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## Transformational Leadership Strategies: Enhancing Teacher Leadership in Schools

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Abstract: This study investigates the strategies employed by principals to foster teacher leadership through a transformational leadership approach in a school in East Lombok. A qualitative case study method was utilized, involving semi-structured interviews and document analysis with four teachers and one principal as participants. The findings reveal three key strategies implemented by the principal: conducting regular meetings to address educational challenges and share best practices, facilitating teacher professional development through workshops and training, and actively involving teachers in decision-making processes. These strategies align with transformational leadership dimensions, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The results underscore the significant role of principals as transformational leaders in promoting teacher leadership, enhancing collaboration, and fostering a positive school culture. This study highlights the practical implications for principals to adopt transformational leadership practices to optimize teacher potential and improve overall educational outcomes. Further research is recommended to explore the challenges of implementing teacher leadership in diverse educational settings and to assess its impact on long-term school performance.

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the primary challenges for under the independent teachers curriculum policy lies in their ability to provide the best possible service to students (Suhandi & Robi'ah, 2022). Teachers recognize the importance of developing students' abilities as part of their professional responsibilities. A teacher is an individual who actively shares knowledge with others, equipped with requisite knowledge the (Heriyansyah, 2018), competence, and experience in their specific field of expertise (Dirsa et al., 2022).

Teachers face challenges in organizing students effectively during

learning activities (Wardhani, 2018). Many teachers still fall short in providing comprehensive guidance to students for completing assigned tasks. Several studies highlight that one of the primary challenges in classroom learning is how teachers can effectively manage students to ensure participation in the learning process (Ningsih, 2022). Furthermore, teachers often rely on methods that inadvertently lead to boredom in the classroom, resulting in students losing focus and engagement during lessons (Afriani et al., 2021).

Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding the

results of the Teacher Competency Test (UKG), which measures professional, pedagogical, social, and personal competencies, The national teacher competency test results are still below the target, namely 58.5 (standard 60). Therefore, it is important to improve teacher quality through teacher development.

The Merdeka Curriculum policy places a significant focus on teachers in schools. According to Regulation No. 15 of 2018 issued by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, responsibilities teachers' primary include: (a) planning learning guidance activities, (b) conducting learning through intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities, (c) assessing learning or guidance outcomes, (d) mentoring and training students, and (e) performing additional tasks related to the main activities in accordance with the teacher's workload. Consequently, teachers play a pivotal role as the driving force in implementing effective learning. One of the ways fulfill teachers can these responsibilities is by exercising teacher leadership in the classroom.

Teacher leadership is a concept that emphasizes the critical role of educators in initiating and driving change within the educational environment 2024). (Visone, ability to inspire, encompasses the influence, and lead positive transformations in teaching and learning practices (Schott et al., 2020). Implementing teacher leadership is thus essential as a demonstration of teachers' commitment to managing effective classroom learning. Research by Warren (2021) highlights that teacher leadership is a pivotal factor in achieving learning objectives.

Research on teacher leadership by Visone (2024) indicates that fostering a culture of risk-taking, trust in teachers, support for leadership expectations, and shared leadership are key factors that enable the growth of teacher leaders. These elements also emphasize the importance of a collaborative system that allows teachers to work together effectively. findings The further highlight the critical role of principals in supporting teachers to navigate complex structures and challenging cultures (Acton, 2022). Consequently, this research aims to explore strategies for developing teacher leadership.

The principal plays a pivotal role in educational institutions, leading and managing all school activities, ranging from academic to administrative aspects. As a leader, the principal is responsible for fostering a conducive learning environment for students and staff while ensuring the realization of the school's vision and mission (Capp et al., 2022). Additionally, the principal serves as a mediator in resolving conflicts among students, teachers, and parents. The success of a school is often attributed to the effective leadership of a principal who can inspire, provide direction, and manage resources wisely (Day et al., 2020).

Francis and Oluwatoyin (2019) emphasize that principals are key agents success in classroom in teachers' management. By implementing leadership transformational models. principals significantly influence teachers' classroom practices and maintain positive relationships (Supermane et al., 2018; Li & Liu, 2022). Bass and Riggio (2006) identified four key components of transformational leadership that define an effective principal: Idealized Influence. Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation. and Individualized Consideration. These attributes highlight how principals create policies to support teacher leadership and enhance effective learning management.

