

# The Influence of School Principals' Transformational Leadership Style on Teacher Performance

Tri Indahsari<sup>1\*</sup>, Burhanuddin<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Administration, State University of Malang, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author, email: tri.indahsari.2401328@students.um.ac.id

## Keywords

Transformational leadership

Teacher performance

Principal leadership

## Abstract

This study examines the impact of transformational leadership style by school principals on teacher performance. Using a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, this research analyzes studies published over the past ten years (2014-2024) sourced from Springer, Taylor & Francis, and other relevant databases focused on Indonesia. The review follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, involving identification, screening, and inclusion steps, resulting in 20 articles selected for final analysis.

The findings indicate that transformational leadership positively influences teacher performance by increasing motivation, inspiring teachers, and fostering a sense of responsibility in their tasks. Principals who adopt a transformational leadership style can create a positive work environment, provide clear direction, and motivate teachers to enhance their competencies and teaching performance, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes and more effective achievement of educational goals. Additionally, transformational leadership strengthens collaboration among school staff, fosters a culture of learning, and enhances teacher professionalism.

This study emphasizes that the quality of school leadership plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance, and recommends that school principals continuously develop their transformational leadership skills to motivate and inspire their staff. By doing so, principals can create a more effective school environment and contribute to achieving the vision and mission of education.

## 1. Introduction

The role of the school principal as a leader is very important, especially in improving the progress of the school. The principal has tasks and targets that need to be achieved for the school. The management and development of the school depend on the principal's ability. A principal is expected to have the right strategies to improve their performance and that of their subordinates. School leadership involves guiding, motivating, directing, and moving teachers, students, staff, and other parties connected to the educational institution to achieve educational goals (Haris, 2013). Thus, the leadership of the school principal is crucial in creating various rules and policies that must be followed by all members of the school community.

A good school principal must be able to improve the performance of teachers through training and capacity-building programs. Leadership style refers to the approach a leader uses to communicate with their subordinates (Chen & Silverthone, 2005; Davis, Buskist, & Miller, 2012). The leadership style adopted by a leader is not only personal but also organizational, with the goal of motivating subordinates. A principal can be considered successful if they understand the school as a complex and unique organization and can fulfill their role as a leader entrusted with the responsibility of leading the school. As the leader of the school, the principal is tasked with managing education professionally. A good principal must be able to optimize teacher performance through various training programs. Therefore, a principal is expected to possess the personality, skills, and abilities required to lead an educational institution.

Transformational leadership is one of the leadership styles that can influence members, making them feel confident, proud, loyal, and respectful toward their leader (Suwartno, 2019). According to Robins (2017), transformational leadership refers to a leadership approach that inspires members to align their individual interests with the collective goals through intellectual stimulation,

motivation, and idealized influence, leading them to work harder to improve the organization's performance. A leader with transformational leadership traits can enhance organizational commitment by inspiring and encouraging members to achieve better results in their performance (Permatasari & Supartha, 2017).

The leadership theory developed by Bass & Avolio (1994) outlines four dimensions of transformational leadership, known as the "4-I" concept, which distinguishes it from other leadership styles. These dimensions are: 1) **Idealized Influence**, which is the leader's ability to project charisma and strength, making them respected and admired by their subordinates; 2) **Inspirational Motivation**, which includes the leader's ability to boost enthusiasm and high spirits among subordinates to reach or exceed standards; 3) **Intellectual Stimulation**, where the leader encourages subordinates to explore new methods of performing tasks and seek opportunities to enhance their knowledge; 4) **Individualized Consideration**, where transformational leadership shows understanding of the unique differences and needs of each subordinate.

A school principal must possess skills in educational administration, a high level of commitment, and flexibility in carrying out their duties. The success of a school is determined by the effectiveness of the principal's leadership. Teachers play a crucial role in the success of students in school. The performance of a teacher is significantly influenced by their leader. Teacher performance will be maximized when the principal can guide and direct the teachers effectively, ensuring that they perform their duties responsibly, prioritize the needs and interests of students, and maintain authority to serve as role models. However, teacher performance is also affected by the leadership of the principal (Epi & Fatin, 2023).

