



**ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE OF THE
PRINCIPAL AND THE FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHER
PERFORMANCE AT SD INPRES DAGIMON, MAPPI REGENCY, SOUTH
PAPUA PROVINCE**

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Abstract

This study is motivated by the educational challenges in disadvantaged, frontier, and outermost (3T) regions, particularly Mappi Regency, South Papua, where limited infrastructure, low teacher discipline, and weak supervision demand transformational leadership from school principals to enhance teacher performance. The study aims to analyze the transformational leadership style of the school principal and its influence on teacher performance at SD Inpres Dagimon. A qualitative approach with a single case study design was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, with validation conducted via source triangulation. The findings reveal that teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership encompass four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Such leadership positively impacts work motivation, discipline, instructional innovation, and teacher collaboration. The implication is that the application of transformational leadership constitutes a key strategy in addressing educational challenges in 3T regions and in enhancing sustainable learning quality.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Teacher Perception, Teacher Performance, Principal, 3T Area Education



INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in driving national development, particularly in improving the quality of human resources. In Indonesia, the equitable distribution of education quality remains a major challenge, especially in 3T (disadvantaged, frontier, and outermost) regions such as Mappi Regency, South Papua Province. Educational issues in this region are not only related to limited facilities and infrastructure but also to the low quality of teacher performance, which in turn affects the achievement of national education goals.

Teachers, as the spearhead of education delivery, have a central role in creating effective learning environments and producing quality graduates (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers). According to Uno and Lamatengo (in Akbar & Imaniyati, 2019), teacher performance refers to individual work behavior that results in certain achievements after meeting predetermined criteria. This level of performance is influenced by internal factors such as motivation and competence, as well as external factors such as a conducive work environment.

In the external context, school principal leadership becomes a crucial factor in determining teacher performance. Effective leadership can foster a positive work climate, motivate, provide individual attention, and encourage instructional innovation (Bass & Avolio, 1994). However, in remote areas such as Mappi Regency, the quality of school leadership often falls far short of expectations. The BPMP of Papua Province (2025) reported low attendance rates among principals and teachers, as well as issues such as discrepancies in the Dapodik data, low public awareness of the importance of education, and significant transportation barriers.

This situation is exacerbated by findings from assessment teams indicating that some principals do not fully perform their duties, and in certain cases, rarely attend school. The absence of consistent leadership has caused stagnation in the learning process, decreased teacher motivation, and ultimately disadvantaged students. Furthermore, issues related to the transparency of School Operational Assistance (BOS) fund management and weak accountability have further deteriorated the quality of education governance at the primary school level.

The unique geographical and socio-cultural characteristics of Mappi Regency also pose specific challenges. The shortage of qualified teachers, limited access to professional training, and social conditions that do not always support the educational process have complicated efforts to improve education quality.



This situation calls for adaptive, contextual, and transformation-oriented school leadership to foster sustainable changes.

Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership styles have a positive impact on teacher performance. Akbar & Imaniyati (2019) concluded that transformational leadership can improve teacher motivation and performance, while Wisda (2021) emphasized that leadership success correlates with teachers' work enthusiasm. Aisyah et al. (2024) further stated that positive teacher perceptions of leadership style increase professional loyalty and responsibility.

However, most of these studies were conducted in regions with adequate educational infrastructure, whereas research in 3T areas such as Mappi Regency remains very limited. The unique social, geographical, and cultural contexts require different leadership approaches, making findings from more developed areas not always applicable. This research gap highlights the need for qualitative studies that explore teachers' experiences and perceptions directly in the field.