Many previous studies have focused on learning in the context of teacher leadership. For instance, research by Bellibaş et al. (2020)

emphasized the critical role of teacher agency as a mediator in the interaction between teacher leadership and principals' learning-centered leadership. The study concluded that emphasizing teaching and learning in principals' leadership practices is essential for cultivating school cultures that encourage teachers to assume leadership roles.

Meanwhile, previous studies have extensively explored the development of teacher leadership, particularly through teacher leadership learning strategies and building teacher confidence in professional learning (Pan & Chen, 2021; Er, 2024). This research, however,

focuses on the strategies employed to foster teacher leadership from a transformational perspective. Consequently, the research question formulated is: What strategies do school principals use to develop teacher leadership through a transformational perspective?

### **METHOD**

To overcome the problems above, look at the flow diagram, which is the research step. Research on school principals developing teacher leadership through transformational theory was carried out based on these steps, as presented in Figure 1.

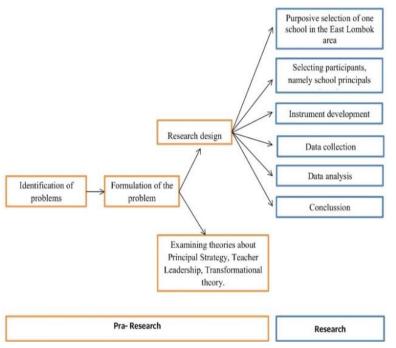


Figure 1. Research Steps.

This study employs a qualitative research design. Creswell (2020) defines qualitative research as an approach used to describe, explore, and understand how individuals or groups perceive social or humanitarian issues. In this context, researchers act as primary instruments for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to derive meaningful insights (Lichtman, 2023). The research method utilized is a case study, focusing on the strategies employed by school principals

to enhance teacher leadership through the lens of transformational leadership.

The purposive sampling strategy was employed to select research participants (Campbell et al., 2020). This approach enables researchers to choose participants based on their relevance to the research objectives and the specific goals of the study (Campbell et al., 2020).

This research involved four teachers and one principal at one school

in East Lombok. The inclusion criteria for participants were teachers with at least 5 years of teaching experience and school principals who had served for at least 3 years. Participants' demographic characteristics included age, gender, education level, and length of employment at the current school. The participants' ages varied between 30 and 50 years. The length of time they have worked at the school currently ranges from 3 to 7 years.

Data collection was conducted through interviews and documentation studies. According to Merriam and Grenier (2019), data collection refers to a series of procedures employed to gather the necessary information to address research questions. structured interviews were held with school principals and teachers over a one-month period. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes and was recorded using a digital recording To ensure consistency in device. questioning, an interview guide was developed based on the literature on transformational leadership. The collected data were transcribed and analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, identifying key themes and breaking them down to uncover patterns and relationships relevant to the research objectives.

The research instrument employed in this study was an interview guide developed based on the theories of principal strategy (Crowther et al., 2009), teacher leadership (Visone, 2024), and transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The interview

guide comprised 10 questions designed to explore how school principals can foster teacher leadership through the application of transformational leadership principles.

The research data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which involves three key steps: data reduction. data presentation, conclusion drawing. Data reduction refers to the process of simplifying and organizing the collected data to focus on relevant aspects. Data presentation involves the structured exposure of the reduced data in an understandable format. Finally, conclusion drawing entails interpreting the presented data to derive meaningful insights and findings (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION Principal's Strategy in Improving Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a successful educational environment, as it encompasses teachers taking on responsibilities beyond their classrooms to positively impact and enhance the broader school community (Schott et al., 2020). Teacher leaders actively participate in school improvement initiatives (Szeto & Cheng, 2018), provide guidance to their colleagues, and engage in decisionprocesses making that influence educational policies and practices within schools (Ross, 2019). The results of interviews school principals with regarding the principal's strategies for developing teacher leadership can be observed in the following Table 1.

 Table 1. Result of Interview Principal Strategy Fostering Teacher Leadership.

Question	Interview Result
What strategies	The strategy that I can apply is:
are used to	a) I have held regular meetings with the teacher to discuss existing problems related
develop the	to the learning process and look for existing solutions. This was done to see to what
quality of teachers	extent the teacher can solve existing problems.
as learning	b) I fully support training activities, workshops, technical guidance to develop
leaders in the	teacher professionalism as a form of concrete step to improve teacher quality.
classroom?	c) I also involve teachers in decision making which can build teacher competency
	in teacher leadership in learning.