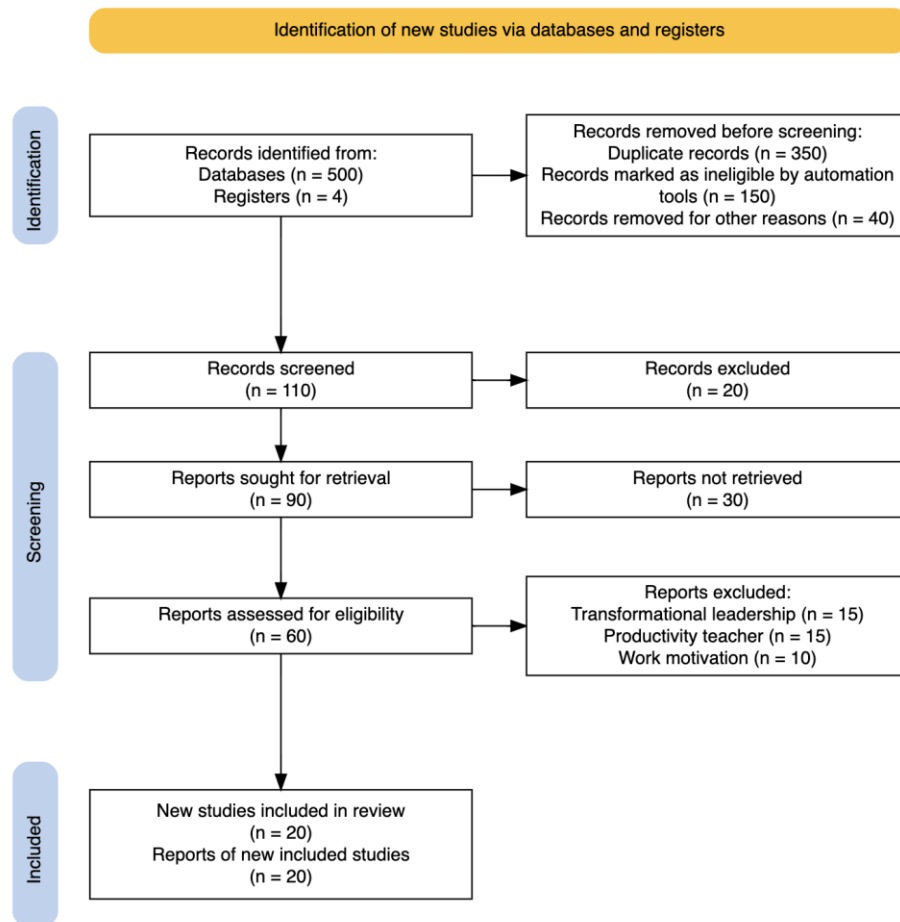
Teacher performance will be optimal when the principal provides proper guidance, allowing teachers to fulfill their duties responsibly. Moreover, teachers will consider students' needs and interests, ensuring there are no complaints about their duties. Teachers must also demonstrate authority so that they can be respected and followed by students. Improving teacher performance is essential (Dobson, 1985; Taylor & Tyler, 2012).

Improving teacher performance can be achieved through supervisory services aimed at enhancing professionalism, teacher performance, and the quality of teaching and learning processes. The success or failure of a teacher in performing their duties is greatly influenced by the leadership of the school principal. Previous research has shown that the effectiveness of the principal's leadership style affects teacher performance (Epi & Fatin, 2023). The principal plays an important role in enhancing teacher professionalism (Lazwardi, 2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that the progress and success of education depend on the leadership of the school principal. Based on the background above, the research question is: is there any influence of the principal's transformational leadership style on teacher performance?

## 2. Method

The research approach in this study is a systematic literature review (SLR) on the influence of transformational leadership style of school principals on teacher performance. The data sources were collected from Springer, Taylor & Francis, limited to publications from the last ten years (2014-2024), and other sources identified as relevant to the research area in Indonesia. The studies in this article apply the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, which include (1) identification, (2) screening, and (3) inclusion.

The preparation for this study began with the identification of (1) transformational leadership style, (2) the influence of transformational leadership of school principals, and (3) the improvement of teacher performance. The inclusion criteria discussed in this SLR are (1) transformational leadership, (2) the influence of school principal leadership on teacher performance, and (3) teacher performance. Research articles, reviews, and open-access and open-source files were selected as eligible references. Exclusion was applied to studies on school leadership styles outside of Indonesia, higher education, and teacher performance, resulting in 20 articles to be reviewed in this study (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Research Step Using PRISMA Protocol

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Results

A total of 500 database records aligned with the three objectives of the SLR outlined in the methodology. The publication restriction to the last ten years and the inclusion criteria for specific keywords were set in the advanced search menu of Springer and Taylor & Francis, resulting in 110 articles (5 records included). Further screening was conducted to exclude non-research articles and review articles, as well as articles that were not open-access or open-source, yielding 90 articles. The final screening step involved removing articles containing exclusion criteria, including studies on transformational leadership outside of Indonesia, work motivation, and teacher productivity. The final selection consisted of 20 articles for review in this study.