Based on this background, the present study aims to analyze teachers' perceptions of the transformational leadership style of the principal at SD Inpres Dagimon, Mappi Regency, and to examine its impact on teacher performance, including aspects of motivation, discipline, instructional innovation, and collaboration. This approach is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of educational leadership in remote areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and empower subordinates beyond expectations through a shared vision, values, and goals (Hafidulloh et al., 2021). It involves idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Anindita & Tanuwijaya, 2023), positioning leaders as role models, innovation drivers, facilitators, and change agents (Insan, 2017; Amalou, 2024). In education, principals apply it to guide teachers with a clear vision, continuous development, and a supportive environment.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is the fulfillment of duties and responsibilities as educators (Ashlan & Akmaludin, 2021), including planning, teaching, evaluation, student mentoring, and classroom management. It shapes students' character, attitudes, and skills (Munawir et al., 2022), and is indicated by subject mastery,



teaching strategies, evaluation ability, and interpersonal skills (Hafidulloh et al., 2021). Improvement requires professional competence, high motivation, and supportive conditions.

Factors Affecting Teacher Performance

Performance is influenced by motivation, professional competence, discipline, and work environment. Motivation drives optimal performance, competence covers mastery of material, curriculum, teaching skills, and technology (Mulyasa, 2013), discipline maintains order and role modeling (Hasibuan, 2019), and the work environment affects comfort and social relations (Sedarmayanti, 2018). Improvement requires synergy among these factors.

Transformational Leadership Theory in Education

In education, transformational leadership influences teacher performance through a clear vision, professional development, and a positive climate (Ratnawulan et al, 2021). Principals act as inspirers, facilitators, and change agents, fostering trust and intrinsic motivation. The four dimensions (Robbins & Judge, 2018) guide school improvement, promoting commitment, teaching creativity, and active participation, thereby enhancing performance quality.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a single case study design focusing on SD Inpres Dagimon in Mappi Regency, South Papua. This approach was selected to explore an in-depth understanding of the school principal's transformational leadership style and its impact on teacher performance within the context of 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions. The research will be conducted from January to July 2025, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument responsible for determining the focus, selecting informants, as well as collecting and interpreting data (Creswell, 2014). The research subjects are permanent and honorary teachers who have taught for at least one year at SD Inpres Dagimon, selected using purposive sampling techniques. The data sources consist of primary data obtained from interviews with teachers and secondary data derived from official school documents.

Data collection will be carried out through three main techniques: observation of interactions between the principal, teachers, and students; in-depth semi-structured interviews to explore teachers' experiences and perspectives; and document analysis, including the school's vision and mission, RKS, RAPBS, and meeting minutes. The collected data will be analyzed interactively through three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and



conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data validity will be ensured through source triangulation, member checking, and audit trails, ensuring that the research findings possess strong validity and reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis in this study was conducted based on the results of in-depth interviews with teachers at SD Inpres Dagimon, Mappi Regency, South Papua, using two approaches: data obtained directly during field interviews and data analysis conducted after the researcher returned from the field.

Several components were involved in the data analysis process, namely:

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the initial process carried out by the researcher, involving the summarization, sorting, and focusing of raw data obtained from in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In this study, data reduction was based on the predetermined focus and sub-focus of the research, namely:

1. Teachers' perceptions of the principal's transformational leadership style.
2. The impact of leadership style on teacher performance.
3. Factors influencing teacher performance.

b. Data Presentation

After reduction, the data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives organized according to relevant themes and subthemes. The data presentation aimed to provide a systematic depiction of the field findings, which were subsequently analyzed theoretically.

c. Conclusion and Verification

Conclusions were drawn after all data had been thematically analyzed and interpreted. The conclusions were formulated based on direct observations and meanings derived from the informants' experiences, and were compared with existing theories.

The data collection methods used in this study were observation and interview as the primary methods, and documentation as a supporting method.

Observation Results

The researcher conducted direct observations at SD Inpres Dagimon, located in a remote area of Mappi Regency, South Papua. The observations were carried out to strengthen the data from interviews and documentation, as well as to obtain an authentic portrayal of the implementation of the principal's



leadership style and the teachers' daily activities in carrying out their duties, along with the interactions between the principal, teachers, and students.

During the observation process, the researcher noted that the distance from the city to SD Inpres Dagimon is approximately 20 km, which can be reached in about 40 minutes by motorcycle. Due to poor road conditions, it often took longer to arrive at the school.

