

BUILDING TEACHER MOTIVATION: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF DRIVING SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AT SMP NEGERI 3 LOGAS TANAH DARAT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of school principals in implementing transformational leadership to motivate teachers to participate in the Driving Teacher Program at SMP Negeri 3 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The research informants consisted of the principal, the driving teacher, and the chairman of the school committee. The results showed that school principals applied transformational leadership styles through four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The strategies used include providing personal motivation, forming a common vision, professional coaching, and a humanistic approach that fosters trust and enthusiasm for teacher learning. Some of the challenges faced include low initial motivation of teachers, technological limitations, and resistance to change. The principal has successfully overcome these obstacles with a participatory approach, empowerment, and the creation of a collaborative culture in the school environment. This research provides theoretical contributions in understanding transformational leadership in the context of driving schools as well as practical recommendations for school principals in increasing teacher participation in professional development programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a complex process that aims to educate the nation's life and shape the character of people who are faithful, moral, and responsible as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Schools as formal institutions play a central role in this effort, but the success of education is largely determined by the quality of human resources, especially teachers and principals. One of the main challenges of education in

Indonesia is the low quality of teachers (Kurniawati, 2022). To overcome this, the government has initiated various competency improvement programs, one of which is through the Teacher Leader Program. This program aims to form teachers who are able to design and implement student-centered learning, collaborate, and develop themselves independently and sustainably (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Teacher leaders are expected to be learning leaders as well as agents of change in the school environment. They are provided with training through four main modules: vision of the teacher leader, student-centered learning, learning leadership, and reflection and collaboration. This approach is in line with progressivism, namely student-centered learning (Farida et al., 2022). However, the success of this program is highly dependent on the role of the principal. The principal is not only an administrative leader, but also a transformational manager who inspires, motivates, and guides teachers to participate in change. This transformational leadership reflects the philosophy of "Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, Tut Wuri Handayani" (Inderasari, 2021).

Law Number 14 of 2005 states that the principal is a teacher who is given additional duties as a school leader. In carrying out his role, the principal must be able to integrate his professionalism as a teacher with his abilities as a managerial leader. This is important so that the learning process can take place effectively and efficiently and have an impact on improving student learning outcomes (Wahyudi, 2009).

The challenges of implementing the School Mover Program are not easy. One of the main obstacles is the low motivation and enthusiasm of teachers to participate in the program. Lack of readiness and competence is also an obstacle in its implementation (Satriawan et al., 2021). In this context, the principal must be able to act as an agent of change who can encourage teachers to improve their quality through the teacher motivator program. One example of the success in implementing this program is at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Regency. This school, which is located in an ex-transmigration village area and far from the city center, is one of five secondary schools in the district that has successfully participated in the School Activator Program. Interestingly, almost 50% of the total teachers at this school have participated in the Teacher Activator Program. This figure is much higher than other activator schools in the same district.

This success cannot be separated from the transformational leadership of the principal. Based on initial observations and interviews, the principal of SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat has succeeded in inspiring and motivating teachers to actively participate in the teacher activator program. This school has even spread its good practices to other schools, which shows that this school is at a more advanced stage of educational transformation. This phenomenon is interesting to study further, especially from the perspective of the principal's experience in raising the spirit of teachers to participate in the Teacher Mover Program. Through a narrative approach, this study aims to reveal the strategies, challenges, and ways of principals in motivating teachers as part of efforts to create educational transformation in schools. By raising a case study of SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat, this study is expected to contribute to the development of educational leadership theory and practice in Indonesia, as well as being an inspiration for other principals in driving change towards better quality education..

2. METHODS

In this study, the author uses a qualitative descriptive research method. This study uses qualitative research because the data obtained is non-numerical data, but descriptive data in the form of an explanation of the social phenomena being studied. Qualitative research is the collection of data in a natural setting with the intention of interpreting the phenomena that occur where the researcher is the key instrument. Sampling of data sources is carried out by purposive sampling, the collection technique is with triangulation

(combination), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning more than generalization (Sugiyono, 2019). Appointment of informants with a purposive procedure, namely determining the group of participants who become informants according to selected criteria that are relevant to a particular research problem (Bungin, 2007). Research informants are those who know and have various basic information needed in the study. Key informants or called main informants, are someone who is an expert in the field to be studied.

1. Key informants are those who know and have various basic information needed in research.
2. Key informants are those who are directly involved in the social interactions being studied.
3. Additional informants are those who can provide information even though they are not directly involved in the social interactions being studied..

