Integrity and Professionalism Driven Visionary Leadership of School Principals for Enhancing School Quality

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of visionary leadership based on integrity and professionalism on the quality of education in vocational high schools (SMK). The research method employed is quantitative, with data analysis techniques using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The sample consists of 246 vocational school teachers selected through cluster sampling in Bireun Regency, Aceh. The results indicate that visionary leadership based on integrity and professionalism has a significant impact on the quality of education in vocational schools. The school quality variable is explained by the visionary leadership construct, which comprises the dimensions of integrity and professionalism, accounting for 82.5% of the variance. The study finds that visionary leadership grounded in integrity and professionalism has a significant positive impact on educational quality in vocational high schools, explaining 82.5% of the variation in school quality. Professionalism-based leadership was identified as having the strongest influence on school quality, followed by integrity-based leadership and general visionary leadership, all of which proved statistically significant. The implications of these findings suggest that schools should emphasize strengthening integrity and professionalism in the leadership of school principals to sustainably improve educational quality. Enhancing visionary leadership will better equip schools to face educational challenges in the era of globalization and technological disruption. This research uniquely focuses on visionary leadership in vocational education, emphasizing integrity and professionalism as critical components, unlike previous studies that often addressed general school environments without these specific leadership dimensions.

Keywords: Visionary leadership; Integrity; Professionalism; Educational quality

INTRODUCTION

Quality is a key indicator in assessing the effectiveness and success of education. Educational quality is not only measured by academic outcomes but also by students' competency achievements, curriculum relevance, and learning processes that support the holistic development of learners. Previous studies measuring educational quality identified several barriers to its improvement, such as curriculum and learning methods (Cahaya, Suryaningsi, & Widyatmike

Gede, 2021), lack of teacher competence and public understanding (Wibawani, Wiyono, & Benty, 2019), organizational culture, funding, and infrastructure (Lorensius, Cahaya, Silpanus, & Ping, 2021). Another critical factor in improving and evaluating quality is the leadership capacity of the school principal. As educational leaders, principals play a vital role in enhancing educational quality (Herawan, 2016).

Unfortunately, educational quality in Indonesia continues to face significant challenges. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) reports that Indonesian students' performance in literacy, mathematics, and science remains below the average of OECD member countries (OECD, 2023). Factors such as insufficient teacher competence, inadequate infrastructure, and limited integration of technology in learning contribute to the low quality of education (The World Bank, 2019). This indicates an urgent need to improve school quality through strong leadership grounded in values of integrity and professionalism.

The current situation reveals that educators face various challenges in their professional development. These challenges can stem from internal factors, such as personal limitations, as well as external influences, like institutional constraints. To effectively address these issues, it is crucial to identify the specific problems principals encounter in their professional growth, which will enable the formulation of appropriate and effective solutions (Hidayat, 2019).

As leaders, school principals must have a clear, measurable vision and the ability to plan strategically. Visionary leadership exercised by principals has a significant impact on school effectiveness (Handarini, S. N., 2019). In a dynamic school environment, principals do not only serve as administrative leaders but also as figures capable of projecting the school's future through a clear vision based on integrity and professionalism (Fatihah, 2024). A leader's integrity and professionalism not only enhance the institution's credibility but also foster a positive school culture, which directly affects teacher performance and student learning outcomes (Ghamrawi, Shal, & Ghamrawi, 2023).

Professionalism relates to the ability to manage school planning, institutional development, direct educational staff, regulate school-community relations, master reporting systems, develop curricula, foster entrepreneurial skills, conduct supervision and evaluation, advance science and technology, and create a healthy work culture and climate (Naim, 2017). Furthermore, the professionalism of a school principal is also seen as a form of commitment to improving and developing competencies with the goal of achieving high-quality leadership and resource management within the school community (Botutuihe,

2020). From these definitions, professionalism is closely tied to commitment, direction, and the improvement and development of leadership abilities.