According to the theory proposed by Muijs and Harris, teacher leadership can be categorized into three distinct or dimensions. The models dimension highlights the teacher leader's as a broker, ensuring role establishment of effective linkages. The second dimension emphasizes participative leadership, focusing on collaborative efforts among teachers in developing and implementing teaching strategies. The third dimension underlines the teacher's role as a mediator, facilitating communication and conflict resolution within the school community (Kamaruzaman et al., 2020).

In the first dimension. brokering role of teacher leaders emphasizes their ability to establish and strengthen linkages within the school community. School principals implement various strategies to enhance relationships between teachers students. One effective approach is organizing regular meetings where teacher leaders share best practices, address challenges, and propose solutions (Turner et al., 2018). These meetings serve as platforms for fostering collaboration and building stronger interpersonal relationships. Research findings indicate that holding regular meetings is an effective method for internal strengthening emotional connections within the workplace (Afriani et al., 2021).

During an interview, the principal highlighted holding regular that meetings is a strategic initiative that relationships fosters good and collaboration. This strategy aligns with ofteacher leaders the role intermediaries who facilitate effective communication and promote positive educational outcomes. To provide further reinforcement to the findings, the researcher includes visual evidence of organizing principal routine activities at school, as depicted in the Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Regular Meeting Conducted by Principal and Teacher.

dimension. In the second participative leadership emphasizes collaborative efforts among teachers in developing and implementing effective teaching strategies. The principal plays a pivotal role in fostering the professional development of teacher leaders, ensuring well-equipped they are to work professionally (Santosa, 2022). During an interview, the principal highlighted importance the of teacher professionalism, stating that professional growth is integral to improving the quality of education.

Research findings support this professional revealing that view. development activities positively impact teachers' ability to meet the demands of roles and enhance their their professional competencies (Ikhwan & Rabbani, 2024). To substantiate these findings, the researcher provides a visual representation of the principal professional facilitating routine development activities in the school.



**Figure 3.** Workshop Professional Development Conducted by Principal and Teacher.

third In the dimension. the teacher's role as a mediator is emphasized. School principals enhance this role by involving teachers decision-making in the process, particularly regarding discipline policies classroom management, strengthen their capacity as mediators (Ayeni, 2018). When teachers feel their input is valued and considered in shaping school policies, they are more motivated to effectively carry out their mediation responsibilities. During an interview, the principal stated that teachers are actively involved in school decision-making processes. This approach aligns with research findings, which indicate that teachers are more motivated and committed to their work when principals include them organizational decision-making (Ingersoll al., 2018). et Teacher involvement fosters a sense of value and recognition, creating a positive work Furthermore. environment. teacher involvement in decision-making has been identified as a critical strategy for achieving educational goals effectively (Ayeni, 2018). By assuming the role of mediators in the classroom, teacher leaders can contribute to fostering a harmonious learning environment, ensuring that educational objectives are met efficiently and effectively.

The principal has implemented various strategies to enhance teacher leadership within the school. These strategies reflect the principal's responsibility to empower teachers as leaders in classroom learning (Conan Simpson, 2021). By assuming leadership roles, teachers can directly influence the quality of education, foster innovation, and cultivate a collaborative culture that benefits both students and staff.

The findings of this research indicate that the transformational strategies implemented by school principals significantly increase teacher leadership, supporting the results of previous research by Morales, (2022)

which emphasizes the importance of transformational leadership in increasing effectiveness and motivation educational organizations. However. results contradict these research conducted by Chaplin-Cheyne, (2021) that transformational which states leadership is not always effective in an educational context due to differences in school organizational culture. Recent research from Kılınç et al., (2024) also supports these findings, showing that the implementation of transformational strategies by school principals can increase collaboration and innovation among teachers, strengthening argument that this approach is effective in advancing the quality of education.

