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FROM WORKSHOP TO CLASSROOM: PRINCIPAL SUPPORT, MOTIVATION TO LEARN, AND TRAINING TRANSFER AMONG MEDAN'S PRIVATE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract

Teachers can complete the same training programme and differ in how they use what they learned. This article examines whether motivation to learn may help explain the relationship between principal support and training transfer among private vocational school teachers in Medan, Indonesia. A narrative synthesis draws on research on training motivation, workplace support, and teacher professional development. The proposed model distinguishes teachers' willingness to engage with training content from their intention to apply it and from subsequent application in classrooms or workshops. It also allows principal support to relate directly to transfer by creating opportunities for teachers to use new practices. A prospective field design is proposed to measure principal support before training, motivation to learn at the start of training, and transfer during subsequent teaching. A vocational performance-assessment example illustrates how transfer can be documented through teaching artefacts and independently scored evidence of practice. The article offers four hypotheses and an evaluation framework. The proposed relationships remain to be tested with data from private vocational schools in Medan.

Keywords: motivation to learn, principal support, teacher professional development, training transfer, vocational education.

INTRODUCTIO

A vocational teacher can leave a workshop with a well-designed performance rubric and still face a practical question the following week: will that rubric actually change how students receive feedback during a practical lesson? The answer depends partly on what the teacher learned and partly on what happens back at school. A principal can help before training by clarifying its purpose and protecting time to participate. After training, the principal can make implementation possible by arranging access to a suitable class, workshop session, or equipment. These actions matter at different stages of professional development. Research on training transfer identifies workplace support and opportunities to practise as factors associated with the use and maintenance of newly learned skills (Ford et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2020).

Research on teacher professional development in Indonesia has identified recurring concerns about the relevance of training, the attention paid to teachers' starting capabilities, the quality of feedback, and post-workshop follow-up (Revina et al., 2023). These concerns are particularly relevant to the design of professional development for private vocational high schools, or *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan* (SMK). A practical teaching strategy may be relevant across vocational programmes, yet its implementation can depend on scheduling, access to equipment, and the assessment requirements of a particular subject. Medan provides the intended setting for evaluating how these conditions interact with principal support and teachers' motivation to learn.

This article asks whether motivation to learn helps explain the relationship between perceived principal support and subsequent training transfer. Motivation to learn refers to a teacher's willingness to engage with, understand, and master the training content. Training transfer refers to documented use of a trained practice in regular teaching. The article develops a model that connects these constructs and proposes a field design that tracks them over time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Principal Support for Teacher Training

In this study, principal support refers to actions by the principal that teachers perceive as helping them participate in and benefit from a specific training programme. Before training, such actions may include discussing its relevance to a teaching need, recognising professional learning as part of the teacher's work, and arranging time for participation. After training, support may include arranging opportunities to try a new practice, providing access to materials, and scheduling feedback. These actions can vary among teachers within the same school, especially when their teaching assignments or training needs differ.

Hughes et al. (2020) found that supervisor, peer, and organisational support were positively associated with training transfer across workplace studies. In teacher education, Fauth and González-Martínez (2023) also examined how the work environment influences the initial application of skills from in-service ICT training. These studies support considering the principal's contribution alongside other conditions, including peer support and access to appropriate facilities.

Motivation to Learn and Motivation to Transfer

Motivation to learn concerns the effort participants are willing to invest in acquiring the content of a training programme. A teacher who sees a clear connection between a workshop and a recurring classroom problem may devote greater attention to demonstrations, practise a technique more carefully, or seek feedback when a task is difficult. Colquitt et al. (2000) linked training motivation with factors such as the work environment and with outcomes related to learning and transfer. Their findings provide a basis for asking whether principal support strengthens motivation to learn in a particular training context.

Motivation to transfer concerns a different decision. It refers to a teacher's willingness or intention to use what was learned in the work setting. A teacher may be eager to master a new assessment technique during a workshop and later hesitate to use it because of timetable or equipment constraints. Research that measures both motivations, including Sharif et al. (2023), provides a precedent for distinguishing them. For the proposed study, survey items for the mediator focus on understanding and mastering the workshop content. Items about plans to use the technique after training belong to motivation to transfer.

Transfer into Vocational Teaching Practice

Baldwin and Ford (1988) conceptualise training transfer in terms of the generalisation of learning to the job and the maintenance of its use over time. In a vocational school, initial transfer can occur when a teacher uses a newly learned assessment method during a regular practical lesson. Generalisation can be examined when the teacher adapts the method to a different task while retaining its core features. Maintenance requires evidence of continued use across later teaching opportunities. Ford et al. (2018) emphasise that a useful account of transfer should specify what is transferred, how it is measured, and when it is assessed.

The proposed model therefore captures two plausible paths. Principal support may strengthen motivation to learn by making the workshop's purpose clear and giving teachers the conditions they need to engage. It may also relate directly to transfer because practical arrangements made before training, such as identifying an upcoming lesson for implementation, can help teachers use the technique later. Both paths can be examined without assuming that motivation explains the entire relationship.

METHOD

Article Design and Evidence Synthesis

This article uses a **narrative literature synthesis** to develop a conceptual model and a prospective research design. Sources were identified using terms including *principal support*, *motivation to learn*, *training transfer*, and *teacher professional development*. Sources were selected for their relevance to construct definition, the relationship between workplace support and training outcomes, or the assessment of transfer. The synthesis focused on which factors should be measured before, during, and after training. Private vocational schools in Medan are the intended research setting. The article draws on published literature, and the proposed model has yet to be tested with local teacher data.