Becoming a professional school principal is not easy. According to (Syafarina, Mulyasa, & Koswara, 2021) many school principals have yet to fully dedicate themselves to their profession. The authors note that the lack of professionalism among school principals and teachers is due to several factors, including (1) many principals have not fully committed to their role, (2) principals' academic qualifications do not meet the required standards, (3) inadequate managerial training for principals, and (4) many principals have not participated in principal leadership enhancement programs. A lack of professionalism among school principals negatively affects their productivity, which in turn impacts school quality and ultimately, educational quality. Therefore, it is necessary for principals to develop a greater awareness and make serious efforts to improve their productivity and performance.

The aim of this article is to analyze how visionary leadership by school principals, based on integrity and professionalism, can improve school quality in Indonesia. This study also seeks to identify key factors influencing the effectiveness of such leadership and to provide strategic recommendations for developing school leadership (Syafarina, Mulyasa, & Koswara, 2021). Through this research, it is hoped that contributions can be made towards improving national educational quality by strengthening the role of principals as integrative visionary leaders.

Quality Education

Quality is a key criterion for stakeholders in assessing the effectiveness and success of education. A school's reputation for quality is largely dependent on the alignment between its services and the expectations of stakeholders, including students, parents, and the community. Educational quality encompasses not only academic outcomes but also the learning process, educational environment, and the social and emotional development of students (Sallis, 2002). It involves multiple dimensions—input, process, output, and outcomes—across all components within the education system (UNESCO, 2019).

Deming's Total Quality Management (TQM) model, particularly the PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act), has been widely adopted in education to improve quality. The cycle starts with setting clear educational standards (Plan), followed by implementing engaging and active learning processes (Do), monitoring and evaluating the progress through assessments and supervision (Check), and finally applying improvements based on these evaluations (Act). Schools are considered high-quality when they consistently produce students

who excel academically and are well-prepared for higher education (Novita, 2017).

The quality of graduates is influenced by the quality of inputs and processes. High-quality schools invest in resources such as teaching materials, infrastructure, teacher training, and support staff, ensuring that these factors lead to better student outcomes (Qingyan, Azar, & Ahmad, 2023). Indicators of a quality school include selective admissions, strong infrastructure, competent educators and staff, a supportive learning environment, and a clear vision and mission (Rahmawati & Kardoyo., 2018) Holistic quality improvement—addressing inputs, processes, and an outcome—is essential for ensuring long-term educational success.

Visionay Leadership

Visionary leadership is a type of leadership that aims to give meaning to collective efforts within an organization, guided by a clear vision (Subaidi, et al., 2023); (Yang & Yang, 2024). A school principal with visionary leadership can anticipate opportunities, challenges, and threats in advancing the educational institution (Kuswardani, 2020). (Taufiqurokhman, 2017) explains that visionary leadership provides direction to institutional efforts based on a clear and well-defined vision.

Visionary leadership plays a crucial role in fostering synergy and collaboration, essential for building an innovative culture in education (Mustiningsih, Maisyaroh, & Ulfatin, 2020). This leadership style promotes a culture of performance improvement and optimism, even when faced with significant challenges (Ubaidillah, Christiana, & Sahrandi, 2019). Visionary leaders take calculated risks, manage them responsibly, and resolve issues using clear reasoning and rational strategies, leading to objective consensus. According to (Nanus, 1992) theory, visionary leadership is based on four pillars: 1) directing the behavior of subordinates toward desired goals; 2) acting as a change agent to create a rational work environment; 3) serving as a spokesperson who persuades internal members and gains external access; and 4) acting as a coach who motivates, builds morale, and helps subordinates develop. Visionary leadership builds unity and commitment, creating a path to progress and fostering a competitive, innovative culture (Mahmud, 2017).

(Yansyah, Hesti, Mardiana, & Musiman, 2023) identify key characteristics of visionary leaders: forward-looking, bold in pursuing goals, able to unite people, capable of turning vision into action, grounded in spiritual values, and proactive. (Mintowati, 2022) highlights the importance of risk-taking, responsibility, and optimism in visionary leaders, while (Lifornita & Sholeh, 2021) emphasize future orientation, creativity, and strong

communication. Key indicators of visionary leadership include high personal integrity, a commitment to improving organizational quality, effective organizational management, and fairness in decision-making (Umalihayati, Wulandari, & Hardhienata, 2022). Visionary leaders are known for their commitment to spiritual values, strong will to act, inspirational vision, and ability to develop innovative strategies (Soelistya, 2022) (Durairaj, et al., 2024).

