



Transformational Leadership: Theory and Practice in Schools (A Literature Review)

Eka Setiawan^{1*}, Hasan Hariri², Riswanti Rini³

^{1*} (Education Administration, University of Lampung, Eka Setiawan)

² (Education Administration, University of Lampung, Hasan Hariri)

³ (Education Administration, University of Lampung, Riswanti Rini)

* Corresponding Author. E-mail: steveekamorse@gmail.com

Received: 10/05/2024

Accepted: 10/09/2025

Published: 01/10/2024

Abstrak

Pada era globalisasi dan perkembangan teknologi yang pesat, institusi pendidikan menghadapi tantangan kompleks yang menuntut pembaruan strategi manajemen, khususnya dalam aspek kepemimpinan. Salah satu pendekatan yang dinilai efektif adalah kepemimpinan transformasional, di mana kepala sekolah berperan sebagai agen perubahan yang mampu menginspirasi, memotivasi, serta membangun budaya kolaboratif dan inovatif di lingkungan sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara mendalam teori dan praktik kepemimpinan transformasional di sekolah melalui metode studi literatur terhadap 13 artikel jurnal nasional dan internasional yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2021 hingga 2025. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional memiliki dampak signifikan terhadap peningkatan motivasi kerja guru, kinerja staf, serta mutu layanan pendidikan. Dimensi utama kepemimpinan transformasional seperti pengaruh ideal, motivasi inspirasional, stimulasi intelektual, dan perhatian individual terbukti berperan dalam menciptakan lingkungan sekolah yang adaptif dan berkualitas. Kajian ini merekomendasikan pentingnya pelatihan kepemimpinan bagi kepala sekolah serta dukungan kebijakan yang mendorong implementasi kepemimpinan transformasional guna menjawab tantangan pendidikan di era modern secara berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: kepemimpinan transformasional, kepala sekolah, motivasi guru, mutu pendidikan, studi literatur.

Abstract

The era of globalization and rapid technological development, educational institutions face complex challenges that require renewal of management strategies, especially in the aspect of leadership. One approach that is considered effective is transformational leadership, in which the principal acts as a change agent who is able to inspire, motivate, and build a collaborative and innovative culture in the school environment. This research aims to deeply examine the theory and practice of transformational leadership in schools through a literature study method of 13 national and international journal articles published between 2021 and 2025. The results show that transformational leadership has a significant impact on improving teacher motivation, staff performance and the quality of education services. The main dimensions of

transformational leadership such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized attention are proven to play a role in creating an adaptive and quality school environment. This study recommends the importance of leadership training for school principals and policy support that encourages the implementation of transformational leadership to sustainably address the challenges of education in the modern era.

Keywords: transformational leadership, principals, teacher motivation, education quality, literature review.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and rapid technological advances, educational institutions face various challenges that require adjustments to management strategies to remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of students. One of the key aspects in school management that has a major influence on the success of educational institutions is the leadership of school principals. Principals are expected to be the driving force for all school components to achieve common goals, which include improving the quality of education and developing the character of learners.

Principal leadership plays an important role in creating a school climate that is conducive to learning. Research shows that effective leadership can improve teacher and student performance and create an environment that supports quality learning [1]. In this context, principals act not only as managers but also as leaders who are able to inspire and motivate staff and students to achieve set educational goals [2, 3]. Thus, good leadership contributes to the development of a positive school culture, which in turn improves the effectiveness of education management.

Transformational leadership has become a widely recognized approach in educational contexts, especially in improving teacher motivation and performance. Transformational leaders play an important role in creating an inspiring and

collaborative work environment, which in turn drives positive changes in the quality of education [4]. Transformational leadership can increase teachers' performance motivation by directing them to achieve higher than expected results. This is in line with the findings of Mardizal, et al. [5] that leader behavior has a significant impact on teacher motivation in the context of learning.