The details of the Research Informants are as follows:

Table. 1. Research Informants

No	Informan	Name	Position
1	Key Informant	Novita Yosmira,S.Pd	Deputy Head of Curriculum of SMP N 3 Logas Tanah Darat
2	Key informant	Yulia Erpita Ningsih Dhian kusumawati Firdaus Reza pahlevi	Leading Teacher at SMP N 3 Logas Tanah Darat
3	Additional informants,	Suhardoyo	Chairman of the Committee of SMP N 3 Logas Tanah Darat
Total			5 people

Method (way or technique) shows an abstract word and is not manifested in objects, but can only be seen in its use through interviews, documentation and observation. (Riduwan, 2012): After data collection, the next step is to analyze the data. Researchers use the Milles and Huberman model where data analysis is carried out when data collection takes place continuously until complete, so that the data is saturated. The steps for data analysis that researchers take are (Arikunto, 2013): 1) Data Reduction, 2) Presenting Data, 3) Drawing Conclusions

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Implementation of Transformational Leadership at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat

Transformational leadership, as developed by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1994), refers to a leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and empower organizational members to achieve sustainable positive change. This model is supported by four main dimensions: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration. This study explores how the principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat applies these principles in the context of educational leadership.

3.1.1 Idealized Influence: Exemplary Leadership

The Idealized Influence dimension emphasizes the importance of role models, integrity, and consistency of values in leaders. The principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat is seen as an inspiring figure who demonstrates ethical, fair behavior and is open to new ideas. Responses from the driving teacher, vice principal, and head of the school

committee emphasized that the principal not only leads administratively, but also becomes a model of values and behavior that are emulated.

The principal is actively involved in the learning innovation process, supports teacher experiments, and shares training experiences with colleagues. The courage to make strategic decisions to strengthen teacher capacity also emphasizes the principal's commitment to collective interests, as stated by Bass and Riggio (2006). Furthermore, open communication and concern for the school community strengthen the role of the principal as a leader who builds an inclusive and collaborative work climate.

This finding is consistent with the study by Itani and Freiha (2023) which shows that the idealized influence of a leader will increase the trust and involvement of organizational members in change. The principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat has succeeded in forming a school culture that encourages transformation through strong role models and leadership integrity.

3.1.2 Inspirational Motivation: Building Collective Vision and Spirit

Inspirational Motivation refers to the leader's ability to communicate a meaningful vision and generate internal motivation among members of the organization. The principal consistently conveys the school's vision in various forums, both formal and informal, and links it to the role of teachers as agents of change. This generates a collective spirit among teachers to take the initiative and make innovations in learning.

The driving teachers stated that the principal often provides verbal encouragement that is reflective, such as an invitation not to be afraid of change. This fosters self-confidence and courage to try more innovative learning approaches. The principal also creates a safe climate for experimentation, where mistakes are not punished but are used as learning spaces.

This approach reflects the findings of Fu and Li (2023), who emphasized that inspirational motivation from leaders plays a role in creating a work climate that is supportive of innovation and collaboration. In addition, the principal's involvement in establishing synergy with the committee and parents also strengthens this motivational dimension, where all elements of the school are directed to move towards the same goal.

Overall, the principal has implemented Inspirational Motivation effectively, not only through inspirational communication, but also by creating a reward system that strengthens teachers' enthusiasm in encouraging positive changes in the educational environment.

3.1.3 Intellectual Stimulation: Encouraging Innovation and Critical Thinking

The Intellectual Stimulation dimension emphasizes the encouragement of leaders to foster critical and creative thinking in the organization. The principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat showed openness to new ideas and encouraged teachers to experiment in learning practices. Teachers felt that they were given space for autonomy in developing innovative teaching approaches.

The vice principal stated that the principal actively facilitated innovative ideas through discussion forums, budget support, and provision of facilities. The driving teachers also felt that the atmosphere created by the principal was free from fear of criticism, but rather directed at reflection and mutual improvement. The principal acts as a facilitator who helps teachers solve learning challenges with a participatory approach.

This practice is in line with the research results of Garcia-Morales et al. (2022) which emphasizes the importance of intellectual stimulation in supporting innovation and adaptation in the world of education. The principal's involvement in dialogue with the

school committee and parents is also evidence of openness to external perspectives, which enriches the innovation process in schools.

By encouraging teachers to think critically and experiment, the principal helps shape an adaptive and responsive professional culture. This is in line with the spirit of Independent Learning which encourages teacher autonomy and creativity as the main agents of educational transformation.