# The Implication of Principal's Transsormational Leadership Approach in Teacher Leadership

Transformational theory has four approach concepts: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

### **Idealized Influence**

Idealized influence is a key characteristic of transformational leadership that fosters respect, trust, and in leaders (Afshari, Transformational leaders serve as role models by exemplifying commitment, ethical behavior, and dedication to their members (Dietz et al., 2020). Such leaders avoid exploiting their authority for personal gain, willingly share risks, prioritize the needs of their members, convey a clear mission, and instill a sense of pride in their team (Tende & Amah, 2021). This leadership style inspires organizational members to respect, admire, and trust their leaders, motivating them to emulate these positive behaviors (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

The principal remarked, "I am aware that leaders are role models, so in any situation, I strive to be a good

example and work optimally at school." Research supports this perspective, revealing that leaders who model positive behaviors have a constructive influence on their colleagues (Kim et al., 2023). This underscores the importance of a leader establishing themselves as a guiding influence within their school environment.

Based on the results of interviews conducted, The teacher said that "the principal is our role model at school, every morning the principal always arrives early to monitor the situation at school. So we often feel embarrassed if the picket teacher is late coming to school." The principal as an educational leader becomes a role model for teachers so that teachers can carry out their duties and responsibilities professionally.

Another important aspect of effective leadership is the principal's

ability to establish a strong vision for the school environment. A clear and welldefined vision provides direction for achieving a better school (Rohiat, 2021). The principal stated, "One of the suggestions for building the desired school is to clarify a vision that can be accepted and achieved Developing a vision involves creating a healthy and conducive environment (Mombourguette, 2017). This demonstrates that a principal with a strong vision can positively influence For instance. the school. during meetings with teachers and staff, the principal consistently communicates their vision for improving the school. Research highlights that regular and clear communication with subordinates fosters positive emotional connections, which helps translate plans actionable outcomes (Saputra, 2021).

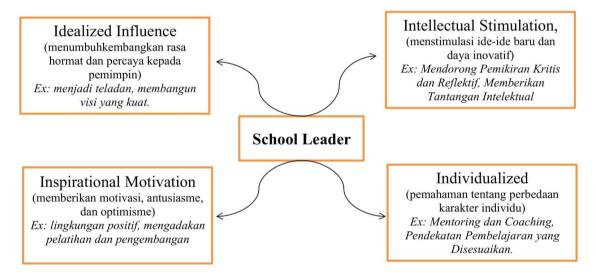


Figure 4. School Leader Strategy by Using Transformational Approach (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

### **Inspirational Motivation**

Inspirational Motivation refers to a leadership approach that communicates optimism and prioritizes the establishment of a vision and the achievement of shared goals, supported by the commitment and encouragement of all school members (Anwar, 2023). A school principal who employs inspirational motivation fosters

positive and optimistic atmosphere in which challenges are perceived as opportunities for growth and improvement (Ameen et al., 2021). By consistently expressing confidence in the abilities of their team and promoting shared objectives, such leaders cultivate an environment where all members feel valued and inspired to contribute their best efforts (ALmahasneh et al., 2022).

this Through inspirational motivation, school principals create an educational environment that is dynamic oriented towards continuous and improvement, with teachers and students who are motivated to reach their full potential. In its application in schools, the principal tries to provide motivation to the staff so that they can create a positive environment. The principal said that "I provide motivation to teachers so that the work can be completed well; this motivation is important for teachers in order to create good grades and a positive environment." Research results reveal that a positive environment can have an impact on teacher performance school (Lutfah et al., Therefore. teachers need strong motivation from the principal. The principal organizes meetings or events where the principal speaks directly to and students, providing teachers motivation and renewing their enthusiasm.

Furthermore, by providing quality teacher development, we build their professionalism. School principals must provide training that can provide new insights to staff. The research results reveal that school principals implement strategies to create professional teachers through training activities such as workshops (Ikhwan & Rabbani, 2024). Based on the results of an interview with the teacher, he said that "we, as teachers at this school, always upgrade ourselves in order to develop our quality." This is in line with research showing that training can be useful to provide good benefits to teachers (Kocak & Bozkurt Bostanci, 2020). Training activities can be an important factor in creating teachers who are of high quality (Mokkapati & Mada, 2018). In this activity, the school principal tries to bring in experts or resource persons to provide new knowledge and insights for teachers at the school.

