



## The Role of Transformational Leaders in Improving the Quality of Early Childhood Education

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### ABSTRACT:

This research examines the application of transformational leadership principles by the Satria Tunas Bangsa PAUD principal and its impact on learning. The research focus includes the implementation of transformational leadership, leadership learning strategies, supporting factors, and the impact of this leadership. The research results show that school principals play an important role in creating a positive learning environment by displaying leadership charisma, providing inspirational motivation to teachers, and paying attention to individual needs. In the learning leadership strategy, the principal develops a clear vision, creates a conducive learning environment, and supervises and provides professional support. Supporting factors include a positive organizational culture, a conducive climate, stakeholder support, and the principal's leadership competence. The impact of transformational leadership can be seen in improving the quality of learning, teacher motivation and performance, developing student character, as well as increasing innovation and creativity in learning. This research concludes that transformational leadership in PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa makes a significant contribution to improving the quality of education and student achievement.

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## 1. Introduction

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a very important stage of education in child development. At this stage, children begin to form character, social, emotional skills, and academic readiness for the next level of education. PAUD has a strategic role in providing a solid foundation for holistic child development, including cognitive, language, and social-emotional abilities (Librianty, 2019; Firnando, 2023). However, the quality of education at this level is not only determined by the curriculum and learning methods, but also by the effective leadership of the principal in creating a learning environment that supports and empowers educators (Nurjanah et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of concern in this study is the leadership of the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa who uses a transformational leadership approach. This approach emphasizes an inspiring vision, motivation, and innovation to encourage potential in educational institutions, especially at the PAUD level (Purnomo, 2022; Nugroho & Muljadi, 2022). Principals who adopt this principle are able to motivate teachers to reach their maximum potential, create a collaborative work atmosphere, and encourage innovation in teaching methods (Saffardin et al., 2022; Aytac et al., 2019).

However, the implementation of transformational policies in PAUD can overcome various challenges. Some of them are limited resources, lack of understanding of the concept of transformational leadership, and differences in implementation in various PAUD institutions (Haw & King, 2023; Mennita Tias, 2023). In addition, the involvement of parents as partners in early childhood education also requires special attention to be optimized by the head of PAUD (Firnando, 2023).

This study specifically highlights the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa. By identifying how the principal builds an inspiring vision, empowers teachers, encourages professional development, and involves parents, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of transformational leadership in improving the quality of PAUD education. This phenomenon is raised to provide insight to policy makers and education practitioners in optimizing the role of leadership in the PAUD environment and offering solutions to the challenges faced.

The problems in this research are how to implement the principles of transformational leadership by PAUD principals in learning, instructional leadership strategies implemented by PAUD principals, supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD and the impact of transformational leadership of Satria Tunas PAUD principals Nation

The aim of this research is to analyze the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals in learning, examine instructional leadership strategies implemented by PAUD principals, analyze supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD and explore the impact of transformational leadership on principals. preschool

One of the leadership models that is considered relevant in improving the quality of PAUD education is transformational leadership. However, the implementation of transformational policies in PAUD is not free from various challenges. Limited resources, lack of understanding of this concept among school principals, and differences in implementation in various PAUD institutions are obstacles that are often faced. On the other hand, the success of transformational leadership also requires support from external factors, such as a positive organizational culture, a conducive work climate, and the involvement of parents as partners in supporting early childhood education.

Problem identification can be focused on several critical aspects as follows: (1) Implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals in Learning. (2) Instructional leadership strategies applied by principals. (3) Supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD. (4) Impact of transformational leadership of principals. By focusing on these problems, researchers can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership of PAUD principals plays a role in improving the quality of early childhood education.

Based on the identification of the problems that have been discussed, it can be formulated as follows: (1) How is the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals in learning? (2) What is the instructional leadership strategy applied by PAUD principals? (3) What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD? (4) What is the impact of transformational leadership on PAUD principals? This problem formulation will help research to explore in depth how PAUD principals apply transformational leadership and instructional leadership in an effort to improve the quality of early childhood education in the school.