Integrity-Based Visionary leadership

Integrity is the quality or state of being consistent in actions, values, methods, principles, and outcomes. In both personal and professional contexts, integrity refers to an individual's honesty, sincerity, and adherence to high moral and ethical standards. In the context of visionary leadership, school principals are expected to demonstrate integrity alongside other competencies to fulfill their mission and achieve the school's vision (Beddu, Suaib, & Jennah, 2016).

Integrity encompasses not only honesty and sincerity but also moral courage—the willingness to do what is right even when faced with pressure or temptation to act otherwise. Key characteristics of integrity include honesty, responsibility, fairness, and transparency (Raheja, 2020). Honesty involves telling the truth and not concealing facts, while responsibility signifies an individual's readiness to accept the consequences of their actions and correct mistakes. Fairness refers to treating everyone equally without discrimination, and transparency involves openness in communication and actions (Begeny, Huo, Smith, & Ryan, 2021).

A principal's integrity is reflected in their performance and behavior (Areagama, 2018). A school leader with high integrity positively influences the school's learning environment and enhances overall school performance (Malingkas, 2022). Principals with integrity are able to align their inner thoughts and intentions with their outward words and actions. Such leadership inspires, motivates, and empowers teachers, students, and staff. Consistently embedding integrity into school management and leadership directly enhances teachers' productivity (Ariswan, Rusdinal, Yusuf, & Gusril, 2018). A principal with integrity is characterized by trustworthiness, consistency, commitment, responsibility, and emotional intelligence (Ekosiswoyo, 2016)

Professionalism-Based Visionary Leadership

Professionalism is a concept that emphasizes the importance of performing every job with a high level of expertise and commitment (Thomas, 2023). It refers to the quality of an individual's conduct within their profession, demonstrating mastery and seriousness toward their field of work (Damon, Colby, Bronk, & Ehrlich, 2005). Professionalism encompasses the attitude of

members of a profession and reflects their level of knowledge and skills necessary to perform their tasks effectively (Joppe, et al., 2022). The term originates from the word "profession," which signifies a career based on specialized education and training. Thus, professionalism can be understood as the quality, standards, and behavior that characterize a profession or a professional individual (Egok, 2019).

Professionalism refers to the quality of attitude among members of a profession concerning their work, along with the degree of knowledge and expertise they possess to fulfill their responsibilities (Bevier, Regan, & Stevenson, 2023). Therefore, professionalism reflects the "state" of an individual's professional standing based on their attitude, knowledge, and skills required to perform their duties as a teacher at an optimal level. A professional is someone who is an expert in their field, takes responsibility for their intellectual and personal decisions, and upholds professional ethics within a dynamic organization (Mökander, Morley, Taddeo, & Floridi, 2021).

In the context of visionary leadership, professionalism among school principals involves several key aspects: 1) strong leadership skills, 2) self-development, 3) adherence to ethical standards and regulations, and 4) engagement and concern for staff and students. The characteristics of professionalism in leaders, particularly school principals, reflect high managerial expertise and capabilities. (Egok, 2019) identifies the following characteristics of visionary leadership based on professionalism: 1) managerial and administrative competence, 2) strong leadership abilities, 3) effective communication, 4) expertise in curriculum and instructional development, 5) relationship-building skills, 6) commitment to professional development, 7) capability to address challenges and conflicts, 8) vision and innovation, and 9) dedication and commitment.

The hypotheses of this research are grounded in the understanding that visionary leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing school quality. Specifically,

H1 asserts that the visionary leadership of school principals directly influences the overall quality of the school. Building on this premise.

H2 posits that visionary leadership, when rooted in integrity, further enhances the quality of education provided by the institution.

H3 suggests that visionary leadership based on professionalism also significantly contributes to the improvement of school quality.

Collectively, these hypotheses highlight the importance of leadership characteristics, such as integrity and professionalism, in fostering an

environment conducive to educational excellence and effective learning outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This quantitative research utilizes Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS) to address the question: "How does visionary leadership based on integrity and professionalism affect the improvement of school quality in vocational schools in Bireuen District?"

