

## **Transformational Leadership of the Principal in Improving the Quality of Human Resources at State Integrated Junior High Schools in Sigi Regency, Indonesia**

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformational leadership of the principal in improving the quality of human resources at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi using a qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving the principal, teachers, educational staff, and the school committee. The findings show that the principal implemented transformational leadership through a clear vision and mission, motivational support, collaborative work culture, continuous professional development, and individualized attention to staff needs and potential. These practices contributed to improved teacher professionalism, staff performance, discipline, and the creation of a conducive and quality-oriented school environment. The study concludes that transformational leadership plays a significant role in enhancing the quality of human resources in schools.

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

#### **Keywords:**

Transformational leadership, principal leadership, human resource quality

### **1. Introduction**

The role of the principal is not limited to administrative responsibilities but also includes visionary leadership that can bring positive changes to various aspects of educational management. In the era of globalization and technological advancement, schools face various challenges that require continuous innovation and human resource development. Therefore, principals are expected to empower and develop school human resources through a transformational leadership approach

(Syukri Azhari et al., 2023) (Purba et al., 2023).

This study is expected to contribute to efforts to improve the quality of education and serve as a reference for developing school leadership oriented toward change and continuous improvement. Amid rapid technological advancement and evolving global demands, schools are required not only to function as learning institutions but also to produce adaptive, creative, and competitive generations. Therefore, effective leadership is needed to encourage comprehensive transformation in managerial practices, curriculum development, school culture,

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and human resource development. One leadership model considered relevant to these challenges is transformational leadership (Supriyanto et al., 2021).

Transformational leadership is an approach that emphasizes processes of change and development. A principal who applies this leadership style serves not only as an administrator but also as an agent of change who inspires teachers and staff to innovate, improve their competencies, and commit to enhancing educational quality. By promoting values such as inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, transformational leadership can create a school environment that supports the growth and development of human resources (Eny Machsusiyah Zin et al., 2023).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is a leadership style oriented toward change and individual development within an organization. A transformational leader acts as an inspirator, motivator, and mentor, capable of fostering enthusiasm, commitment, and a shared vision among organizational members. In the context of education, transformational leadership requires the principal to be able to mobilize all school components toward positive change, innovation, and improving the quality of education (Hakim et al., 2025).

According to the theory developed by Bass and Avolio, authentic transformational leadership is built upon four interconnected components. The first component is idealized influence, wherein a leader serves as a charismatic role model

who is admired and respected by their followers. Second, leaders must be capable of providing inspirational motivation by communicating a clear vision and fostering collective optimism. The third component is intellectual stimulation, which encourages subordinates to think creatively and innovatively, while challenging long-held assumptions to solve problems. Lastly, there is individualized consideration, where the leader pays specific attention to the developmental needs and achievements of each follower, acting as a supportive mentor or coach (Variyani et al., 2024).

The literature on authentic transformational leadership is closely related to classical moral teachings and virtues, as reflected in the philosophies of Socrates and Confucius. These moral teachings form the foundation of emotional intelligence. Studies by Agustian and Siswanto found that transformational leadership in Islamic boarding school-based madrasahs demonstrated high values across the four core components of transformational leadership. Similar findings were reported by Kezar and Hsu et al. in religious educational institutions in Taiwan. These findings support Bass's view that authentic transformational leadership is characterized by the strong presence of the four dimensions of transformational leadership (Gusliana et al., 2025).

### **2.2 Principles of Transformational Leadership of School Principals**

Edward Sallis states that the new paradigm of transformational leadership emphasizes seven principles for creating transformational leadership that aligns with the goals of educational organizations.

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The six principles are: (1) Simplification, where successful leadership begins with a shared vision that serves as a common goal; (2) Motivation, referring to the ability to gain commitment from every individual involved in achieving the vision; (3) Facilitation, namely the ability to support effective learning processes within the organization at institutional, group, and individual levels; (4) Innovation, which is the ability to implement changes as a response to evolving demands and responsibilities. In effective and efficient educational institutions, all members are expected to anticipate and embrace change, while transformational leaders must build trust within the team; (Murbaningtyas et al., 2024) (5) Mobility, which involves empowering individuals and utilizing all available resources to achieve the organization's vision and goals; and (6) Determination, referring to a strong commitment to successfully complete tasks thoroughly and effectively, supported by the development of spiritual, emotional, and physical discipline as well as organizational commitment (Ruhana, 2012).

### ***2.3 Improving the Quality of Human Resources***

According to Poerwadarminta, etymologically the term "resource" refers to a "source" meaning origin and "power" meaning strength or capability; therefore, human resources can be understood as a source of capability or strength. Sadono Sukirno defines human resources as individuals within an organization who contribute ideas and perform various tasks to achieve organizational goals. Similarly, Sadili states that human resources are

individuals who design and produce goods or services, supervise quality, market products, allocate financial resources, and formulate organizational strategies and objectives (Rahardja, 2022).

One of the dominant factors in the successful implementation of school programs is maintaining the quality of human resources within the school. Human resources play a crucial role in educational organizations; however, their potential can only be optimized through effective management (Abdillah, 2024).

Teachers, as the frontline of successful learning processes, must be continuously encouraged and supported by school principals to effectively carry out their responsibilities. The roles of teachers as educators, instructors, and mentors can be performed optimally when managed properly, thereby contributing to educational outcomes that meet the expectations of all stakeholders (Purba et al., 2023).

Students, parents, and school committees should also be effectively managed to provide comprehensive support for achieving school goals. Their involvement in school policy-making, according to their respective roles, can strengthen support for the achievement of the school's vision, mission, and objectives.