##### 3.1.1 Characteristics of Transactional Leadership

Leadership has the responsibility to conduct control activities, aiming to influence the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors of organizational members to direct them toward the organization's goals. According to Bass & Avolio (2003:47), the characteristics of transformational leadership include: 1) Charisma, a leader must have charisma to influence subordinates to follow them; 2) Inspirational Motivation, a leader must be able to inspire and motivate subordinates to achieve established standards; 3) Intellectual Stimulation, the leader must encourage subordinates to solve problems thoughtfully and rationally; 4) Individualized Consideration, a leader must understand the differences among subordinates.

This transformational leadership aligns with the leadership philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, known by the slogan "Ing ngarso sung tulodo ing madyo mangung karso tut wuri handayani," which can be applied in various organizational contexts, including both corporate and educational settings. In educational institutions, there are three major groups: educators, administrative staff, and students. In performing their duties, teachers have the authority to design, implement, and evaluate learning outcomes, while the principal plays a role in creating a work climate in the school that is comfortable for all members. A comfortable school environment affects the performance of teachers and administrative staff, which in turn influences the behavior and learning outcomes of students (Sudarman & Suparno, 2009). Thus, a transformational leader must be able to provide significant influence to subordinates, inspiring them to work towards achieving the vision, mission, and educational goals without burden or coercion.

### **3.1.2 Transformational Leadership of School Principals**

Transformational leadership has long been applied by several school principals in Indonesia. Principals who apply transformational leadership have had a strong impact on improving teacher performance in schools. Research conducted by Kaihatu and Rani (2007) showed a significant influence on the performance of high school teachers. The transformational leadership of the principal can be applied through dimensions that involve all members of the school to achieve the school's vision and mission.

A principal can be considered to apply transformational leadership if they can bring about positive changes in the school. Sudarwan Danim (2003) states that a principal can be said to apply transformational leadership if they can improve all members of the school, including teachers, staff, students, and facilities. Transformational leadership focuses on transforming teachers as key figures in learning. Teachers are expected to have a positive impact in the classroom, motivating students to learn and thus maximizing learning outcomes.

### **3.1.3 Teacher Performance**

Teacher performance is the outcome of a teacher's work when carrying out their duties, based on competence, experience, dedication, and time (Hasibuan, 2008). Teacher performance is a combination of three factors: work ability and interest, understanding and acceptance of task explanations, and work motivation levels. Teacher performance is the teaching achievement resulting from the activities performed by the teacher in carrying out their duties in education. Teacher performance consists of five indicators: designing lessons, implementing lessons, assessing learning outcomes, providing guidance and training, and carrying out additional tasks.

Teacher performance assessment is conducted on every main task activity of the teacher for career development, promotion, and position. In carrying out their main tasks, a teacher's competence in mastering and applying their knowledge is essential. Competency is critically needed for teachers, as outlined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16 of 2007 on Academic Qualifications and Teacher Competencies. Mastery and application of competencies significantly determine the quality of the learning process, student guidance, and the completion of additional tasks in line with the school's functions. Therefore, improving teacher performance through transformational leadership is needed.

## **3.2 Discussion**

### **The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Teacher Performance**

Research by Feriawan et al. (2023) explains that transformational leadership style can impact teacher performance. It can be concluded that principals who effectively implement transformational leadership can enhance teacher performance in carrying out their duties. Conversely, transformational leadership can also influence teachers' attitudes regarding responsibility and their response to developments in information, knowledge, technology, and changes in educational

policies (Addin et al., 2020). Moreover, the competence of school principals can create a learning environment that supports student development in line with the expected competencies (Rahayuningsih & Rijanto, 2022).

Research by Nur Rohma (2023) shows that transformational leadership influences the performance of Madrasah Aliyah teachers in Pemalang Regency. Transformational leadership has a positive effect on teacher performance. As transformational leadership improves, it also impacts the improvement of teacher performance. Therefore, to optimize and maximize teacher performance, transformational leadership is essential, as the principal's transformational leadership style can influence, inspire, motivate, and prioritize collective interests over personal ones, as well as foster trust in subordinates. Leadership can raise awareness among subordinates by guiding them toward higher ideals and moral values (Sutikno, 2018).

The research by Ling Li & Yang Liu (2020) also supports a positive view of transformational leadership and teacher leadership, showing that when principals inspire and develop staff, teachers engage in the principal's leadership related to their responsibilities in teaching. This is consistent with other studies that indicate that teacher leadership in schools depends on the leadership of the school principal (Day et al., 2016; Diamond & Spillane, 2016; Leithwood et al., 2007). With a learning group, teacher engagement in professional development and managing learning is more effective; however, it still requires strong leadership from the principal to set goals, motivate, create structure and climate, and promote instructional collaboration and professional development (Antonakis & Day, 2017; Diamond & Spillane, 2016). Therefore, the principal's leadership impacts the excellence of teachers, staff, and the school, where positive changes can drive transformation in schools through collaborative teacher performance (Bryk et al., 2010). Through transformational leadership, it is expected that teacher performance will improve further.

