

## ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN THE ERA OF EDUCATIONAL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Keywords:  
Transformational  
Leadership, School  
Principal,  
Digitalization,  
Teacher  
Professionalism

The purpose of this study is to learn more about school principals' transformational leadership approaches to the digitization of education. Which aims to provide an overview of the principal's transformational leadership strategy as well as his role in empowering and utilizing digital technology in the learning process so that later students will have competencies developed through digitalization. Research is conducted using a descriptive-qualitative approach. Data sources included people, locations, and field-gathered documents. The study's findings indicate that in order for school principals to exercise transformational leadership in the field of education, they must possess the following abilities: The principal's transformational leadership strategy in influencing digitalization involves providing opportunities to develop teacher professionalism in digitalization and encouraging school change in general. Leadership plays a significant part in promoting and enhancing school quality, and it is the duty of school principals to grow their institutions through coaching and school digitalization to foster positive teamwork. School principals who increase their competence in the field of digitalization are able to make schools receive awards for their achievements in digital form, make children happier learners because it can make the learning process easier, and have positive values in the work environment, get work motivation, and have positive interpersonal relationships with digitalization. other schools, as well as having digitalization skills to develop their talents and having support from the leadership at the school.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The ideal future of educational institutions is actually determined by the existence of their leaders. Leaders of educational institutions have full authority and responsibility, according to their managerial level, for the effective management of educational institutions [1]. Leaders have three main roles in institutions: the role of decision-making (the decision role), the role of building and fostering harmonious human relationships (the interpersonal role), and the role of reviewing and disseminating information (the informational role) [2]. The latest national education system law has been ratified by President Number 20 of 2017. Because it must be able to ensure equal access to educational opportunities and enhance the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of education management to meet challenges in accordance with the shifting demands of local, national, and global life, this new law on the national education system has some fairly fundamental requirements[3]. The planned, targeted, and long-lasting reform of education is one of the immediate measures to meet these goals. Therefore, a professional school principal will be aware of both the general demands of the education sector and the unique needs of the institution; in this way, he will make modifications to ensure that both education and the institution may advance in line with the needs and trends of the day [4].

Education has a very strategic role because it determines a person's self-quality or human resources. A school principal plays a key strategic role in education, and the success of



educational objectives is heavily reliant on the knowledge, abilities, and leadership qualities of the principal. The principle is a professional member of the school administration whose responsibility it is to oversee all of the institution's assets and work with students, faculty, and staff [5]. Two words leadership and transformational form the foundation of this concept. Any activity made by someone to coordinate, guide, and influence others in making decisions and reaching predetermined goals is referred to as leadership. The word "transformation" is derived from the verb "to transform," which implies to alter anything into a new or different shape, as in turning a dream into reality or a potential into an actuality [6]. Not as a controller of change, but as a catalyst for change, is its primary role. Leadership that is transformational has a distinct vision, has the power to move people to action, has a broad perspective, and works to enhance the company both today and in the future [7]. Then the school principal must have the qualities to carry out his leadership, either as a manager or as a supervisor for the educators and staff he leads. Thus, if a school principal is not able to carry out leadership well and as appropriate, it cannot be denied that the organization he leads will experience problems as well as insubordination and abuse in various fields. Leadership is for him or those who are worthy and entitled, because if a person's leadership is stronger, the stronger his influence will be in the organization he leads [8].

It is impossible to achieve good performance without a leader's intervention. Because they have a capable and qualified leader, many institutions and organizations are successful. Because the leader is the foundation of the organization, a competent leader is one who can positively impact his employees [9]. Without effective leadership, it will be challenging for a company or institution to meet its objectives or to adjust to changes that are taking place both inside and outside the organization. Therefore, in order for all aims to be successfully achieved, a leader must take an extra approach to his subordinates. The transformational leadership style is one of the numerous leadership philosophies that an organizational leader might use [10]. To achieve strategy and goals in the era of global competition, many firms are changing their leadership style paradigm from transactional leadership to transformational leadership. Transformative leadership is the ability of a leader or superior to influence followers in such a way that they feel trust, pride, loyalty, and respect for their superiors and are inspired to go above and beyond what is expected or demanded of them [11].

