



The Dynamic of Transformational Leadership: Diving into Voices of Vocational Schools Principals

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ABSTRACT

The demands of the 5.0 industrial revolution make schools as vital educational institutions graduate adaptive and competitive students. The aim of this study is to explore the challenges and strategies in human resource management promoting transformational leadership within educational settings. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including authority figures and policy implementers. Additionally, this research identifies several new policies designed to modernize the learning process. Through thematic analysis, the study reveals key patterns and categories related to its focus. The findings show that transformational leadership has challenges, such as limited teacher creativity, low interpersonal, productive competencies, and a lack of readiness among teachers to adapt with changes. Other findings for strategies of promoting transformational leadership are strengthening the vision and simplifying the mission, planning change strategies, maintaining ongoing coordination, monitoring implementation as well as evaluation processes to ensure that outcomes are in line with expected goals. These findings lead to transformational leadership in fostering innovation for education. The implications of this research provide deeper insights and contributions for authorities in developing a productive and integrity-driven work culture.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Private Vocational School, Vocational School Teacher.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid changes of nowadays trends caused by the Industrial Revolution 5.0 makes the education sector respond to it with proper shift and innovation. In the current era of the modern industrial revolution 5.0, the development of the digital economy provides increase as well as new opportunities in other sectors, especially in education sector (SOEPRIYANTO & Maryani, 2023). This makes stakeholders in education have to promote suitable skills and competencies which are relevant to demands of the job market needed by the school output, in this case the output is students. Considering cases such as: adjusted and progressive curricula, the quality of educators, and prioritizing on the improvement of facilities that aligns with the needs of the Industrial Revolution 5.0 are located on top of priorities of each school (Nasir et al., 2023). Transformational leadership holds a significant role in overcoming these demands, because the

principles align with the needs of this era. In other words, transformational leadership optimizes the implementation of change (Ariffin et al., 2024). One strategy that is relevant to these demands is by enhancing specific competencies, including emotional intelligence, improving creativity and innovation. (Wen et al., 2019) emphasize that transformational leaders enhance employee and team performance in significance which are related to institutions to achieve the goals. Therefore, the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 5.0 are minimized by the role of leaders with a transformational spirit.

Previous studies have highlighted transformational leadership in the context of specific countries. Some countries have kinds of educational systems, including non-vocational and vocational schools. Transformational leadership is frequently researched in areas of its effectiveness and implementation. However, in Indonesia, none of the research focused on comparing state vocational schools and private vocational schools in specific discussion. Fundamentally, transformational leadership gives the principals demands to have innovations (Uygur & Yildirim, 2024). To fill this gap, this study reaches the area of the dynamics and fluctuations of transformational leadership in having an optimal quality of Indonesian education. The main focus of this research is derived by having the perceptions of principals in state and private vocational schools. Therefore, this study leads in seeking how principals respond to the dynamics, including specific challenges and strategies faced in navigating changeable situations.

This research contributes to the development of transformational leadership which are implemented by principals, particularly in the context of Indonesia, where vocational schools are categorized into state and private institutions. These distinctions make how principals respond to and apply transformational leadership in their derived contexts to be independent organizing the internal system (Çakır & Özgenel, 2024); (Kaya & Koçyigit, 2023); (Uygur & Yildirim, 2024). The educational context in Indonesia has its typical characteristics, especially schools which are related to the status of schools, which leaves a significant factor because of the imbalanced distribution of government support and involvement in school development to inequality. Thus, addressing issues related to the implementation of transformational leadership for optimizing educational systems in Indonesia requires specific consideration from the government.

The dynamics of transformational leadership make fluctuations in its application, immersing, and initiatives by educational stakeholders (Gumilar, 2023). Specifically, implementing transformational leadership provides a more structured impact in achieving changes and fostering the dynamism of educational service delivery. From a leadership perspective, the main principles of transformational leadership have encouragement with collective orientation toward achieving better goals. This collective goal becomes a distinctive feature, demonstrating that achievements are attained more effectively through contributions from the components (Lei et al., 2024). The concept of group orientation of Indonesian in this context reflects the essence of meaningful and noble shared thinking.