Based on the formulation of the problem that has been made, the objectives of the study can be detailed as follows: (1) Analyze the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals in learning. (2) Review the instructional leadership strategies applied by PAUD principals, (3) Analyze supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD. (4) Explore the impact of transformational leadership of PAUD principals. With these objectives, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of

transformational leadership of PAUD principals in creating a conducive learning environment and improving the quality of early childhood education.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research Approach and Design

This study will use a single-case study design with the PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa Salatiga as the unit of analysis. The selection of this single-case study design is based on the consideration that PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa Salatiga is a unique case and rich in information related to the implementation of the principal's transformational leadership in improving the quality of early childhood education (Moleong & Surjaman, 1989). Focusing on one case allows for an in-depth and detailed analysis of the implementation of transformational leadership principles in improving the quality of early childhood education.

The case study was chosen because it is in accordance with the research objective which is to explore the phenomenon of transformational leadership in a specific context, namely in the early childhood education environment. This qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the processes and interactions that occur in the PAUD environment in detail, which can ultimately reveal complex aspects of principal leadership that may not be explained quantitatively (Creswell, 2013).

The study involves the principal, teachers (Group A and B), parents of students (Group A and B), the school's parenting committee chair, and the foundation chair of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa. The institution is located in Salatiga, known for its commitment to early childhood education.

### 2.2 Research Focus

Based on the formulation of the problem and objectives that have been presented, the focus of this study is divided into four interrelated topics:

- 1) Implementation of transformational leadership principles by examining the extent to which the principal applies transformational principles, such as charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. This focus examines how the principal provides inspiration and motivation to teachers and staff in improving the quality of learning in PAUD.
- 2) Instructional leadership strategy by identifying the instructional leadership strategies implemented by the principal. This strategy includes planning and preparing a clear vision and mission, creating a conducive learning environment, supervision and evaluation of learning, and professional support for teachers.
- 3) Supporting factors for the implementation of transformational leadership by examining factors that support the principal in implementing transformational leadership. These factors include organizational culture, school climate, support from stakeholders such as teachers, parents, foundations, availability of resources, and the principal's leadership competency.
- 4) The impact of transformational leadership on teacher motivation and performance and student development by assessing the impact of the principal's transformational leadership on teacher motivation and performance, learning environment, and students' cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

### 2.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was carried out using several techniques that are in accordance with the characteristics of qualitative research, namely. Primary data was obtained directly from primary sources, namely through participant observation and in-depth interviews. The researcher conducted participatory observation at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa to directly observe learning activities, interactions between the principal and teachers and students, and other activities relevant to leadership. These observations allow researchers to capture the dynamics and patterns of interaction in the daily context of PAUD. Referring to the observation grid as follows:

**Table 1 Observation Guide**

No	Aspects Observed
1	Implementation of Transformational Leadership Principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principal's leadership charisma               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to communicate and interact with teachers, students, and parents</li> <li>• Ability to build trust and inspire</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Inspirational motivation to teachers and staff               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to convey the school's vision, mission, and goals</li> <li>• Efforts to motivate and inspire teachers and staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Intellectual stimulation in the learning process               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to encourage creativity and innovation in learning</li> <li>• How to facilitate the exchange of new ideas and concepts</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Individual consideration of teacher and student needs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attention to the individual needs of teachers and students</li> <li>• Efforts to provide support and guidance as needed</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
2	Instructional Leadership Strategy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building a learning vision and mission               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socialization of the learning vision and mission to teachers and parents</li> <li>• Efforts to realize the vision and mission in learning activities</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Creating a conducive learning environment               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangement of the physical environment of the classroom and school</li> <li>• A pleasant learning climate that supports child development</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Conducting supervision and evaluation of the learning process               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal supervision activities for the learning process</li> <li>• Evaluation and feedback mechanisms for teachers</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Providing support and professional development for teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development programs for teachers</li> <li>• Efforts to facilitate the improvement of teacher competence</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
3	Stakeholder Interaction and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement and support of parents/guardians</li> <li>• Collaboration with foundation administrators and school parenting chairpersons</li> <li>• Collaboration with related agencies or institutions</li> </ul>
4	Learning Environment and Student Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learning environment in the classroom and school</li> <li>• Interaction between teachers and students in the learning process</li> <li>• Learning activities that support aspects of student development (cognitive, social, emotional, physical)</li> <li>• Student achievement and development</li> </ul>