Proposed Participants and Data Collection

The proposed field study would recruit active teachers from participating private vocational schools in Medan. For comparability, the main study would focus on a clearly defined programme, such as training in performance assessment and feedback during practical lessons. Eligible teachers would need a regular teaching

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assignment that offers a realistic opportunity to use the trained technique during follow-up. The sample size should account for the expected indirect association, the number of participating schools, the clustering of teachers within schools, and likely loss to follow-up.

Table 1. Proposed measurement plan

Stage	Construct or indicator	Source of evidence
Before training	Perceived principal support and existing use of the target practice	Teacher questionnaire and a baseline teaching artefact or observation
At the start of training	Motivation to learn the programme content	Brief questionnaire completed before substantive instruction
At the end of training	Acquisition of the target skill	A common practical task scored with a shared rubric
Four to six weeks after training	Initial transfer into regular teaching	An independently scored observation or recording and the corresponding teaching artefact
Ten to twelve weeks after training	Continued use and, where relevant, adaptation to another task	A second teaching observation or recording and evidence from a later lesson

Perceived principal support and motivation to learn would be measured using separate sets of items. An example support item is *"Before the training, my principal discussed how the programme could address a specific teaching need."* An example motivation item is *"I am willing to put effort into mastering the technique taught in this programme."* These are proposed items. Their clarity and coverage should be examined with vocational teachers before field use.

Proposed Analysis

The primary analysis would estimate the association between pre-training principal support and subsequent transfer through motivation to learn. It would adjust for baseline use of the target practice and account for teachers being grouped within schools. Potential pre-training covariates would be specified in advance, including prior exposure to similar training and teaching assignment where relevant. The direct and indirect estimates would be reported with 95% confidence intervals that reflect the school-level clustering.

End-of-training skill acquisition and post-training implementation support would be reported separately. Both occur after the proposed predictor and may form part of the process through which earlier support relates to transfer. The timing of measurement strengthens the interpretation of the proposed sequence, while unmeasured differences among teachers and schools remain possible in an observational study. The indirect estimate would therefore be interpreted as evidence of an association consistent with mediation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Proposed Mediation Model and Hypotheses

The synthesis produced a model in which **perceived principal support** is the predictor, **motivation to learn** is the mediator, and **training transfer** is the outcome. Principal support is expected to make training more relevant and feasible for teachers. Motivation to learn may then help explain which teachers engage sufficiently with the training to apply its content later. A direct association remains plausible because arrangements such as an agreed implementation schedule can facilitate application through practical means.

Hypothesis	Proposed relationship
H1	Perceived principal support is positively associated with teachers' motivation to learn.
H2	Motivation to learn is positively associated with subsequent training transfer after accounting for principal support.
H3	Perceived principal support is positively associated with subsequent training transfer after accounting for motivation to learn.
H4	Perceived principal support has a positive indirect association with subsequent training transfer through motivation to learn.

The model's contribution lies in examining motivation to learn at the start of training and observed application after training as distinct events. H4 is tested through the estimated indirect association and its confidence interval. A weak or imprecise direct estimate under H3 would still allow the indirect association to be assessed on its own merits.

What Transfer Would Look Like in a Vocational Lesson

Consider a workshop on assessing students' practical performance. Before training, the principal and teacher discuss a recurring problem. Students receive a final grade for a practical task but have limited information about

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what to improve while they are still working. During the workshop, the teacher practises defining observable criteria and giving feedback that students can act on before completing the task. An end-of-training demonstration can show whether the teacher has acquired the skill. Follow-up evidence can show whether the teacher subsequently uses it with students.

For the first follow-up, an observer can check three features: whether the teacher explains the criteria before the task, refers to the criteria when providing feedback, and gives students an opportunity to use that feedback. A rubric or lesson plan helps establish what was prepared, while an observation or recording shows how the technique was enacted. At the later follow-up, the teacher may adapt the criteria to a different practical task while preserving the same assessment process. This example makes the outcome concrete and reflects the distinction between learning, initial application, and sustained use described in the transfer literature.

Implications for School Leadership and Professional Development

The model allows different findings to inform different decisions. If principal support is associated with higher motivation to learn and higher subsequent transfer, pre-training conversations about relevance and protected learning time may merit closer attention. If teachers express strong motivation but rarely apply the technique, the school can examine whether they had a suitable lesson, equipment, or time to practise. If teachers apply the technique once and later discontinue it, feedback and a second opportunity to use it may be more relevant than another introductory workshop. Research on Indonesian teacher development and international professional development design supports giving explicit attention to follow-up and the conditions needed to embed new practices.

The proposed study has boundaries. Findings from one training programme would apply most directly to the skill and schools studied. Teachers' perceptions of support could vary with prior relationships or experiences. Independent evidence of later practice would reduce reliance on teacher self-report, although observations sample only part of what happens during ordinary teaching. A subsequent study could strengthen causal evidence by testing a defined set of principal support practices across participating schools.

CONCLUSION

This article proposes that motivation to learn may help explain how principal support relates to training transfer among private vocational school teachers in Medan. Principal support can help teachers engage with relevant training and can also create practical opportunities to use a newly learned technique. The proposed framework measures support before the programme, motivation at the start of training, and application during subsequent teaching. It offers four testable hypotheses and a plan for documenting both initial and continued use. Field data are needed to establish the strength and direction of the proposed relationships in Medan's private vocational schools.

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