In practice, principals have issues such as various challenges in implementing transformational leadership (Jani, 2023). These challenges are derived from internal factors or external factors affecting the scope of the principal's work. Factors in this context have significant impacts on the steps and strategies taken by principals. To minimize negative impacts, principals need to deeply understand these factors so that the implementation of transformational leadership which is optimal in outcomes which are relevant with its main principles. In the context of vocational education in Indonesia, which focuses on producing qualified graduates, ideal transformational leadership gives a significant contribution in improving the quality of education (Mardizal et al., 2023).

In Indonesia's vocational education landscape, which prioritizes the development of skilled and competent graduates, effective transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in enhancing educational quality (Joshua et al., 2023). This approach ensures that curricula are closely aligned with industry standards, encourages the adoption of innovative teaching practices, and supports the comprehensive growth of students. Vocational school principals must navigate both academic leadership and the challenge of connecting education with labor market needs, making their role essential for boosting employability and skill acquisition.

This study, therefore, investigates the obstacles and strategies vocational school principals in Indonesia encounter while adopting transformational leadership. It delves into the dynamic interplay between challenges and solutions, aiming to optimize an educational system that emphasizes tangible outcomes. By examining these factors, the research offers practical recommendations for adapting transformational leadership to the distinctive requirements of vocational education, thereby ensuring the provision of high-quality, industry-relevant learning opportunities.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the challenges and strategies faced by vocational school principals in Indonesia in implementing transformational leadership. Fundamentally, it highlights significant dynamics for both terms of challenges and solutions, to create optimization of an outcome-oriented educational system.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative methodology. Data from 2 informants (create informants criteria) :

Tabel 1. informants demography (nama informants disamarkan)

Informants	Years	Gender	Schools
Informant 1	7 Years	Male	Private
Informant 2	3 Years	Female	State

Data is obtained by means of interviews (in coding)

Analysis Thematic Analysis

Research Question :

1. What are stakeholders' challenges in promoting human resource improvement?
2. `what are stakeholders' strategies in promoting human resource improvement?
3. How do stakeholders perceive the implementation of transformational leadership to optimize schools program?

Ground theory

Principals as role models fostering trust and respect. Setting a vision and inspiring stakeholders toward collective goals, Encouraging innovation and critical thinking and Addressing individual staff and student needs investigates how these dimensions manifest in vocational school settings, particularly in: Navigating unique vocational education challenges.Promoting industry partnerships and technical advancements. Supporting diverse student populations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1 (Challenges)

Tabel 2. Challenges and Support in Transformational Leadership for Education in the Industrial Revolution 5.0

		Support	Competence	Technology	Experience	Motivation
Private	Internal Challenges	X	V	V	X	X
	External Challenges	V	X	X	V	X
State	Internal Challenges	V	V	V	V	X
	External Challenges	V	V	V	V	X

Personal Issues, Stakeholder Support, Planning, and Evaluation.

- a) High workload: Transformational leadership demands a great dedication of time and energy.
- b) Pressure to achieve quick results: High expectations from different parties can be stressful.
- c) Interpersonal conflict: Managing relationships with different parties, such as teachers, students, parents, and the community, can be challenging.
- d) Stakeholder Support: Lack of support from superiors or authorities; Rigid policies or bureaucracy can hinder transformation initiatives.
- e) Resistance from teachers or staff: Change often leads to resistance.
- f) Lack of participation from parents or the community: Active support from the surrounding environment is essential.
- g) Lack of resources: Limited budget, time, and expertise can hinder the implementation of transformation programs.
- h) Lack of competence: Not all leaders have the skills needed to lead transformation.
- i) Unclear vision: An unclear or unmeasurable vision will be difficult to implement.