Transformational leaders not only function as decision makers, but also as agents of change who can motivate and inspire teachers to contribute more in the educational environment. Furthermore, Palembang and Sihotang [6] emphasized that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in motivating teachers is crucial for the performance of their professional duties. This study shows a positive relationship between transformational leadership and teacher morale, which supports the results of another study that found that good leadership can improve staff motivation and performance [7].

In this context, transformational leadership plays a role in building a work culture that is innovative and oriented towards improving the quality of education, which is needed to face the challenges of an ever-evolving era. Transformational leadership also contributes to strengthening a positive school culture. According to Suud [8], transformational leaders are able to improve the morale and motivation of school staff, which in turn has an impact on the overall school culture.

Simanullang [9] added that transformational leaders create a school culture characterized by shared values and high expectations, which focuses on continuous improvement. Thus, transformational leaders play an important role in building a work environment that supports professional development and collaboration among teachers.

The literature shows that transformational leaders are able to create a work environment that is inspiring, collaborative and oriented towards improving the quality of learning. With an approach that focuses on a shared vision, collective values and support for teachers' professional development, transformational leadership is one of the relevant leadership models to be applied in this dynamic era of change.

Based on the above issues and the researcher's review of national and international articles, it was found that there are still few studies that discuss transformational leadership both theory and practice in schools, especially using the literature review method. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting a literature review on transformational leadership both theory and practice in schools. Thus, a more comprehensive implementation of transformational

leadership is expected to realize a school environment that supports the continuous improvement of education quality.

METHOD

This research uses the literature study method. The method aims to identify, search, evaluate, and interpret all existing research [10]. Researchers collected national journal articles from Google Scholar to complete this research. The articles collected are journal articles published in 2021 to 2025. The criteria in this study are: the articles reviewed were journal articles in both Indonesian and English, did not include articles other than Indonesian and English, and did not include theses and dissertations. From the various articles, the researcher selected 13 articles that were relevant to the keywords "Transformational Leadership" and "Transformational Leadership Theory and Practice in Schools". Furthermore, the articles were analyzed and compiled as a whole into a discussion written in this article.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Research related to Transformational Leadership: Theory and Practice in Schools which is the subject matter of this study is summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Review Table

No	Penulis dan Tahun	Hasil
1.	Puspasari [11]	The implementation of transformational leadership has a positive impact on teacher motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and student academic achievement.
2.	Suri [12]	Transformational leadership has a significant effect on teacher motivation, with 65% of motivation variability explained by these leadership factors.
3.	Harsoyo [13]	The application of transformational leadership improves the quality of education and the effectiveness of educational institutions.
4.	Primasary and Syamsudin [14]	1. The principal is successful in his transformational and instructional leadership to improve the quality of graduates. 2. The quality of graduates is good, although there are challenges in achieving university targets.
5.	Supandi [15]	The results show that there is a positive and significant influence between the principal's transformational leadership and the performance of teachers and staff, with a fairly strong relationship.

6.	Puspitarini [16]	The results showed that the principal's transformational leadership during the pandemic was very effective. The principal succeeded in changing the vision, providing motivation, and assisting teachers in adapting to new conditions. In addition, this transformational leadership resulted in positive impacts for both teachers and students in the learning process.
7.	Armiyanti, et al. [17]	Results show that transformational leadership successfully improves education services by building a strong vision, motivating participation, encouraging innovation and creating a collaborative learning culture.
8.	Rahayu and Iskandar [18]	Stating that the transformational leadership of school principals plays a significant role in inspiring, motivating, encouraging innovation, building collaboration, and strengthening the quality of education.
9.	Riski, et al. [19]	Transformational leadership style, work discipline, and work motivation have a significant effect on teacher performance. Transformative leadership style has a direct effect, while work discipline and motivation also show a significant impact.
10.	Andriani, et al. [20]	The overall transformational leadership of the principal is categorized as very good, with the indicators of transformational leadership implemented very well.
11.	Sliwka, et al. [21]	The results show that transformational leaders have a broader vision and are able to address systemic factors that support collaboration among teachers. They emphasize the importance of cultural and structural change to widely adopt deeper learning practices.
12.	Almonawer, et al. [22]	It was found that transformational leadership can increase teacher motivation and commitment, contributing to a more effective educational process.
13.	Alzoraiki, et al. [23]	The findings show that transformative leadership has a positive effect on teacher commitment and teaching performance, with teacher commitment acting as a mediator between transformative leadership and sustainable teaching performance.