In-depth interviews were conducted with various sources who have important roles in PAUD management, namely the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa, teachers of group A and group B, representatives of one of the parents of students in group A and group B, the head of parenting and the head of the Bethel foundation in the Salatiga area. This interview was conducted to obtain a rich and in-depth perspective on how the principal applies transformational principles and their impact on the quality of learning. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow flexibility in exploring information that may emerge spontaneously during the conversation, referring to the interview instrument grid as follows:

**Table 2 Interview Instrument Grid**

Source person	Focus on the Problem
Head of Satria Tunas Bangsa Preschool	Implementation of transformational leadership principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership charisma</li> <li>• Inspirational motivation for teachers and staff</li> <li>• Intellectual stimulation in the learning process</li> <li>• Individual consideration of teacher and student need</li> </ul>
	Instructional leadership strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a learning vision and mission</li> <li>• Creating a conducive learning environment</li> <li>• Conducting learning supervision and evaluation</li> </ul>

Source person	Focus on the Problem
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing support and professional development for teachers</li> </ul>
	Supporting factors for the implementation of transformational leadership
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational culture and school climate</li> <li>• Support from stakeholders</li> <li>• Availability of resources</li> <li>• Principal leadership competencies</li> </ul>
	The impact of transformational leadership on the quality of early childhood education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher motivation and performance</li> <li>• Conducive learning environment</li> <li>• Student development and achievement</li> </ul>
Early Childhood Education Teachers of Satria Tunas Bangsa Salatiga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers' perceptions of the principal's transformational leadership</li> <li>• Support and motivation provided by the principal</li> <li>• Impact of the principal's leadership on teacher performance and motivation</li> <li>• Challenges and opportunities in implementing transformational leadership</li> </ul>
Parents/Guardians of Satria Tunas Bangsa Preschool Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental perceptions of principal leadership</li> <li>• Positive changes felt in the quality of PAUD education</li> <li>• Conducive learning environment for children</li> <li>• Children's development and achievements after attending PAUD education</li> </ul>
Head of Foundation and Head of School Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support given to the principal in implementing transformational leadership</li> <li>• Observation of positive changes in PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa Salatiga</li> <li>• Challenges and opportunities in supporting the transformational leadership of the principal</li> <li>• Hopes and suggestions for improving the quality of PAUD education in the future</li> </ul>

Secondary data was obtained from various documents relevant to the focus of the research, namely:

- 1) The researcher analyzed school documents, such as vision and mission, curriculum, work programs, and activity reports. The analysis of this document aims to understand the policies and frameworks underlying the leadership process in PAUD.
- 2) The researcher reviewed policies related to PAUD leadership and management to understand the formal guidelines that influence the principal's decision-making in implementing transformational leadership.
- 3) Relevant school records or archives were also analyzed to track developments and important activities related to the implementation of the principal's leadership.
- 4) The researcher also reviewed books, journals, and other literature related to the theory of transformational leadership, instructional leadership, and the quality of PAUD education to enrich the analytical framework and validate the findings.

## 2.4 Data Validity Techniques

In qualitative research, data validity is very important to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings. Triangulation of data sources by comparing data obtained from interviews with principals, teachers, parents or parenting leaders and the head of the Bethel Area foundation with the results of observations.

**Table 3 Triangulation of data sources**

Perspective	Implementation of Transformational Leadership Principles	Instructional Leadership Strategy	Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Transformational Leadership	The Impact of Transformational Leadership
Head of Parenting or Parents	Principals who provide inspiration and collaboration with parents will be more supported. A creative and enjoyable learning	Strategies that focus on educational quality, teacher development, and collaboration with parents create an	Good communication, collaboration, support for teachers, and supporting facilities are important elements.	Parents experienced positive changes in the quality of education, parental involvement, and children's development.