Quantitative research was chosen for this study due to its capacity for systematic measurement and analysis of variables, making it particularly suitable for assessing the impact of visionary leadership on school quality. This approach allows for the collection of numerical data through structured questionnaires, enabling objective assessment of respondents' perceptions and attitudes toward leadership and its influence on educational outcomes. The study seeks to explain the causal relationships between leadership styles and school quality. It identifies and measures the influence of variables such as integrity and professionalism-based leadership on educational outcomes. The study employs statistical techniques, specifically Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS), to explore complex relationships between multiple variables. This method facilitates the identification of direct and indirect effects, providing a comprehensive understanding of how leadership impacts school quality.

Furthermore, by utilizing a larger sample size across multiple vocational schools, quantitative research enhances the generalizability of the findings, ensuring their applicability to a broader context within vocational education. The quantitative framework also allows for clear hypothesis formulation and testing, which is crucial for determining the significance of the relationships among variables and contributing to the study's theoretical foundation. Additionally, quantitative methods offer a structured approach to data collection and analysis, making the research process more time-efficient, which is essential for producing timely results that can inform educational practices.

Population and Sample

The study is conducted in three Vocational High Schools (SMK) located in Bireuen District, Aceh Province: SMK 1 Bireuen, SMK 1 Peusangan, and SMK 1 Jeunib.

Table 1

Research Population

No	School	Number of Population			
		PNS Teacher*	PPPK Teacher**	Honorary	Total
1	SMKN 1 Peusangan	46	18	12	76
2	SMKN 1 Jeunib	26	21	10	57
3	SMKN 1 Bireun	75	25	13	113
	Total	**147**	**64**	**35**	**246**

* Teacher with civil servant status

** Teacher with a government contract (PPPK stands for Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja)

Sample determination was conducted using Slovin's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Assuming a margin of error of 5%, the sample size can be calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{246}{1 + 246(0,05)^2} = \frac{246}{1,615} = 152,32$$

Thus, the sample size for this study is rounded to 152 participants.

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

A questionnaire utilizing a Likert scale was distributed to collect data, which was subsequently analyzed using the SmartPLS statistical program. The Likert scale comprises the following response categories: Strongly Agree (SA, score 5), Agree (A, score 4), Disagree (D, score 3), Strongly Disagree (SD, score 2), and Very Strongly Disagree (VSD, score 1). The latent variable of Visionary Leadership (X1), based on the works of Nanus (1995), Mintowati (2022), and Lifornita & Sholoh (2021), includes the manifest variable of visionary leadership concepts and characteristics of visionary leaders. The visionary leadership concept is measured by the following indicators: 1) Directing subordinate behavior toward desired goals; 2) Acting as a change agent to create a clear and rational working environment; 3) Serving as a spokesperson who can persuade internal members to gain access from external sources; 4) Acting as a coach who sets an example; 5) Fostering enthusiasm; 6) Assisting subordinates in learning and development; and 7) Enhancing their confidence and ability to achieve the vision.

The manifest variables of the characteristics of visionary leaders include: 1) Willingness to take risks; 2) High sense of responsibility; 3) Optimism; 4) Future-oriented; 5) Strong planning skills. The latent variable of Integrity-Based Visionary Leadership (X2), as identified by Ariswan et al. (2018), Ekosiswoyo (2016), and Sandi et al. (2022), consists of manifest variables a) Integrity values, which include: 1) Trustworthiness; 2) Consistency; 3) Commitment; 4) Responsibility; 5) Emotional intelligence; b) Professionalism characteristics of leaders, which include: 1) Strong leadership skills; 2) Self-development; 3) Adherence to ethics and regulations; 4) Engagement and concern for staff and students; c) Professional competencies wherein the principal serves as: 1) Leader; 2) Administrator; 3) Manager; 4) Educator; 5) Climate creator; and 6) Supervisor.

The latent variable of School Quality (Y), as described by (Azan, Rosadi, & Muntholib, 2021), Usman (2022), and Vlasic et al. (2022), consists of manifest variables a) Quality of service in the education sector, which includes: 1) Respect for students; 2) Teacher's knowledge; 3) School physical environment; b) Quality resources in education, which include: 1) Aesthetics; 2) Reliability; 3) Specific features.

Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a technique that can handle multiple independent variables, even in the presence of multicollinearity among these variables. PLS is considered a powerful analytical method because it does not rely on numerous assumptions or requirements, such as normality and multicollinearity tests (Syahrir, Danial, Yulinda, & Yusuf, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Loading Factor

The evaluation of the measurement model, commonly referred to as the outer model, included the results of the convergent validity test. The outer loading values for the variables of visionary leadership, integrity-based visionary leadership, and professionalism-based visionary leadership that had loading factor values below 0.5 were deemed invalid and excluded from the indicators. For the visionary leadership variable (X1), which initially had 30 indicators, a total of 21 indicators remained after the validity assessment. The integrity-based visionary leadership variable (X2) started with 15 indicators, of which 3 were found to be invalid, leaving 12 valid indicators. Similarly, the professionalism-based visionary leadership variable (X3) had 30 indicators, with 6 deemed invalid, resulting in 14 valid indicators. The school quality variable (Y), which also had 15 indicators, retained 12 valid indicators after excluding 3 that were invalid.

Discriminant Validity Testing

The results of the validity tests from the cross-loading values indicated that the data obtained possessed good discriminant validity, meaning each construct could clearly distinguish itself from the others. The discriminant validity test, using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, showed that each construct had a value greater than the correlation values among other constructs in the model, thereby confirming the model's good discriminant validity. The discriminant validity test based on the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) also indicated that all HTMT values were below 0.9, concluding that discriminant validity was established between the two reflective constructs.

Reliability Testing Results

The Cronbach's alpha values for the visionary leadership variable (X1) was 0.937, for the integrity-based visionary leadership variable (X2) was 0.905, for the professionalism-based visionary leadership variable (X3) was 0.970, and for the school quality variable (Y) was 0.929, all exceeding the threshold of 0.7. Furthermore, the composite reliability values for the visionary leadership variable (X1) was 0.943, for the integrity-based visionary leadership variable (X2) was 0.913, for the professionalism-based visionary leadership variable (X3) was 0.972, and for the school quality variable (Y) was 0.935, all also exceeding 0.7. These results indicate that all research variables demonstrate high consistency (reliability) in testing.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

After the measurement model (outer model) showed adequate results, the next step in the PLS-SEM evaluation was to analyze the structural model (inner model). The purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether the omitted constructs significantly affected the endogenous constructs.

R-Square Value (Coefficient of Determination)

The inner model is used to evaluate the presence of collinearity among constructs and the model's predictive capability. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is utilized to measure the model's predictive ability, indicating how much of the endogenous construct can be explained by the exogenous constructs. The R^2 values are expected to range between 0 and 1, with $R^2 = 0.75$ indicating a strong model, $R^2 = 0.50$ indicating a moderate model, and $R^2 = 0.25$ indicating a weak model. According to Chin's criteria, $R^2 = 0.67$ indicates a strong model, $R^2 = 0.33$ indicates a moderate model, and $R^2 = 0.19$ indicates a weak model. A higher R^2 value signifies a better predictive model for the conducted research (Syarir, 2020).

The study results revealed that the adjusted R-square value was 0.825, indicating that the school quality variable could be explained by the constructs of visionary leadership, integrity-based visionary leadership, and professionalism-based visionary leadership at a rate of 82.5%. Thus, it can be concluded that the structural model testing results (inner model) for the variables of visionary leadership, integrity-based visionary leadership, and professionalism-based visionary leadership fall within the category of a strong model.

F-square Testing Results (Effect Size)

The F-square is calculated to assess the significance of the change in R-square values when certain constructs are omitted from the model, evaluating whether the omitted constructs have a substantial impact on the endogenous constructs. The general rule of thumb for assessing F-square values is as follows: a value of 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a medium effect, and 0.35 indicates a large effect. Conversely, if the F-square value is less than 0.02, the variable is considered to have no significant effect (Syarir, 2020).