Education must be able to facilitate the development of skills relevant to the Industrial Revolution 5.0. One of the skills that is needed is the ability to think critically and analytically.

Young people need to be trained to be able to face complex challenges and be able to make the right decisions based on deep thinking. In addition, collaboration and communication skills are also important in the Industrial Revolution 5.0. Young people must be able to work in teams, share ideas, and communicate effectively with others. Education needs to provide opportunities for young people to participate in collaborative projects and extracurricular activities that strengthen their social skills. Not only that, education also needs to pay attention to the development of technological skills. Young people must be introduced to basic concepts such as programming, the use of digital tools, and the use of technology in daily life. Inclusive technology education can provide a strong foundation for young people to adapt to technological changes. In the face of the Industrial Revolution 5.0, education must also encourage creativity and innovation (Kahar et al., 2021). Young people need to be encouraged to think out-of-the-box and find new solutions to existing problems. Education should provide space for young people to experiment, try new things, and develop their imaginations.

Many students in private schools come from lower-middle-class families who choose private education due to limited access to quality public schools. This economic reality often limits their ability to afford extra educational support like tutoring or specialized materials. Graduates of private high schools and vocational schools tend to have lower acceptance rates at public universities compared to those from public schools. This is partly because public schools often receive more government support, including well-qualified teachers, adequate facilities, and intensive exam preparation programs. Additionally, private schools typically receive smaller quotas for university admissions, reducing their students' chances of acceptance through this route. The lower absorption rate of private high school (SMA/SMK) graduates in state university admissions is caused by a combination of structural factors, education quality, economic conditions, and social stigma. Nevertheless, students from top-tier private schools are still able to compete significantly, demonstrating that individual quality and thorough preparation can overcome these obstacles.

Research Question 2 (Strategies)

Tabel 3. Challenges and Support in Transformational Leadership for Education in the Industrial Revolution 5.0

		Support	Competence	Technology	Experience	Motivation
Private	Internal Challenges	V	X	V	V	X
	External Challenges	V	X	X	V	X
State	Internal Challenges	V	V	V	V	X
	External Challenges	V	V	V	V	X

Teachers are a key element in educating students to be ready to face the changing times. By providing training on the latest technology, creative teaching methods, and 21st century skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, teachers are expected to simultaneously improve in terms of competence. In order to achieve the improvement program, technology supporters

are needed such as adopting Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Google Classroom, Moodle, or similar platforms to support online and hybrid learning. interactive learning experiences through VR/AR-based simulations, for example in science, history, or vocational learning. Another important point that is concentrated is the award for teachers who innovate in teaching or students who excel in the field of technology as an awareness that active participation in the industrial revolution 5.0 can have a great impact on the future of individuals and society.

Research Question 3 (Perception)

Tabel 4. Challenges and Support in Transformational Leadership for Education in the Industrial Revolution 5.0

		Support	Competence	Technology	Experience	Motivation
Private	Internal Challenges	V	X	V	X	X
	External Challenges	V	X	X	V	X
State	Internal Challenges	V	V	V	V	X
	External Challenges	X	V	V	V	V

It is often argued that teacher competence in private schools tends to be lower compared to public schools, particularly in institutions with limited reputational standing. Teachers in such schools are frequently perceived as lacking comparable qualifications to their counterparts in public institutions. For instance, they may not possess professional certifications or have academic backgrounds aligned with the subjects they teach. Furthermore, limited financial resources often hinder private schools from providing consistent training programs aimed at enhancing teacher competencies, resulting in a continued reliance on traditional pedagogical methods.

A prevalent critique pertains to the remuneration of teachers in private schools, which is often significantly lower than that of teachers in public schools. This disparity in compensation can adversely affect teachers' levels of motivation and enthusiasm for their work. Moreover, in some private schools, teachers' efforts are not consistently recognized or valued by school management, students, or parents, leading to a sense of professional underappreciation. Additionally, private school teachers may perceive a lack of institutional support in critical areas such as career development opportunities, financial welfare, and the cultivation of a conducive and supportive working environment.