In theory, transformational leadership has the power to inspire followers and motivate subordinates to go beyond what they are capable of doing; in other words, it can boost subordinates' trust or confidence, which will impact performance [12]. A leader's transformational leadership style will inspire his team members to work harder and perform to their potential. Previous study, which asserts that school principals' transformative leadership affects the digitalization of education, is consistent with this. Additionally, leaders play a crucial part in assisting members of an organization to forge bonds of cohesion, promote a love of their jobs, and achieve their objectives [13]. The application of a transformational leadership style can result in more basic changes, such as adjustments to the values, objectives, and requirements of subordinates, as well as and this is crucial improved worker performance. When teaching and learning, teachers who do well exhibit professional behavior, including honesty, discipline (on time), cooperative skills, and relationships with both students and colleagues. The creation of annual programs, semester programs, lesson plans, attendance lists, grade lists, and lists of student portfolios are other ways that teachers demonstrate their performance. Because the teacher is the one who organizes, administers, and evaluates student learning outcomes, this arrangement may affect how well students learn. The realization of high-quality education will occur if the leadership performs well [14].

This needs to be backed by the capacity of a leader (school principal) who can sway his followers, provide them the opportunity to change, and promote the common good. A digital transformational leader is someone who demonstrates such leadership. In addition to having a



vision, transformational leaders may persuade others to accept that vision and strengthen their commitment to seeing it through [15]. To achieve quality education, Indonesia still faces several obstacles, namely the low competitiveness of education in Indonesia and the low quality of human resources, as can be seen from the 2015 UKG results, which are still below the minimum competency standards (SKM). Digitization is the process of changing physical or analog forms, such as paper notes, photos, or graphic forms, into electronic representations or images that can be accessed and conveyed electronically [16] -[19]. Likewise, in the field of education, digitalization is very necessary because, in classroom learning, it can make it easier for teachers to explain learning material to students.

## 2. METHODS

In this study, the subject from which the data can be gathered is the data source. In this study, observations and interviews served as data sources. In this study, researchers used qualitative research as their method. Several data analysis methods used in qualitative research include: Data reduction entails summarizing, identifying the key components, concentrating on what matters, and searching for patterns and themes. Researchers will have access to data that has been condensed into crisp visuals, making it simpler for them to gather and look for further data (if needed). Data presentation can take the form of a brief description; nevertheless, narrative prose is the type of data representation that appears most frequently in qualitative research. It will be simpler to comprehend what transpired in this manner and to organize future work based on what is currently understood. Conclusion is an effort to see, review, and examine carefully the information and temporary conclusions drawn to obtain more appropriate conclusions and understanding. After the data is complete, the final step is to conclude the results. The researcher reviews the data obtained and the documents used to strengthen the results of interviews, observations, and field notes, then draws conclusions in descriptive form. Researchers use triangulation techniques with sources and theories. Meanwhile, researchers use triangulation, a method that is carried out by checking the validity of the data using the same method from different sources. This form of triangulation was carried out by conducting direct interviews with school principals, teachers, and students based on the information that had been obtained, and then the researcher wrote complete field notes. Researchers use semi-structured interviews, which aim to find more open problems and give researchers more freedom to explore when searching for data. In this research, interviews will discuss transformational leadership strategies in the educational digitalization process. The interview will be conducted openly and using semi-structured interviews so that the resource person is aware that he is conducting an interview, knows the purpose of the interview, and can find out and explore the information he wants to obtain.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principals discovered that numerous indications, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalized consideration, were applied by school principals to the digitalization of education in the author's research on transformational leadership. The findings of the study demonstrate that the principal's conduct in carrying out his responsibilities and acting as a leader in the school is successful, and both can serve as models for all subordinates, particularly in terms of discipline. School principals have a high level of discipline, which can be transmitted to their teachers and staff. By arriving at school on time and completing assignments on time, the principal does not need to reprimand verbally but only sets an example with actions, which certainly makes the principal more respected in carrying out his duties. As the results of the interview with the school principal show, he can be a role model for teachers and staff, always behaving honestly and with authority. When he speaks enthusiastically, listeners, especially researchers, are amazed by his soft and charming speech.



The principal always has convictions and beliefs. With this belief, the principal is able to invite the teachers' council to strive to become an institution that has been awarded many awards. The principal has a passion for work; this can be seen from the way he speaks in front of researchers, talking about the previous state of the school compared to the current one. During the teachers' council meeting, the principal said that he spoke loudly to motivate the teachers' council and staff so that in carrying out their duties and work, there must be improvement every day. The principal believes that by working together, he will be able to make the institution he leads better, more advanced, and able to compete with other educational institutions.