3.1.4 Individualized Consideration: Leadership that Pays Attention to Individual Needs

Individualized Consideration reflects the leader's attention to the unique needs of each individual in the organization. The principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat shows deep concern for the professional and personal development of teachers. He provides opportunities for training, supports further study, and facilitates capacity development tailored to the potential and interests of each teacher.

This approach reflects the principle of differential leadership, as explained by Day and Sammons (2016), where capacity development is carried out based on individual needs and their professional context. The principal does not adopt a uniform approach, but rather adjusts interventions based on the dynamics of each teacher's development.

The principal's attention also contributes to the formation of a collaborative learning community, where teachers are involved in reflective forums, discussions of good practices, and exchange of experiences across schools. Teachers feel valued, heard, and facilitated to develop independently. This attitude fosters intrinsic motivation that encourages active involvement in innovation and improving the quality of learning.

In accordance with the views of Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), effective educational leaders are those who foster moral purpose and empower individuals through strong interpersonal relationships. The principal has carried out this role with a humanistic, empowering approach, and is oriented towards the formation of the character of the driving teacher.

3.2 Implementation of Teacher Motivation to Participate in the Teacher Movers Program

This study examines the motivation of teachers to participate in the Teacher Leader Program (PGP) at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat, focusing on six main indicators: desire to achieve, fulfillment of standards, improvement of abilities, personal relationships, influence on colleagues, and social responsibility. The results of the study indicate that teachers participating in the PGP have strong motivation that comes from internal and external drives to actively contribute to educational transformation.

3.2.1 Desire to Achieve

The desire to achieve is the main motivation for teachers to participate in the PGP. Teachers such as Yulia Erpita Ningsih and Firdaus Reza Pahlevi convey the importance of setting specific and meaningful professional targets in learning practices. They interpret achievement not as a personal goal alone, but as a form of moral responsibility for the quality of education. This enthusiasm reflects the Goal Setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002), where clear goals improve individual performance and motivation.

In addition, a reflective learning approach, such as that carried out by Dhian Kusumawati, shows the existence of self-regulated learning that plays a role in teacher professional development. This finding is also in line with the study by Putri & Suryana (2023) which shows that teachers with high achievement motivation tend to be more innovative and resilient in facing learning challenges.

3.2.2 Meeting Professional Standards

Motivation to meet national education standards and school policies is another important indicator. Teachers view compliance with standards as a form of professional integrity. Yulia Erpita Ningsih and Novita Yosmira stated that guidelines and regulations are a reference in creating systematic and continuous learning.

This motivation reflects compliance motivation (Vroom, 1995), which is the drive to behave according to norms because of a commitment to common goals. Teachers do not see standards as limitations, but rather as a framework that facilitates innovation, in line with the concept of curriculum coherence (Schmidt et al., 2020). The public's view is also supportive, as conveyed by Suhardoyo, Chair of the School Committee, who considered teachers who comply with standards to be more trusted and appreciated.

3.2.3 Efforts to Improve Ability

Commitment to continue learning is a characteristic of driving teachers. Respondents actively participate in training, discussion forums, and collective reflections to develop competence. This is in accordance with the concept of lifelong learning (Candy, 1991), which emphasizes the importance of continuous learning in the teaching profession.

Yulia Erpita Ningsih and Dhian Kusumawati emphasize the importance of adapting to technology and implementing differentiated learning. The support of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (2023) for developing the capacity of driving teachers through formative assessment and learning leadership strengthens this process. In addition, peer collaboration is also a primary strategy in the process of meaningful social learning, as emphasized by the theory of sociocultural learning (Vygotsky, 1978).

3.2.4 Maintaining Friendly Personal Relationships

Harmonious interpersonal relationships also drive teacher motivation. Driving teachers maintain open communication, respect differences of opinion, and establish productive collaboration. This is in accordance with affiliation motivation (McClelland, 1985), where individuals have a need to establish positive and supportive relationships. Novita Yosmira and other colleagues showed that positive interactions between teachers strengthen a conducive work climate and support the formation of a Professional Learning Community (Widodo & Setiawan, 2023). Well-established relationships strengthen teamwork, increase trust, and create collaborative innovation.

3.2.5 Desire to Influence Colleagues

Moving teachers not only think about self-development, but also have a strong desire to inspire colleagues. Firdaus Reza Pahlevi and Yulia Erpita Ningsih, for example, actively provide feedback, facilitate reflective discussions, and share good practices. This motivation is in line with the theory of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994), where leaders act as inspirators and facilitators of change.