Perspective	Implementation of Transformational Leadership Principles	Instructional Leadership Strategy	Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Transformational Leadership	The Impact of Transformational Leadership
	atmosphere is a major factor.	environment that supports the holistic development of children.		
Foundation	The principal must be able to bring about positive change through innovation and collaboration that is in line with the foundation's vision.	Leadership strategies should focus on teacher development, improving the quality of learning, and collaborating with parents and the community.	A clear vision, shared commitment, teacher professional development, and support for educational facilities are the keys to success.	Improving the quality of education, teacher development, parental involvement, and positive learning environments have a wide impact on children's development.
Teacher	Creating an environment that supports self-development, innovation and collaboration, which has a positive impact on children's learning experiences.	Continuous professional development, innovation in teaching, and full support in the curriculum improve teacher morale and teaching quality.	Inspiration from the principal's leadership, support for professional development, collaboration, adequate facilities, and parental involvement greatly help improve the quality of education.	Teachers experience increased motivation, professional development, and a positive work environment, which has a direct impact on children's learning outcomes.
Headmaster	Focusing on collaboration, innovation, and growth of teachers and students to create a school environment that supports optimal child development.	The strategy focuses on teacher professional development, innovation in teaching, and creating a child-centered environment, with the goal of ensuring every child has a meaningful learning experience.	Foundation support, teacher professional development, adequate facilities, collaboration, and parental involvement are key elements to the success of transformational leadership.	Improvements in the quality of education, teacher motivation, parental involvement, and children's character development demonstrate the positive impact of a transformational leadership approach.

### Implementation of transformational leadership principles

The principal at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa with involvement in a shared vision, the principal invites all teachers and staff to participate in formulating the school's vision. This creates a sense of ownership among all members. Inspiration and motivation, regularly holding meetings to provide inspiration and motivation to teachers, thereby increasing work enthusiasm and collaboration. Individual approach, paying attention to the needs of each teacher and child, conducting classroom observations, and providing constructive feedback for improvement. Intellectual stimulation, the principal encourages teachers to continue learning and taking training, and facilitating innovative activities in the learning process

## Instructional leadership strategy

Applied in PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa with curriculum development, the principal focuses on developing a competency-based curriculum that is relevant to student needs, ensuring that learning is outcome-oriented. Learning evaluation, by conducting supervision and evaluation of learning programs periodically, providing constructive feedback to improve the quality of learning. Teacher training by organizing training for teachers in implementing varied and innovative learning methods, improving their competence. Parental involvement, inviting parents to actively participate in school activities, building good cooperation between schools and families.

## Supporting Factors in the Implementation of Transformational Leadership

Foundation support, the Bethel Area Foundation provides support in the form of facilities, resources, and training for principals and teachers. Effective communication, there is open and transparent communication between principals, teachers, and parents, which facilitates decision making. Active teacher involvement, teachers actively participate in programs and training held, creating a sense of responsibility for the success of the program. Parental participation, parental involvement in school activities creates a more conducive learning environment and supports child development.

## Impact of Principal Transformational Leadership

Improvement of learning quality, there is a significant increase in the quality of learning, with children more enthusiastic and comfortable in participating in educational programs. Holistic development of children, children are seen experiencing good development in cognitive, social-emotional, and physical aspects, reflecting the success of the implemented educational program. Strong cooperation, good cooperation can be established between the principal, teachers, parents, and the community, creating solid support for educational development. The success of the program, the programs implemented receive support from all parties, with evaluation results showing success in achieving educational goals.

## 2.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis process in this study includes several steps, namely:

- 1) Interview data with the principal shows how the implementation of transformational leadership principles is by providing inspiration, potential development, effective communication, providing examples. How is the instructional leadership strategy implemented by the PAUD principal with training and mentoring, class supervision, reflection and evaluation and giving creative assignments. What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD including foundation support, cooperation with parents, positive school culture, educator competence. What is the impact of the transformational leadership of the PAUD principal including interesting learning, improving teacher performance, developing student character, and a positive school environment.
- 2) Interview data with teachers shows how the implementation of transformational leadership principles by the PAUD principal with involvement in decision making, providing support and motivation, building good communication, providing freedom in creativity and mentoring. How is the instructional leadership strategy implemented by the PAUD principal including adequate facilities, improving teacher competence, implementing innovative methods, team collaboration. What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD including good communication, resource support, involvement of the entire school community, education that encourages creativity. What is the impact of transformational leadership of PAUD principals can be seen in improving teacher performance, increasing student creativity, a positive learning environment, ongoing professional development
- 3) Interview data with parents of students shows how the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals with openness and communication, parental participation, student development, understanding of vision and mission. How is the instructional leadership strategy implemented by PAUD principals with interesting learning programs, safe and comfortable facilities, extracurricular activities and development of social and emotional skills. What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD showing effective communication, a supportive environment, parental involvement and inspiring leadership. What is the impact of transformational leadership of PAUD principals can show positive child development, increased skills and creativity, parental satisfaction and independence and social awareness.
- 4) Interview data with the parenting chairperson shows how the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals by providing inspiration and role models, transparency and motivation,

