determinant of teacher performance. The significant contribution of principals' instructional leadership indicates that leadership practices focusing on teaching and learning enhance teachers' professional engagement and instructional quality. Consistent with instructional leadership theory, principals who provide clear academic direction and ongoing instructional support create conditions that enable teachers to perform more effectively. Although organisational climate contributed less directly to teachers' job performance, its role remains critical as a contextual factor that supports motivation, collaboration, and well-being. A positive organisational climate reduces work-related stress and reinforces the positive effects of pedagogical competence and instructional leadership. Overall, the integrated regression model confirms that teachers' job performance is best understood as the outcome of interacting individual and organisational influences rather than isolated factors.

Pedagogical Competence and Teachers' Job Performance

The findings indicate that teachers' pedagogical competence is the most dominant predictor of teachers' job performance. This result confirms that teachers' ability to plan instruction, manage classrooms, select effective teaching strategies, and implement appropriate assessment practices constitutes the core determinant of effective professional task performance. These findings are consistent with the Malaysian Teacher Standards Model and recent empirical studies that emphasise pedagogical quality as the fundamental basis of consistent and sustainable teacher performance. In the context of secondary schools in Southeast Sabah, high levels of pedagogical competence enable teachers to adapt instructional approaches to limitations in resources, diversity in students' backgrounds, and challenges within the learning environment. This contextual adaptability explains why pedagogical competence emerged as the most significant factor compared to other variables in the proposed research model.

Principals' Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance

The findings also confirm that principals' instructional leadership has a significant influence on teachers' job performance, although its contribution is more moderate compared to pedagogical competence. Principals' roles in setting academic direction, monitoring instruction, providing professional guidance, and fostering a positive learning culture were found to contribute to enhanced teacher motivation and professional commitment. These findings support Hallinger's Instructional Leadership Model, which emphasises the principal's role as an instructional leader rather than merely an administrator. Within the secondary school context, consistent instructional leadership functions as a supportive mechanism that strengthens teachers' pedagogical capacity and ensures that instructional practices are aligned with school goals.

School Organisational Climate and Teachers' Job Performance

School organisational climate was found to exert a significant but relatively lower influence on teachers' job performance. This finding suggests that a conducive working environment, harmonious interpersonal relationships, and administrative support serve as stabilising factors that support teachers in performing their professional responsibilities. Although the direct contribution of organisational climate is relatively small, its role as a supportive factor should not be underestimated. In the context of this study, a positive organisational climate helps reduce work-related stress and enhance teachers' job satisfaction, thereby reinforcing the effects of instructional leadership and pedagogical competence on teachers' job performance.

Discussion of the Integrated Model

Overall, the findings confirm that teachers' job performance is the result of an integrated interaction between individual and organisational factors rather than being influenced by a single factor in isolation. The tested multiple regression model demonstrates that the combination of pedagogical competence, instructional leadership, and organisational climate provides a more comprehensive explanation of teachers' job performance. These findings further reinforce the relevance of Porter and Lawler's Job Performance Model within the contemporary educational context, particularly in secondary schools located in rural and semi-rural areas such as Southeast Sabah.

Implications Of The Study

From a theoretical perspective, this study strengthens job performance theory by demonstrating the explanatory power of an integrated model that combines individual competence and organisational factors within the educational context. Practically, the findings suggest that professional development initiatives should prioritise pedagogical competence while being supported by strong instructional leadership and a positive school climate. At the policy level, the results highlight the need for holistic education policies that align teacher training, leadership development, and organisational support to ensure sustainable improvements in teachers' job performance.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the strengthening of job performance theory by demonstrating that the integration of individual and organisational factors is essential in explaining teachers' job performance. The proposed integrated model extends the application of classical theories within the Malaysian educational context.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that teacher professional development programmes should place greater emphasis on strengthening pedagogical competence. In addition, principals are encouraged to consistently practise instructional leadership with a strong focus on enhancing teaching and learning processes. Furthermore, school management should actively cultivate an organisational climate that supports teachers' well-being and sustains their motivation.

Policy Implications

At the policy level, the results of this study support the need for a holistic approach in teacher training planning and school leadership development to ensure sustainable improvements in teachers' job performance.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the job performance of secondary school teachers in Southeast Sabah is significantly influenced by teachers' pedagogical competence, principals' instructional leadership, and school organisational climate through an integrated model. Pedagogical competence emerged as the most dominant factor, while instructional leadership and organisational climate functioned as supportive mechanisms that enhance the effectiveness of teachers' professional practice. Overall, this study provides strong empirical evidence to support a school management approach that prioritises teacher professional development, instructional leadership, and a conducive working environment. In summary, this study provides empirical evidence that pedagogical competence plays a central role in teachers' job performance, supported by effective instructional leadership and a positive organisational climate.

REFERENCES

1. Alsharari, N. M., & Abougamos, H. (2021). The role of leadership styles in enhancing teachers' performance: Evidence from educational institutions. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 35(6), 1231–1246. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-09-2020-0436>.
2. Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2020). School leadership and management in England: The paradox of simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(4), 543–558. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219871266>.
3. Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2019). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 55(3), 426–459. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X18814905>.
4. Hallinger, P. (2019). Instructional leadership in education: A retrospective and prospective view. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-01-2019-0003>
5. Hallinger, P., & Wang, W. C. (2020). Assessing instructional leadership with the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03936-0>.

6. Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2021). *Standard Guru Malaysia 2.0*. Putrajaya: Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum.
7. Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(1), 5–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2019.1596077>.
8. Mahmud, Z., & Rahman, S. (2022). Kepemimpinan instruksional pengetua dan hubungannya dengan prestasi kerja guru sekolah menengah. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan*, 9(2), 1–14.
9. Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2020). *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025*. Putrajaya: MOE.
10. OECD. (2021). *Teachers and school leaders as valued professionals*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264502374>
11. OECD. (2023). *Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/69096873>
12. Porter, L. W., & Lawler, E. E. (2020). *Managerial attitudes and performance* (Updated ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429283866>.
13. Rahman, N. A., & Mansor, M. (2021). Iklim organisasi sekolah dan hubungannya dengan kepuasan serta prestasi kerja guru. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia*, 46(1), 35–46.
14. Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction, motivation, and well-being. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 102, 103331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103331>.
15. Sun, A., & Xia, J. (2022). Instructional leadership and teacher performance: A multilevel analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 50(6), 918–935. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432211022558>.
16. Yusof, R., & Ibrahim, M. S. (2023). Kompetensi pedagogi guru dan hubungannya dengan prestasi kerja dalam konteks sekolah menengah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia*, 48(2), 67–78.