The research results show that the principal's behavior is always to provide guidance to teachers and staff, namely by stimulating the growth of innovation and new ways of completing work. Such as using interesting and IT-based learning media in the learning process. Making the learning process unique and interesting certainly makes students happy and proud to take part in it. Through this stimulation process, there will be an increase in subordinates' ability to understand and solve problems, think, and imagine, as well as changes in values and beliefs. From the interviews, researchers were able to find out that the school had implemented or adapted attendance in terms of the presence of teachers, staff, employees, and also leaders. There is a transformational leadership strategy for the educational digitalization process. The principal also provides the widest possible opportunities to obtain higher education and involves teachers and employees in educational training. The principal also stimulates his subordinates to apply what they have gained by inviting them to think about future plans they want to carry out, as well as delegating various jobs such as preparing work programs for each class coordinator. From the explanation above, researchers can see that schools are still in the development or trial stage of digitalization in education. It can be seen that schools are still unable to implement the digitalization of education because they are hampered by the economic conditions of parents whose average level of education is still lower than that of the middle class.

The principal pays special attention to the needs of individuals in terms of their achievement and the growth they expect by behaving as a coach or mentor. Responsibilities include preparing all school facilities and infrastructure required for the teaching and learning process, developing institutions, allocating work to subordinates in accordance with their competencies, and showing appreciation for each excellent job. The researcher's observations regarding the success of the principal were characterized by collaboration with the teacher council. Namely, there is a delegation of authority tasks given by the principal to subordinates, with the aim that subordinates can learn to lead themselves, lead the institution, carry out mandates, work, and innovate. And the principal can also appreciate the achievements achieved by subordinates and students. So that there is interest from subordinates and students to develop skills towards achievement. In other words, we can understand that schools, in terms of accepting employees or teachers, are more professional and also more focused in accordance with the school regulations that have been made.

The principal is knowledgeable and competent to run the school. School principals can assess how well the learning and curriculum are being implemented in addition to working to increase the performance of teachers and staff through capacity building and training programs and allocating tasks to teachers and staff members in accordance with their skills and educational backgrounds. In accordance with the results of the interview, the principal emerged as a leader who was considered successful in creating changes in the school, so almost the entire teacher council was inspired by the principal's behavior. The successful behavior of the principal will automatically have an impact on the behavior and personality of the future leaders of the institution. The principal has good articulation skills, is able to simplify problems, and often uses role models who are clear and easy to understand in explaining things. As expressed in his interview, "to motivate teachers and staff, I usually do it at every opportunity when we gather together or when I see my subordinates are less enthusiastic, or if needed, thank God after that



there are slight changes that occur when working and teaching, although not much because I just give words of encouragement or motivation for them to be more diligent in learning and teaching and remind them of their initial goal when they applied here; that's what it was for. In providing motivation to the teacher council, the principal always sets an example for his subordinates. Apart from that, we always invite teachers and employees to look at it from a new perspective. For example, if there is a new curriculum such as the Merdeka Curriculum, we, the teacher council, are immediately sent to training to find information on how to implement it or to invite competent resource persons to explain it to the teacher council. The author observes in the field that the principal has the skill of using words that can arouse enthusiasm or motivate and inspire his subordinates. Not only are the sentences in his words motivating, but the way the principal conveys them is also full of feelings and attitudes that are optimistic, enthusiastic, and convincing.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The transformational leadership strategy for the digitalization process of education in schools has been going well, as stated by the principal, but there are still several aspects that cannot fulfill the characteristics of transformational leadership. Overall, it can be said that the transformational leadership strategy for the digitalization of education process can be implemented well with existing aspects. The steps in the educational digitalization process use good planning in implementing digitalization in the school, which is in accordance with their vision and mission regarding educational digitalization. However, the steps in the process of digitalizing their education are just beginning. Teachers and staff who are competent in this field according to their capacity are the first supporting and inhibiting factors for transformational leadership strategies in the educational digitalization process. The second are the facilities and infrastructure that support the educational digitalization process. The inhibiting factor in this school is that some of the older teachers have not been able to adapt quickly to the presence of digitalization. Meanwhile, what supports the transformational leadership strategy in the educational digitalization process is the school principal's enthusiasm for developing digitalization. The most important inhibiting factor is that students are not allowed to bring cellphones to school. There have been many changes after the implementation of digitalization of education in schools, including students becoming more active and enjoying learning because they can understand learning in more detail because they can use learning tools such as Infocus to explain learning material that may be difficult to understand. In contrast to that, after the digitalization of education was implemented, it was still not felt because students were prohibited from bringing cellphones, so teachers could not use digital facilities more optimally.

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