encouraging performance and harmony, willingness to learn. How the instructional leadership strategy implemented by PAUD principals shows active support in programs, creative and fun learning activities, parental participation and diverse parenting activities. What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD showing a clear vision and mission, good communication, a comfortable school environment, involvement of all school residents. What is the impact of transformational leadership of PAUD principals including school development, quality of learning processes, parental support and innovation and creativity

- 5) Interview data with the head of the Bethel Area Foundation shows how the implementation of transformational leadership principles by PAUD principals by building a shared vision, inspiration and motivation, individual attention, intellectual stimulation, role models. How the instructional leadership strategy implemented by PAUD principals shows the development of competency-based curriculum, supervision and evaluation, teacher training and development and collaboration with parents and the community. What are the supporting factors in the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD with the support of the foundation, effective communication, active participation of teachers and involvement of parents. What is the impact of transformational leadership of PAUD principals on improving the quality of learning, holistic child development, strengthening cooperation, and program success.

### 3. Result

This study highlights the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa through findings from interviews and observations. Data triangulation techniques were carried out by comparing information from the principal, teachers, foundation chairman, and parents with the results of direct observations in the school environment. The following is an analysis of the research findings.

#### 3.1. Implementation of Transformational Leadership Principles by the Principal of Satria Tunas Bangsa PAUD

##### a) Principal's Leadership Charisma

Based on interviews with teachers and the head of the foundation, the principal demonstrated strong charisma through warm and enthusiastic communication. The teachers stated that the principal was able to create a pleasant and motivating working atmosphere. One teacher said: *"The principal always greets us with a smile and is full of enthusiasm. He is able to make us feel appreciated and motivated to give our best in teaching."*

The head of the foundation added that the principal often provides visionary direction, which makes the entire school community feel inspired to work towards a bigger goal. The head of the foundation said: *"He always speaks with a clear vision. This helps us see the big picture and directs our steps in achieving common goals."*

Observations conducted showed that the principal is always the center of attention in every meeting or school activity. He demonstrates his ability to build strong interpersonal relationships with all members of the school, including teachers, staff, and parents. This is seen in attentive interactions, where the principal listens attentively and provides encouraging responses.

##### b) Inspirational Motivation for Teachers and Staff

Teachers and parents agreed that the principal provided inspirational motivation, for example through positive messages in parenting meetings or activities. In an interview, one parent stated: *"The principal always encourages us, parents, to continue supporting our children's education, so we feel more involved."*

Observations showed that the principal often gave appreciation to teachers in front of parents, increasing their self-confidence. Teachers expressed that this approach encouraged them to perform better.

##### c) Self-Development and Intellectual Stimulation in the Learning Process

From the results of interviews with teachers, the principal is known to actively encourage competency development through training, seminars, and workshops. One teacher said: *"Training activities like this really help us find new methods in teaching."*



Observations show that training activities take place periodically with a focus on learning innovation. Teachers seem enthusiastic about discussing and trying new methods, such as the use of interactive teaching aids in the classroom.

#### d) Change Management and Individual Consideration of Teacher and Student Needs

Interviews with teachers showed that the principal paid special attention to individual needs, both for teachers and students. Teachers revealed that the principal often held personal meetings to discuss the challenges they faced. One teacher said: *"When I feel difficult, the principal accompanies me directly and provides concrete solutions."*

Observations showed that the principal often interacts directly with students, pays attention to their needs, and talks with parents to discuss their children's development.