Moving teachers become agents of innovation in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and other professional development activities. They build influence through a participatory approach, not only top-down but also horizontally. This strengthens the collective capacity of schools to carry out sustainable educational transformation.

3.3 The role of transformational leadership of the driving school in motivating teachers at SMPN 3 LTD to participate in the driving teacher program.

The transformational leadership of the principal at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat plays a crucial role in motivating teachers to be actively involved in the Teacher Mover Program (PGP). This study identified several main dimensions of transformational leadership that contribute to increasing teacher motivation, namely: inspiration and vision, concrete support, role models, open communication, and the influence of the principal's motivation on teacher decisions.

3.3.1 Principal's Inspiration and Vision

The principal as a transformational leader is able to convey an inspiring and meaningful vision for all school members. This vision not only leads to formal achievements, but also emphasizes the values of humanity, professionalism, and the transformation of the teacher's role as a learning leader. At SMPN 3 LTD, the principal actively articulates how PGP is a strategic means for teachers to develop personally and professionally and contribute to educational change that favors students.

Teachers feel that this vision is conveyed consistently and convincingly, creating a school atmosphere full of hope and optimism. The principal also becomes a role model in action, not only talking but also actively participating in training and supporting teachers in real terms. This approach motivates teachers who were initially hesitant to get out of their comfort zone and participate in the program. This finding is in line with previous studies that confirm that transformational leadership with strong vision inspiration has a positive impact on teacher motivation and performance.

3.3.2 Principal's Concrete Support

In addition to inspiration, the principal provides real support that is directly felt by teachers. This form of support includes facilitating administrative needs, such as preparing recommendation documents, adjusting teaching schedules, as well as technical assistance and access to learning resources. The principal also provides adequate space and time so that teachers can follow the PGP stages without sacrificing their main duties.

This support shows the principal's understanding of the realities and challenges faced by teachers, as well as efforts to create an empowering environment. In addition, the principal initiates a learning community that brings together PGP participant teachers with prospective participants to share experiences and good practices, building a collaborative culture that supports professional development. This concrete support is the foundation for teacher motivation to continue to develop and contribute, as supported by previous studies that show a close relationship between transformational leadership and increasing teacher motivation through operational and emotional support.

3.3.3 Principal's Exemplary Behavior

Exemplary behavior or idealized influence is a main pillar in transformational leadership. The principal of SMPN 3 LTD shows a real role model through continuous learning, active involvement in professional development, and the courage to take innovative steps. Teachers consider the principal as a figure who continues to learn and develop, thus triggering internal motivation for teachers to follow in his footsteps through PGP.

This exemplary role model strengthens teachers' trust in the leader and increases positive identification with the school's vision. The principal does not just give direction, but becomes a mentor and facilitator who shows integrity and consistency in acting. An

inclusive and collaborative work environment is formed, creating a climate that encourages teachers to dare to step out of their comfort zone to follow change. Other studies confirm that the principal's exemplary role model is an effective source of intrinsic motivation in building teacher commitment.

3.3.4 Open Communication from the Principal

Another characteristic of transformational leadership is open and empathetic communication. The principal of SMPN 3 LTD builds intense and egalitarian two-way communication with teachers, both in formal forums and informal conversations. A dialogue space is provided so that teachers can convey ideas, concerns, and doubts about programs such as PGP.

The principal is present as a sincere listener and solution provider, building strong emotional relationships and a healthy work climate. This reduces teacher resistance to change and increases their confidence to get involved. Open communication also encourages collaboration between teachers so that there is mutual motivation and sharing of best practices in following the program. Thus, effective communication not only facilitates the delivery of information, but also strengthens the psychological and social bonds between the principal and teachers, which are very important in the process of educational transformation.

3.3.5 The Influence of Principal Motivation on Teacher Decisions

The principal's high motivation for educational change acts as a driving force that is contagious to teachers. The principal shows passion, enthusiasm, and belief in every opportunity—from conveying the vision, assisting in the registration process, to dealing with teacher doubts. This motivation creates a strong psychological effect, making teachers feel valued and trusted as learning leaders, so that they are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone to take the PGP.

This finding is in line with the Self-Determination Theory which states that support for autonomy, competence, and connectedness increases intrinsic motivation. The principal creates an environment that strengthens the potential of teachers so that the decision to take the PGP is born from internal motivation that is strengthened by authentic external support. Other studies also show that principals who consistently show high motivation, provide facilities, and initiate learning communities can encourage teachers to continue to develop themselves sustainably.

3.4 Challenges, Obstacles, and Solutions Taken by the Principal of the Moving School in Motivating SMPN LTD Teachers to Participate in the Moving Teacher Program.