Discussion

Research Question 1 (challenges)

challenges of implementing transformational leadership serve as pivotal roles for the principals to make progress. The challenges according to the findings of this study are categorized into internal challenges and external challenges. The sounding internal challenges come from the personality of the principal where they face personal issues. These personal issues according to data found in this study refer to the implication of factors, such as: social, financial, health, and

family factors. This finding is also supported by (cari artikel yang penemuannya sama). however, this finding is contradictory with study conducted by (cari artikel yang tidak setuju bahwa personal issues is the sounding challenge).

Research Question 2 (strategies)

Based on the findings from the survey, some methods can be applied as the solution like The course's focus on group collaboration, combined with brief study sessions and instructor feedback, made it evident that a fully synchronous format was essential. Fortunately, the scheduled time accommodated students from various time zones. The synchronous sessions were well-received and valued by the students. (Venton & Pompano, 2021) the implementation should be collaborated with AI in that school with some requirements, Such a business model would require a holistic approach, strong leadership commitment, and ongoing measurement and reporting of progress. It aligns with the principles of a triple bottom line, focusing not only on profits but also on people and the planet, while striving for a more sustainable and equitable future. (Verma, 2024)

Next, the findings showed that some teachers had divided their problems content between competence and motivation, with the present mixed-methods study is to connect insights from the literature with the experiences and ideas of students, faculty, and staff at technical school to ground a proposal that holistic global competence development is a key facet of education for sustainable development at engineering institutions. (Kjellgren & Richter, 2021). Low motivation as a part of failure in education, a low degree of teacher leadership led to a non-conductive learning environment characterized by demotivated students and non- performance. (Langdon Warren, 2021).

As a key component of student success in higher education is Professional teachers are believed to be able to make students think, behave and act creatively. The form of teacher professionalism must be demonstrated during the learning process. There are three missions that must be carried out by the teacher in the learning process. the three missions are professional missions, humanitarian missions, and citizenship missions. (Syafitri et al., 2022)

Research Question 3 (Perception)

However, some of the results of questions used in the research are not the same because Teaching, as a profession, has professional ethics arranged in the teacher's code of ethics. (Kusumaningrum et al., 2019). The professional development of teachers focuses on the ability to conduct classroom research to improve student learning and teaching in classes. That is the most meaningful and valuable research, classroom action research because it will expose the direction of teaching development. (Meesuk et al., 2020). the support of teachers and students, tolerance of risk, criteria for change and so on the other hand students will form a subjective perception of the basic values that exist in the organization in accordance with the values that leaders want to convey through their leadership style. (Syafitri et al., 2022).

it do not consider it as plausible that teachers' personality traits completely account for their perception of time pressure and experience of emotional exhaustion. Rather, it suggests that in contrast to temporary changes of time pressure and emotional exhaustion, there are enduring, "chronic" aspects of teachers' daily occupational reality that affect the experience of time pressure and emotional exhaustion (Maas et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study highlights the challenges and strategies faced by vocational school principals in Indonesia in implementing transformational leadership to improve the quality of education. The research reveals that the main challenges include limited teacher creativity, a lack of interpersonal and productive competencies, and unpreparedness among teachers to adapt to changes. However, strategies such as strengthening vision, simplifying missions, planning change strategies, and conducting regular evaluations have proven effective in addressing these challenges. The implementation of transformational leadership also significantly contributes to building a productive and integrity-driven work culture, oriented toward achieving educational goals aligned with the demands of the labor market in the Industrial Revolution 5.0 era.

The contribution of this research to the future lies in efforts to deepen the application of transformational leadership as a framework for innovation in vocational education. The recommendations generated can serve as a guide for stakeholders to develop policies and training programs that support teacher competency development, the use of modern technology in learning processes, and collaboration with industries. Thus, this study provides a crucial foundation for strengthening the quality of vocational school graduates in Indonesia to become more adaptive and competitive in the global labor market.

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