### **Intellectual Stimulation**

Intellectual Stimulation represents a leadership approach that broadens the school perspectives of members. encourages creative problem-solving, and motivates subordinates to explore innovative approaches (Ogola et al., 2017). As a core component of transformational leadership, Intellectual emphasizes Stimulation fostering creativity and innovation within teams (Bogoviz et al., 2018). In the educational context, principals who implement Intellectual Stimulation challenge both teachers and students to think critically, embrace innovative solutions. and explore novel ideas in addressing academic and institutional challenges.

emphasized, The principal "Problems exist in every learning process, and as a leader, I must actively participate in resolving even the smallest issues, as it demonstrates a good response to teachers and empowers them to address challenges effectively." This perspective aligns with the findings of Kusumaningrum et al. (2017), which highlight that providing solutions to problems is an essential responsibility of school principals, considering their authority. Furthermore, duties and Graesser et al. (2018) argue that principals must act as problem-solvers and exemplify effective leadership, setting a positive standard for teachers within the school environment.

School principals foster a safe environment for experimenting and learning from failure (Weiner et al., 2021), thereby encouraging continuous improvement and adaptive learning (Faizuddin et al., 2022). By encouraging staff and students to develop problemsolving and independent thinking skills, principals help them become more effective and resilient in their roles (Zhang et al., 2020).

Furthermore, school principals who present intellectual challenges to teachers contribute to fostering a dynamic and progressive academic

environment. By encouraging teachers to think critically and explore new ideas (Sudana & Apriyani, 2018), principals motivate them to step beyond their comfort zones and develop innovative teaching methodologies (Nurvati, 2023). For instance, principals might organize discussions on recent advancements in educational research or facilitate workshops where teachers can exchange best practices and offer constructive another. feedback to one intellectual stimulation not only enhances teachers' knowledge but also elevates the quality of teaching delivered to students (Mubarokah et al., 2021).

Based on the results of the interview with teacher, he said that "the principal gives us the freedom to be able to work and innovate in the learning environment in order to provide good benefits to students. This is done to answer the challenges of today's era." Research results reveal that teachers with new skills and innovations have a strong influence on student achievement (Hadisi et al., 2017). Therefore, school principals can continue to strive to provide excellence. best for the common good.

### **Individualized**

Individualization refers a leader's capacity to recognize and address the unique needs and expectations of subordinates on an individual basis (Sutanto et al., 2021). It is a vital component of transformational leadership, emphasizing personalized support that aligns with each individual's strengths, aspirations, and objectives within organization. the In the educational context. a principal practicing individualization invests time in understanding the personal professional goals of teachers students (Muhammad Sharif, 2024). They provide tailored support and opportunities to help individuals achieve their full potential (Martínez-Córcoles et al., 2020). For instance, a principal might design a customized professional development plan for teachers, aligned with their specific interests and career goals. Such an approach cultivates a sense of value and recognition, thereby boosting morale, motivation, and overall engagement within the school community.

Based on the interview, the principal said, "We give roles and tasks according teachers their to qualifications and expertise; this is one way for teachers to develop according to their interests and talents." Risdiany, that the professional (2021) said development of teachers is a school necessity in an effort to support school quality. The consideration of a school assigning principal in tasks responsibilities in accordance with the teacher's expertise is an appropriate and measurable method.In other school principals can also carry out coaching and mentoring as a way to provide services to teachers (Kutsyuruba & Godden, 2019). This mentoring and coaching will have a good impact on teacher performance if it continues to be pursued. Research by Carr et al., (2017) revealed that one of the efforts to develop teacher abilities is by carrying out mentoring and coaching as a form of developing teacher professionalism.

Based on an interview with the school principal, he said, "Mentoring and coaching are tools for developing teacher professionalism that must continue to be carried out." Therefore, the principal plays a major role in providing good guidance to teachers at school.

The practical implications of this research finding indicate that principals implement transformational who leadership strategies can significantly improve teacher leadership, which in turn has a positive impact on the quality teaching. Therefore. it of is recommended that school principals be provided with intensive training regarding transformational approaches, as well as ongoing support to implement these strategies in daily practice. In the future, it will be important for educational policymakers to develop professional development programs that focus on transformational leadership, as well as create evaluation systems that can measure the effectiveness of these strategies and provide constructive feedback.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that have been described. the results of this research show that the principal's strategy includes regular teacher professional meetings, development, and teacher involvement in decision making. These findings imply the important role of school principals in encouraging teacher leadership through a transformational This research approach. has limitation that researchers have not looked at other aspects which could allow obstacles that will considering the research results in this study. The hope for future research is to look at the context of a supportive school environment, broader research objects and considering problems in the application of teacher leadership from other perspectives.

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