Based on the data processing results, one variable was found to contribute the most to the R-square value in the research model, specifically the F-square value of the professionalism-based visionary leadership variable concerning school quality, which was measured at 0.514 (large). In contrast, the visionary leadership and integrity-based visionary leadership variables exhibited small effects, with values of 0.026 and 0.023, respectively.
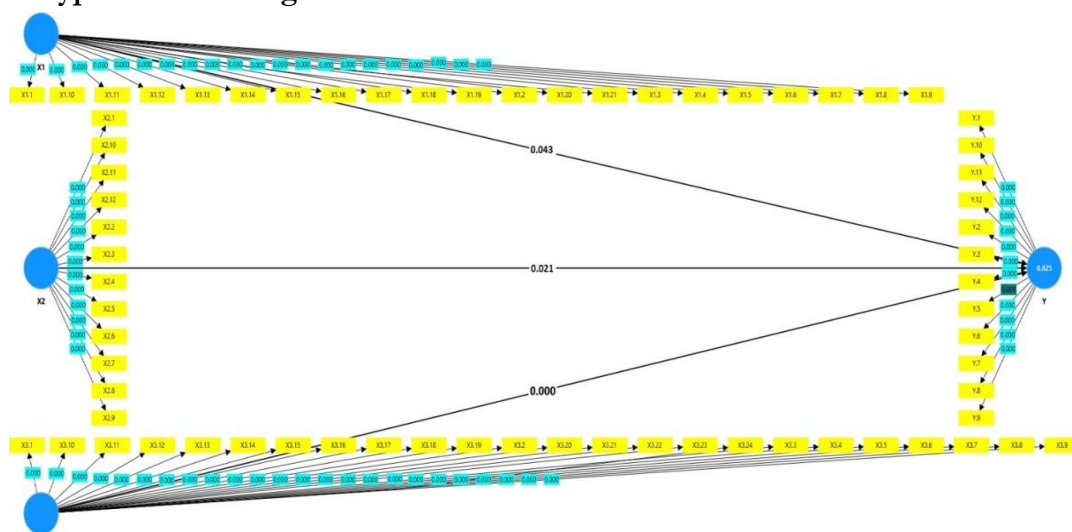
Hypothesis Testing Results

Figure 1
Model of the Relationship between Researches Constructs Using the Bootstrapping Method

The subsequent testing was conducted to assess the significance of the hypothesized relationships between constructs or to observe the influence between variables through a bootstrapping procedure. This process generated outputs in the form of T-statistic values, which were used to evaluate the significance of these relationships. At a significance level of 5%, a T-statistic value of 1.65 was deemed significant.

Table 2
Results of Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ($|O/STDEV|$)	P values
X1 -> Y	0.438	0.544	0.081	2.691	0.043
X2 -> Y	0.510	0.515	0.084	3.305	0.021
X3 -> Y	0.689	0.677	0.084	8.236	0.000

Source: Output Smart PLS 4.0, 2024

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.18, all three hypotheses were accepted. The hypothesis testing results for each construct are as follows:

1. The relationship between visionary leadership and school quality had a T-statistic value of 2.691, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.65, with a P-value of 0.043. Since the P-value is less than 5% (0.043 < 0.05), it can be concluded that the visionary leadership of the school principal has a positive and significant impact on school quality. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

2. The relationship between integrity-based visionary leadership and school quality had a T-statistic value of 3.305, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.65, with a P-value of 0.021. As the P-value is less than 5% (0.021 < 0.05), it can be concluded that the integrity-based visionary leadership of the school principal positively and significantly affects school quality. Thus, the second hypothesis (H2) is accepted.

3. The relationship between professionalism-based visionary leadership and school quality had a T-statistic value of 8.236, which is greater than the T-table value of 1.65, with a P-value of 0.000. Since the P-value is less than 5% (0.000 < 0.05), it can be concluded that the professionalism-based visionary leadership of the school principal has a positive and significant impact on school quality. Hence, the third hypothesis (H3) is accepted.

Discussion

The findings confirm that the visionary leadership of the school principal positively and significantly impacts school quality, aligning with the leadership research of (Bass & Avolio, 1994), which states that leaders with a strong vision can motivate and inspire organizational members to improve performance and quality. Additionally, this research corroborates the work of (Ghasabeh, 2021), who emphasize that visionary leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational performance through motivation and innovation. Furthermore, (Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal, 2020) assert that visionary leadership creates a collaborative and adaptive learning environment, contributing to the improvement of educational quality. These studies support the finding that visionary leadership positively influences school quality.