### 3.3 Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion presented, it can be concluded that transformational leadership has a significant influence on teacher performance in schools. The transformational leadership style applied by school principals can enhance teachers' motivation, inspiration, and sense of responsibility toward their duties. The studies reviewed indicate that principals who apply transformational leadership can drive positive changes in teacher performance. Principals who inspire, provide clear direction, and create a positive work climate can motivate teachers to improve their competencies and performance in teaching. This, in turn, will lead to better student learning outcomes and the achievement of educational goals more effectively.

Furthermore, transformational leadership also plays a role in strengthening collaboration among school staff, creating an effective learning culture, and enhancing teacher professionalism. Therefore, improving teacher performance greatly depends on the quality of the principal's leadership, which not only manages but also inspires and motivates all members of the school community to work together to achieve the established vision and mission of education. As a recommendation, it is important for school principals to continue developing their transformational leadership style by paying attention to each dimension of leadership, in order to consistently improve teacher performance and create a better school environment.

### Author Contributions

All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### References

- Antonakis, J., & Day, D.V. (2017). *The nature of leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bass, B. M., Avolio, B. J., Jung, D. I., & Berson, Y. (2003). "Predicting Unitperformance by Assessing Transformational and Transactional Leadership". *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(2), 207-218.

- Bass, B.M. & Avolio, B.J. 1994. "Improving Organizational Effectiveness: Through Transformational Leadership". London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J.Q. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Chen, M. C., Cheng, S. J., & Hwang, Y. (2005). An empirical investigation of the relationship between intellectual capital and firms' market value and financial performance. *Journal of intellectual capital*, 6(2), 159-176.
- Danim, Sudarwan. 2003. *Menjadi Komunitas Pembelajar: Kepemimpinan Transformasional dalam Komunitas Pembelajar*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2016). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 52(2), 221-258
- Diamond, J.B., & Spillane, J.P. (2016). School leadership and management from a distributed perspective: A 2016 retrospective and prospective. *Management in Education*, 30(4), 147-154.
- Efendi, F., Sunaryo, H., & Harijanto, D. (2023). Efektivitas kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah melalui komitmen kerja terhadap kinerja guru merdeka belajar. *Jurnal Akuntabilitas Manajemen Pendidikan*, 11(2), 19-32. DOI: 10.21831/jamp.v11i2.60605
- Haris. 2013. *Buku Perkuliahan Kepemimpinan Pendidikan*. Tanpa tempat: Government of Indonesia (Gol) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB).
- Hasibuan, Malayu S.P. 2008. *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia*. Edisi Revisi. Jakarta : PT. Bumi Aksara.
- Kaihatsu, T. S., dan Rini, W.A. 2007. Kepemimpinan Transformasional dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Kepuasan atas Kualitas Kehidupan Kerja, Komitmen Organisasi, dan Perilaku Ekstra Peran: Studi pada Guru-Guru SMU di Kota Surabaya. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Kewirausahaan*. 98 (1). Hlm. 49-61.
- Kurniawati, N. R. (2023). Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Madrasah, Motivasi Kerja dan Disiplin Kerja terhadap Kinerja Guru Madrasah Aliyah. *JIIP- Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 6(1), 583-595. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i1.1395>
- Lazwardi, Dedi. (2016). Peran Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Profesionalisme Guru. Al-Idarah: *Jurnal Kependidikan Islam*. Vol. 6, No. 2.
- Li, L., & Liu, Y. (2022). An integrated model of principal transformational leadership and teacher leadership that is related to teacher self-efficacy and student academic performance. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 42(4), 661-678.
- Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional No. 16 Tahun 2007 Tentang Standar Kualifikasi Akademik dan Kompetensi Guru.
- Permatasari, K. C., & Supartha, W. G. (2017). Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Budaya Organisasi, Dan Keadilan Organisasi Terhadap Komitmen Organisasional Pada CV. Megah Food Trading (Doctoral dissertation, Udayana University).
- Rahayuningsih, Y. S., & Iskandar, S. (2022). Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam menciptakan budaya sekolah yang positif di era revolusi industri 4.0. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(5), 7850-7857. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i5.3626>
- Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., & Campbell, T. T. (2017). *Organizational behaviour*. pearson.
- Siregar, E. S., & Tarigan, F. N. (2023). Efektivitas Gaya Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah terhadap Kinerja Guru. *jurnal education and development*, 11(2), 305-309. DOI:10.37081/ed.v11i2.4475
- Sudarman Danim dan Suparno. 2009. *Manajemen Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Sutikno, M. S. (2018). *Pemimpin dan kepemimpinan: Tips praktis untuk menjadi pemimpin yang diidolakan*.
- Suwatno, P. (2019). *Kepemimpinan dalam oraganisasi public dan bisnis*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.