The observations also revealed that most teachers, including the principal, reside in Kapi City. However, it was noted that the principal consistently arrived earlier than other teachers. The principal actively monitored teacher and student attendance in the morning and was seen interacting informally with teachers before the learning activities began.

The principal did not maintain a formal distance but rather engaged closely in activities with both teachers and students, such as cleaning the school environment, accompanying students in morning assemblies, and providing motivation and information to teachers and students.

The researcher further observed that the interaction between the principal and teachers was not bureaucratically formal but familial in nature. Although many teachers at SD Inpres Dagimon were older than the principal, mutual respect and appreciation were well-established within the school.

Overall, the observations indicated that the principal at SD Inpres Dagimon had genuinely implemented transformational leadership in daily practice. The principal not only served as a school administrator but also acted as a motivator, facilitator, and role model who fostered positive working relationships with teachers. The teachers at SD Inpres Dagimon were generally over 30 years old, with the majority being OAP (Orang Asli Papua) holding Civil Servant (PNS) status.

Interview Results

This in-depth interview was conducted directly with several informants, consisting of teachers at SD Inpres Dagimon who had been teaching at the school for at least one year, and who were willing and had agreed to participate in interviews regarding their perceptions of the principal's leadership. The interviews were naturally conducted face-to-face within the school environment. The atmosphere during the interviews was warm, open, and friendly, while maintaining research ethics and respecting the comfort of the informants.

The interviews took place in the assembly hall of SD Inpres Dagimon, with each informant entering the room in turn to be interviewed. The collaborative work environment created a distinctive nuance in the data collection process,



with teachers patiently waiting for their turn while completing school administrative tasks. The researcher made an effort to adapt to the local culture and refrained from using an overly formal approach so that the teachers felt comfortable and open in providing information.

During the in-depth interviews with several informants, a number of findings emerged that demonstrated how the principal implemented transformational leadership through four main dimensions and its impact on teachers' performance in carrying out their duties.

1) Four Main Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

a. Idealized Influence

Based on the interview results, the majority of teachers stated that the principal was considered a role model due to his discipline, sense of responsibility, and consistency between words and actions. The principal's habit of arriving earlier than other teachers every morning left a lasting impression. Several informants noted that although the official start time for teachers and students was 07:15, the principal typically arrived earlier and allowed only a 15-minute tolerance for lateness, while rarely being late himself except when attending to official matters at the education office. Another informant said the principal seldom verbally emphasized rules, but his actions aligned with his words, motivating teachers to work more diligently. Even without direct reprimands for tardiness, teachers who were often late felt a sense of shame and adjusted their behavior to arrive on time. This example-driven leadership positively influenced teachers' work attitudes, making them more responsible and quality-oriented.

b. Inspirational Motivation

The findings show that the teachers at SD Inpres Dagimon perceived the principal as capable of boosting work enthusiasm through constructive guidance and an emphasis that limitations should not be a reason to stop contributing. Most teachers felt their motivation arose not merely from rules but from the consistent encouragement and spirit instilled by the principal. This support was seen as providing significant psychological reinforcement, increasing their appreciation for his leadership style.

c. Intellectual Stimulation

According to the teachers interviewed, the principal provided space for innovation, experimentation with new methods, and the use of local resources in



the learning process. Teachers did not feel judged when new teaching methods did not succeed. The principal consistently offered encouragement and assistance when teachers faced challenges and often engaged in discussions to find the most suitable teaching approaches for the students' context. One teacher recounted using rubber seeds as a counting medium, which was praised by the principal, who emphasized that any medium could be used as long as it helped students understand the material. Another teacher noted that when they lacked computer skills, the principal patiently taught them to operate laptops for school administration tasks. As a result, teachers became more proficient in using laptops and received training whenever possible, including in the use of information technology for classroom learning.

d. Individualized Consideration

This dimension was among the most strongly felt by teachers, as the principal was perceived to be highly attentive to each teacher's personal circumstances, including non-academic matters. Teachers observed that the principal frequently reminded them to be cautious when traveling to and from school due to poor road conditions, and urged those using private vehicles to ensure their vehicles were in good condition. The principal was also proactive in contacting teachers who were absent without notice and showed understanding if absences were due to family matters. Other findings revealed that teachers felt motivated and proud to be part of the school because the principal not only fulfilled leadership functions but also participated directly in teaching when a teacher was absent.