### 3.2. Learning Leadership Strategy (*Instructional Leadership*)

#### a) Building a Clear Learning Vision and Mission

The results of the interview with the head of the foundation revealed that the principal actively formulated the school's vision and mission together with all related parties, including teachers, staff, and parents. The head of the foundation stated: *"The principal is very involved in the process of preparing the vision and mission. All parties are invited to discuss and provide input, so that the vision and mission truly reflect the common goals for the development of the school and students."*

Teachers also said that the school's vision is a guideline in every activity carried out, so that all members feel they have the same goal. One teacher stated: *"The school's vision is the basis for designing learning activities and other activities. We feel more focused and confident in carrying out our duties because all the activities we do always return to the same vision."*

Observations made showed that the school's vision and mission were clearly published in various corners of the school, including in the teachers' room, hall, and classrooms. The vision and mission are the main themes in routine meetings and activities carried out, such as monthly meetings with teachers and annual evaluations with parents. This shows that the principal has succeeded in instilling the importance of the vision and mission as a guideline for all members of the school in achieving the same goal.

With a transformational leadership approach, the principal is able to build collective awareness and shared commitment in realizing the vision that has been formulated, creating a clear direction in every activity carried out at school.

#### b) Creating a Conducive Learning Environment

Parents expressed that the learning environment at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa felt safe and enjoyable for children. One parent said: *"My child is always enthusiastic about going to school because the atmosphere is comfortable, and the teachers are very caring."*

Observations showed that interactions between teachers and students took place with great affection. Facilities such as playgrounds, clean classrooms, and teaching aids support a positive learning atmosphere.

#### c) Conducting Supervision and Evaluation of the Learning Process

Teachers mentioned that the principal actively supervises and provides constructive feedback. In an interview, one teacher said: *"The principal often observes us teaching, then provides very useful suggestions for improvement."*

Observations showed that supervision was carried out with a supportive approach, so that teachers felt appreciated and motivated to develop.

#### d) Providing Support and Professional Development for Teachers

The principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa plays an active role in supporting the professional development of teachers. Based on interviews, teachers feel that they receive great attention through various training programs and workshops. This training is designed to improve their teaching skills, such as an introduction to the Montessori method and the STEAM approach, which have been proven to help teachers create more creative and innovative

learning. One teacher stated: *"We are often invited to participate in training to improve our teaching skills, such as training in the Montessori method and the STEAM approach. The principal also motivates us to continue learning."*

Observations show that this training has an impact on more creative and innovative teaching methods, as seen from the diverse and interesting learning activities for children

Routine mentoring and supervision The principal periodically supervises classes to provide direct feedback to teachers. Observations show positive interactions between the principal and teachers during supervision, with a focus on developing the quality of learning

Personal motivation with several teachers revealed that personal attention from the principal greatly helped increase their motivation. One teacher said: *"The principal often discusses with us individually to find out the challenges we face and provide supportive solutions."*

The observation results also showed that the principal routinely conducts classroom supervision to provide constructive feedback. Positive interactions between the principal and teachers during supervision create an atmosphere that supports professional development. In addition, the personal approach by the principal in discussing challenges faced by teachers shows his commitment to supporting the professional well-being and individual motivation of teachers.

#### e) Provision of Learning Resources

The results of interviews and observations show that the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa strives to provide adequate learning resources to support teaching and learning activities. Observations in the classroom show that this PAUD has a variety of teaching aids, such as puzzles, building blocks, and art supplies. The teacher stated: *"We have no difficulty in getting teaching aids. The principal always tries to meet our needs, even though sometimes we have to look for sponsors or assistance from other parties."*

Observations showed improvements in facilities, such as classrooms equipped with child-friendly furniture, a safe outdoor play area, and a small library. The principal seeks cooperation with the local community to improve these facilities.

From interviews with the principal, it was found that BOP (Education Operational Assistance) funds and donations from the community were used transparently to meet learning needs. Teachers expressed satisfaction with the way the principal managed the budget, as seen from: *"Every learning need is always discussed in a joint meeting, so we feel involved."*

Findings from teacher interviews, field observations, and statements from the principal showed consistency in the implementation of professional development strategies and the provision of learning resources. This combination of efforts creates a conducive learning environment and supports children's holistic development.