Discussion

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes change, innovation and individual development in organizations, including schools. Leaders with this style have a clear vision and are able to inspire and motivate teachers and staff to improve the quality of education. According to Bass and Avolio [24], transformational leadership consists of four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized attention. These four aspects are fundamental in creating a more dynamic and progressive school environment.

Various studies have shown that transformational leadership has a significant impact on teacher motivation and performance. Puspasari [11] found that the application of transformational leadership in modern madrasahs increased teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and student academic achievement. Suri [12] also revealed that 65% of the variability in

teachers' work motivation can be explained by transformational leadership factors. In addition, Supandi's research showed a positive relationship between the principal's transformational leadership and the performance of teachers and staff, which has an impact on the effectiveness of learning in schools.

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes change, innovation and individual development in organizations, including schools. Leaders with this style have a clear vision and are able to inspire and motivate teachers and staff to improve the quality of education. According to Bass and Avolio [24], transformational leadership consists of four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized attention. These four aspects are fundamental in creating a more dynamic and progressive school environment.

Various studies have shown that transformational leadership has a significant impact on teacher motivation and performance. Puspasari [11] found that the application of transformational leadership in modern madrasahs increased teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and student academic achievement. Suri [12] also revealed that 65% of the variability in teachers' work motivation can be explained by transformational leadership factors. In addition, Supandi's research showed a positive relationship between the principal's transformational leadership and the performance of teachers and staff, which has an impact on the effectiveness of learning in schools.

Transformational leadership has also proven effective in dealing with challenges and crises, as seen during the Covid-19 pandemic. Puspitarini found that principals with this leadership style are able to adapt learning strategies, motivate teachers and students, and create a learning environment that remains productive despite difficult conditions. With a flexible and innovative approach, transformational leadership can help schools deal with changes and uncertainties in the future.

Overall, transformational leadership has a broad positive impact on education, especially in improving teacher motivation, education quality and learning innovation. To strengthen the implementation of this leadership model, there is a need for specialized training for school principals, strengthening the culture of innovation, and developing educational policies that support the implementation of transformational leadership. Thus, transformational leadership can continue to grow and contribute to the continuous improvement of education quality.

CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership has been shown to play an important role in improving teacher motivation, staff performance and the quality of education in schools. Through a clear vision, the ability to inspire, and the encouragement of innovation and collaboration, principals are able to create a positive learning environment that is adaptive to change. Therefore, this leadership model is relevant to be applied to respond to today's educational challenges and support the continuous improvement of education quality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1] N. Efendi, M. I. Sholeh, and Learning, "Manajemen pendidikan dalam meningkatkan mutu pembelajaran," *Academicus: Journal of Teaching*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 68-85, 2023.
- [2] F. Permatasari, N. A. Lestari, C. D. Y. Christie, and I. Suhaimi, "Kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu kinerja guru: studi meta analisis," *Indonesian Journal of Humanities Social Sciences*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 923-944, 2023.
- [3] A. O. Putri, R. F. Salsabila, and A. Marini, "Peran Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Peningkatan Kinerja Guru," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar dan Sosial Humaniora*, vol. 3, no. 9, pp. 659-668, 2024.
- [4] J. Santoso and P. Selwen, "Penerapan Strategi Kepemimpinan Transformasional Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Organisasi Pendidikan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Kanderang Tingang*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 400-409, 2023.
- [5] J. Mardizal, F. Anggriawan, G. Al Haddar, and O. Arifudin, "Model Kepemimpinan Transformational, Visioner dan Authentic Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan di Era 4.0," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research*, vol. 3, no. 5, pp. 2994-3003, 2023.