2) Impact on Teacher Performance

The interview results indicate that the implementation of transformational leadership had a direct positive effect on improving teacher performance. Teachers became more diligent in preparing lesson plans, more reflective in evaluating students, and more disciplined in fulfilling administrative duties. They collaborated in handling school administration, assisted each other when someone lacked understanding, and worked with shared responsibility in line with the principal's emphasis on teamwork. A stronger sense of belonging to the school emerged because the leadership approach treated teachers as work partners rather than mere subordinates. The principal consistently provided opportunities for teachers to attend various training programs, such as GASING (Gampang, Asyik, dan Menyenangkan) learning methods, literacy and numeracy training, and AI technology utilization training. Despite geographical challenges



and limited facilities, the strong social bonds and supportive leadership cultivated a positive and productive work climate at the school.

Discussion

The background of this research indicates that the low quality of education in 3T (frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped) regions is not solely caused by the lack of facilities but also by the weak managerial function of school principals in leading and motivating teachers. Therefore, the role of the principal as a transformational leader becomes crucial.

The findings are consistent with Bass & Riggio (2006) theory that transformational leadership is the most appropriate style to create profound positive changes within an organization. All four dimensions are clearly evident in the interaction patterns of the principal at SD Inpres Dagimon.

In the context of limitations in remote areas such as Mappi Regency, a principal with the characteristics of not merely delivering instructions but also building teachers' self-confidence, serving as a source of motivation, and creating hope amidst constraints is vital. This is reflected in the leadership of the SD Inpres Dagimon principal, who consistently provides motivation and confidence to teachers to continue improving their competencies.

This aligns with Robbins & Judge (2018), who emphasize that transformational leaders are capable of delivering performance and loyalty beyond expectations, even in challenging conditions.

The results of interviews and document analysis show that the principal's leadership style has a strong correlation with the improvement of teachers' performance. The principal's role in guiding and encouraging teachers to develop themselves contributes to enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning process.

Teachers do not perform their duties merely out of obligation but also because they feel motivated and appreciated. This reinforces Munawir et al. (2022) view that teacher performance is strongly influenced by the work climate and leadership style within the school. The principal's emphasis on individualized consideration is the most prominent dimension. This shows that, in the local context, a leader's success is determined not only by strategy but also by empathy and social relationships. This humanistic approach is the key to maintaining motivation and the sustainability of teachers' commitment.

Given the geographical location of SD Inpres Dagimon in a remote area, the principal's personal attention to teachers has an extraordinary impact. Attention to teachers' welfare and psychological conditions creates a sense of



being valued and recognized. This demonstrates that the dimension of individualized consideration is not merely a complementary aspect but becomes a primary element in sustaining work motivation in 3T areas.

Teachers' perceptions of leadership are not formed instantly. The school culture, shaped by the principal being highly open and communicative, plays a key role in shaping teachers' perspectives. This is consistent with Robbins and Judge's view that perception is influenced by experience, communication, and social interaction within the work environment.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the transformational leadership of the Principal of SD Inpres Dagimon has a significant impact on improving teacher performance through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which foster a disciplined, creative, and responsible work environment. Its success is influenced by teachers' experience, a collective work culture, as well as the geographical and social conditions of the remote area. Policy implications emphasize the importance of continuous support from the Department of Education and stakeholders for schools in 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged) regions through training, provision of facilities, and academic supervision. It is recommended that the principal maintain this leadership style by strengthening motivation, personal guidance, and external collaboration, while teachers are expected to utilize such support to enhance their competencies. This research can be extended to other remote areas using a mixed-method approach to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

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