Human resource development (HRD) at the macro level refers to the process of improving human quality and capabilities in order to achieve national development goals. At the micro level, within a particular work unit or institution, human resources refer to employees, staff, or workers who contribute to the

achievement of organizational objectives (Made et al., 2024).

#### **2.4 The Role of Transformational Leadership in Improving Human Resources**

The role of transformational leadership in improving human resources refers to a series of actions, attitudes, and strategies carried out by leaders to inspire, motivate, and develop the potential of individuals and groups optimally, thereby enhancing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and performance of human resources sustainably in achieving organizational goals.

More specifically, transformational leadership plays a role in creating a clear vision, building commitment, encouraging innovation, and providing guidance and role models, so that human resources not only experience quantitative improvements, but also qualitative ones, both in terms of professionalism, responsibility, and work character.

Transformational leaders set an example in attitude, integrity, and work ethic. This exemplary behavior has a direct impact on developing professional, responsible, and quality-oriented human resources (Made et al., 2024). The transformational leadership of school principals plays an important role in improving the quality of human resources through motivation, guidance, and competency development. These improvements contribute to enhanced teacher performance, better learning quality, and overall educational quality at SMP Negeri 14 Sigi. In this context, the principal acts not only as a decision-maker but also as a facilitator who creates opportunities for teachers and educational staff to develop professionally. Through a visionary and

participatory approach, the principal fosters collective awareness of the importance of continuous competency improvement in achieving educational goals.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative method to examine the principal's leadership in improving human resources. Data were collected through interviews with school stakeholders, documentation, and field notes to obtain information related to transformational leadership practices (Sugiyono, 2017). Through in-depth field analysis, the researcher identified the transformational leadership model implemented by the principal, including challenges faced by teachers and the strategies used to improve the quality of human resources. Qualitative research emphasizes natural settings as direct data sources, with greater focus on processes than outcomes. In addition, the case study approach was used to analyze and describe specific social conditions involving individuals, groups, institutions, or communities.

This study was conducted at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi, one of four public junior high schools located in Kinovaro District, Sigi Regency. In this qualitative study, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, supporting documents written by or about the research subjects were used to complement the data obtained.

### **4. Result and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Improving Teachers' Pedagogical and Professional Competencies**

At SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi, improvements in teachers' pedagogical

competence can be seen in their ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning more effectively. Teachers demonstrate a better understanding of students' characteristics and are able to apply varied, student-centered learning strategies. In addition, teachers show improvements in classroom management, the use of instructional media, and the application of assessment methods aligned with learning objectives.

#### ***4.2 Increasing Teacher Participation in Professional Development Activities***

At SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi, teachers' participation in various competency improvement programs, both organized by the school and externally, is evident. Teachers actively participate in training programs, workshops, seminars, and subject teacher meetings (MGMP) to enhance their professional knowledge and skills. This participation demonstrates teachers' awareness and motivation to continuously learn and adapt to developments in the educational world.

In addition, teachers at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi also actively participate in collaborative self-development activities, such as pedagogical discussions, sharing good practices, and reflecting on learning with colleagues. Teacher involvement in these activities positively impacts the quality of classroom learning, as teachers are able to apply new knowledge and experiences to the teaching and learning process. With increased participation in self-development, teachers' professionalism grows and contributes to improving the quality of education at the school.

The results of observations and observations carried out by the author at the state junior high school one roof 14 Sigi, that the implementation of self-development of a

teacher is increasingly developing and continues to innovate in accordance with the developments in the digitalization era, of course the impact of the role of the principal who always provides encouragement and motivation continuously, initially this school was still far from reality but thanks to the principal's breakthrough so that until now it has started to improve.

At SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi, a collaborative work culture is reflected in the increasing cooperation between teachers and educational staff in carrying out school duties and responsibilities. Teachers actively participate in joint lesson planning, academic discussions, and various school activities. Open communication and mutual respect among school members create a harmonious work environment and support the achievement of educational goals collectively. In addition, this collaborative culture is demonstrated through mutual support and the sharing of experiences in addressing learning challenges. Teachers willingly provide feedback, exchange best practices, and support the implementation of school programs. This positive work culture strengthens solidarity, enhances work motivation, and contributes to improving the quality of educational services at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi.

#### ***4.3 Implications of Transformational Leadership***

The implications of transformational leadership at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi include the development of a positive school culture, increased teacher motivation, improved learning quality, and sustainable enhancement of school human resources. These findings indicate that the principal has effectively carried out the roles and functions of transformational leadership in improving the quality of human resources

through well-planned and consistent programs. The improvements are reflected in effective lesson planning, implementation, student evaluation, and continuous development of school facilities and infrastructure. In addition, teachers demonstrate a better understanding of students' socio-economic backgrounds, the ability to apply diverse and student-friendly teaching strategies, and improved competence in implementing effective learning systems.

The principal of SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi emphasizes a vision and mission aimed at producing students with noble character, broad knowledge, and the ability to compete in the global era. Through various extracurricular activities, the school encourages students to develop their interests and talents while instilling positive character values. With strong commitment and dedication, SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi strives to continuously improve the quality of education and produce future generations who are capable of contributing to the development of Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, and Indonesia as a whole.

## 5. Conclusion

The study concludes that transformational leadership implemented by the principal at SMP Satu Atap Negeri 14 Sigi has been effectively applied through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This leadership approach has contributed significantly to improving the quality of human resources, as reflected in increased teacher discipline, professionalism, innovation, participation in professional development activities, and commitment to

educational responsibilities. In addition, transformational leadership has fostered a positive and collaborative work culture, strengthened cooperation among school members, and created a conducive school environment that supports continuous improvement in the quality of education.

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