To enhance the effectiveness of visionary leadership, school principals should intensify their communication of the vision to all school stakeholders. This can be achieved through regular meetings and collaborative discussions with teachers and staff. Developing specialized training for principals in formulating and communicating long-term visions will help strengthen the involvement of all stakeholders in achieving better educational goals. In the future, visionary leadership can be further strengthened through the integration of technology and data-driven decision-making. School principals can use student and teacher performance data to align their vision with evolving needs. Moreover, participating in collaborative networks among schools to share best practices can provide new perspectives on the development of visionary leadership, leading to sustainable innovation in the educational process.

The second hypothesis indicates that the integrity-based visionary leadership of the school principal positively and significantly impacts school quality, consistent with studies such as (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) which emphasize the importance of integrity in leadership for building trust and a good reputation, ultimately enhancing organizational performance. This finding also corroborates research by (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2022) which demonstrates that integrity-based leadership significantly impacts the improvement of educational quality (Peer, 2020). This study is also in line with research by (Ali, Nawaz, & Iqbal, 2021) which stresses the importance of integrity in building trust and credibility, thereby affecting organizational effectiveness. Both studies support the finding that integrity-based leadership contributes positively to school quality.

To strengthen integrity-based leadership, school principals need to ensure that integrity values are embedded in all aspects of school management, from decision-making processes to relationships with teachers and staff.

Additionally, specialized training on ethics and leadership integrity can help principals practice more transparent and accountable leadership, positively impacting school quality. Further development of integrity-based leadership can be achieved through integrity-based performance evaluations and increased parental and community participation in monitoring school activities. These steps will ensure that integrity principles are applied not only by the principal but also by the entire school community. Furthermore, integrity can be established as a standard in the recruitment and promotion of teachers, allowing the culture of integrity to spread throughout the school environment and enhance the overall quality of education.

The third hypothesis reveals that professionalism-based visionary leadership of the school principal positively and significantly impacts school quality, confirming the research of (Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016), which shows a positive correlation between leadership professionalism and school performance improvement. Professionalism-based leadership allows for more effective decision-making and the implementation of appropriate strategies for enhancing school quality. (Oplatka & Arar, 2021) state that professionalism in leadership is essential for creating an optimal learning environment. Additionally, research by (Yıldız, Baştürk, & Demir, 2020) emphasizes that professional leaders can manage resources more effectively, directly impacting the improvement of school quality. These studies support the finding that professionalism-based visionary leadership has a significant positive impact on educational quality.

School principals who lead with high professionalism can further enhance school quality by strengthening their managerial skills. Advanced training in school management, teacher performance evaluation, and strategic planning will help principals manage schools more effectively. Furthermore, it is crucial for principals to promote a culture of professional learning among teachers so that they can continuously develop their teaching skills, thereby impacting educational quality. For future development, principals should ensure that their professionalism includes the use of technology and educational innovation. This can be achieved by integrating technology into management and learning processes and encouraging data-driven decision-making. Additionally, principals can engage in professional networking to share experiences and best practices, broadening their perspectives in managing schools with high professionalism and innovation, ultimately leading to sustained improvements in school quality.

CONCLUSION

This study offers a fresh perspective on visionary leadership in vocational education by emphasizing the critical role of integrity and professionalism in enhancing school quality. Through SEM-PLS analysis of data from 246 vocational school teachers, the results show that professionalism-based visionary leadership has the strongest impact, followed by integrity-based leadership, together accounting for 82.5% of the variation in school quality. Unlike prior research, which often focuses on general educational settings, this study uniquely explores how the integration of ethical values and advanced managerial competencies can drive effective leadership in vocational schools. These findings highlight the strategic importance of fostering leadership that balances visionary planning with ethical integrity and professional expertise. By addressing the specific needs of vocational schools in an era of globalization and technological disruption, the study provides actionable insights for developing sustainable, high-quality education systems tailored to future challenges.

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