In the process of encouraging teachers to participate in the Teacher Leader Program (PGP), the principal of SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat (LTD) faced a number of complex challenges and obstacles. However, through a transformational leadership approach, the principal was able to identify strategic and contextual solutions to overcome these obstacles.

3.4.1 Challenges and Obstacles in Motivating Teachers to Participate in PGP

The results of the study showed that one of the main challenges was the lack of self-confidence and mental readiness of teachers. Some teachers expressed doubts about their ability to go through the selection process and complete all stages of the intensive program. This was triggered by the perception that PGP is a tough program and is only suitable for superior or special teachers.

In addition, the high workload is also an inhibiting factor. Teachers are worried that participating in PGP will interfere with their teaching duties and administrative responsibilities that have already piled up. There are also obstacles in access and mastery of technology for teachers who are not yet familiar with the digital learning platform used in PGP.

These challenges are in line with the findings of Zulfahmi et al. (2024) who stated that teacher motivation is often hampered by internal factors such as fear of new challenges, and external factors such as limited time and facilities. Likewise, according to Palius et al. (2024), teachers are faced with resistance to change due to workload pressure, limited facilities, and lack of confidence in their own abilities in participating in innovative programs such as PGP.

3.4.2 Strategies and Solutions of the Principal as the Driver

In facing these challenges, the principal of SMPN 3 LTD implemented an approach based on the principle of transformational leadership. The solutions implemented were not only technical, but also touched on the emotional and psychological aspects of teachers. Some of the strategies implemented include:

1. Personal approach: The principal conducts direct dialogue with teachers, listens to their concerns, and provides motivational reinforcement and belief that all teachers have the potential to be drivers of change.
2. Administrative and managerial facilitation: The principal provides assistance in the registration process and document preparation. In addition, the principal also provides adjustments to teaching tasks and time, so that teachers can still participate in PGP without being burdened with other responsibilities.
3. Strengthening the learning community: Teachers who have participated or are currently participating in PGP are invited to share their experiences with other prospective participants. This practice encourages trust and inspiration from colleagues.
4. Increasing technological literacy: Principals provide internal training and assist teachers to access and use digital learning platforms such as LMS and SIMPKB.
5. This strategy refers to the principles of individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation in Bass and Avolio's transformational leadership theory, where leaders provide personal attention and encourage followers to think innovatively and get out of their comfort zones. This is also in line with the findings of Cetra Shandilia et al. (2024) that successful driving principals are those who are able to direct teachers through direct guidance, motivation, and the formation of a collective vision
6. Meanwhile, according to Murni et al. (2025), good transformational leadership will create readiness for change in schools through a humanistic, participatory, and collaborative approach. The principal does not only convey orders, but also becomes a facilitator who opens up space for discussion and reflection for teachers.

Thus, the challenges and obstacles in motivating teachers to participate in the Teacher Mover Program at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat are quite complex, but can be overcome through adaptive and humane transformational leadership strategies. The principal does not only act as a formal leader, but as an agent of change who plays an active role in empowering teachers personally and professionally. This approach has proven effective in building motivation, fostering self-confidence, and strengthening teachers' decisions to participate in the PGP as part of efforts to improve the quality of education in the driving school.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted on the role of the principal's transformational leadership in building teacher motivation to participate in the Teacher Mover Program at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat, several things can be concluded as follows:

1. The principal of SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat applies transformational leadership through four main dimensions: being a role model of ethics and professionalism (idealized influence), motivating with an inspiring vision (inspirational motivation), encouraging innovation and critical thinking (intellectual stimulation), and paying attention to the individual needs of teachers in professional development (individualized consideration).
2. Teachers at SMPN 3 Logas Tanah Darat show high motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, which is reflected in the spirit of achievement, commitment to the quality of education, and efforts to develop competencies. The principal's support strengthens teacher motivation by providing a sense of appreciation and empowerment in the learning process.
3. The principal's transformational leadership plays an important role in motivating teachers to participate in the Teacher Mover Program. In addition to administrative support, the principal creates a conducive, communicative, and participatory school climate, with a clear vision and a humanistic approach that recognizes the role of teachers as agents of change, thereby increasing teacher enthusiasm and self-confidence.
4. Challenges to teacher motivation include resistance to change, additional workload, time constraints, and lack of understanding of the program. Principals overcome these obstacles through persuasive motivation, open communication, simplifying administrative tasks, and modeling the good practices of Guru Penggerak alumni, which effectively increase teacher involvement actively and voluntarily.

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