- [6] C. N. Palembang and H. Sihotang, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 26725-26736, 2023.
- [7] K. Sukerti and N. K. Sudianing, "Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru Smp Negeri 3 Singaraja," *Locus*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 106-120, 2023.
- [8] F. M. Suud, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional dan Implikasinya pada Pembentukan Budaya Jujur di Sekolah," *Sukma: Jurnal Pendidikan*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 261-286, 2018.
- [9] H. T. Simanullang, Peningkatan Kinerja Kepala Sekolah Melalui Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Komitmen Afektif dan Budaya Sekolah. *Zifatama Jawara*, 2024.
- [10] E. T. Rother, "Systematic literature review X narrative review," *Acta paulista de enfermagem*, vol. 20, pp. v-vi, 2007.
- [11] M. D. Puspasari, "Penerapan Kepemimpinan Transformasional Dalam Pengelolaan Madrasah Modern," *Refresh: Manjemen Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 40-47, 2023.
- [12] R. A. Suri, "Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Madrasah terhadap Motivasi Kerja Guru di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Islam," *AN NAJAH*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 47-54, 2024.
- [13] R. Harsoyo, "Teori kepemimpinan transformasional Bernard M. Bass dan aplikasinya dalam peningkatan mutu lembaga pendidikan Islam," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 247-262, 2022.
- [14] A. Primasary and S. Syamsudin, "Kepemimpinan transformasional dan instruksional kepala sekolah untuk meningkatkan mutu lulusan (studi kasus di SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta)," *Indonesian Journal of Educational Management Leadership*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 135-145, 2023.
- [15] S. R. Supandi, "Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kewirausahaan*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 113-128, 2023.
- [16] D. Puspitarini, "Kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah di masa pandemi," *Jurnal Fundadikdas*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 137-146, 2022.
- [17] A. Armiyanti, T. Sutrisna, L. Yulianti, N. R. Lova, and E. Komara, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Layanan Pendidikan," *Jurnal Educatio Fkip Unma*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 1061-1070, 2023.
- [18] R. Rahayu and S. Iskandar, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah Dalam Pembelajaran Abad 21 Di Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Elementaria Edukasia*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 287-297, 2023.
- [19] D. Riski, J. Idris, and M. Marwan, "Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah, Disiplin Kerja Dan Motivasi Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *journal Hijri*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 71-83, 2024.
- [20] N. Andriani, S. A. Kamaruddin, A. Pendidikan, and F. Pendidikan, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah di Sekolah Menengah kejuruan," *EDUSTUDENT: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 102, 2024.
- [21] A. Sliwka, B. Klopsch, J. Beigel, and L. Tung, "Transformational leadership for deeper learning: shaping innovative school practices for enhanced learning," *Journal of Educational Administration*, vol. 62, no. 1, pp. 103-121, 2024.
- [22] N. Almonawer, A. Althonayan, S. Alainati, F. Al-Hammad, R. Haque, and A. Senathirajah, "Transformational Leadership Style and School Transformation: The Case of Secondary

Schools in Kuwait," *International J. of Oper. and Quant. Management*, 2023.

[23] M. Alzoraiki, A. R. Ahmad, A. A. Ateeq, G. M. A. Naji, Q. Almaamari, and B. A. H. Beshr, "Impact of teachers' commitment to the relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable teaching performance," *Sustainability*, vol. 15, no. 5, p. 4620, 2023.

[24] B. M. Bass and B. J. Avolio, "Transformational leadership and organizational culture," *Public administration quarterly*, pp. 112-121, 1993.