#### f) Curriculum Development

The results of interviews with the head of the foundation and several teachers showed that the principal plays an important role in developing a curriculum that is relevant to students' needs. The head of the foundation stated: *"The principal is very involved in designing a curriculum that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also supports children's social and emotional development."*

Teachers also emphasized that the curriculum implemented at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa is designed to support children's holistic development, including cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. One teacher stated:

*"We feel that the principal provides clear direction in developing a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of children. We are invited to collaborate in designing activities that involve all aspects of children's development."*

Observations conducted at the school showed good collaboration between the principal and teachers in developing and evaluating the curriculum. The principal holds regular meetings with teachers to discuss teaching materials, learning methods, and ways to adapt the curriculum to the latest developments in early childhood education. The curriculum implemented appears to accommodate various types of activities that support the development of students' social, motor, and cognitive skills.

These findings indicate that the transformational leadership of the PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa principal has a positive impact on creating a curriculum that supports children's holistic development. Leadership approaches such as charisma, inspirational motivation, individual attention, and intellectual stimulation have successfully created an atmosphere that supports holistic learning. Support from the foundation, effective communication, and active involvement from all parties are the main supporting factors for the success of this curriculum development.

#### g) Teacher Development

Based on the results of interviews and observations, teacher coaching at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa is carried out in a structured and sustainable manner. The principal routinely holds internal training sessions involving discussions on new teaching methods, such as play-based approaches and integrative thematic learning. Teachers feel that this training is relevant and provides practical solutions to challenges in the classroom.

From the interviews, several teachers revealed that the principal provides individual guidance, especially for new teachers who need more intensive guidance. One teacher said: *"When I first started teaching, I often felt confused about how to apply the right method. The principal is always willing to guide and provide examples, so I feel more confident."*

The results of observations show that coaching is not only carried out formally, but also through daily interactions. The principal often provides direct input when he sees potential for improvement in teaching practices. In addition, the principal conducts regular class supervision to monitor teacher development and provide constructive feedback.

### 3.3. Supporting Factors in the Implementation of Transformational Leadership in PAUD

#### a) Organizational Culture and School Climate

The results of the interview showed that PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa has an organizational culture that emphasizes cooperation and open communication. One of the teachers stated: *"We feel like family here. All staff support each other, and the principal always encourages us to work together for the good of the children."*

Observations showed a positive working atmosphere, where teachers often discuss and help each other in designing learning activities. This culture is reinforced by the principal who routinely holds meetings to discuss school developments.

#### b) Support from Stakeholders

From interviews with the principal, it was revealed that support from parents and the foundation greatly assisted in the implementation of school programs. The principal said: *"Parents are very enthusiastic. They are not only involved in school activities, but also provide constructive input."*

Observations at meetings between the school and parents showed active discussions, where input from parents was received and accommodated in learning activities. Stakeholder support is a strong foundation in the implementation of transformational leadership.

#### c) Availability of Resources

Interviews with teachers revealed that adequate facilities, such as comfortable classrooms and educational play equipment, support learning. One teacher said: *"We feel supported because the school always provides the tools we need for learning activities."*

Observations showed that learning tools were available in sufficient quantities and used optimally in learning activities. This data triangulation confirmed that the availability of resources was a significant supporting factor.

#### d) Principal Leadership Competence

The results of interviews with teachers showed that the principal has good communication skills and is able to be a role model. One teacher said: *"The principal is very inspiring. He gives clear directions and always supports us to develop."*

Observations showed that the principal actively leads meetings and provides motivation to teachers. This competency creates an effective work environment and supports the implementation of transformational leadership principles.

#### e) Support from the Community

Interviews with the principal and local community leaders showed that the local community provides support through participation in school activities. The principal said: *"The community around the school often helps, especially in big activities such as celebrating children's day or mutual cooperation."*

Observations showed the active presence of the community in school events. This data triangulation shows that community involvement has a positive impact on the success of the school program

#### f) Teacher Involvement

The results of interviews with teachers showed that they felt they had an important role in determining the direction of learning. One teacher said: *"We are given the freedom to innovate in learning, and the principal always supports our ideas."*

Observations show that teachers are actively involved in planning and evaluating learning programs. Data triangulation shows that high teacher involvement is one of the key factors for the success of implementing transformational leadership at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa.

### 3.4. Impact of Transformational Leadership of PAUD Principals

#### a) Improving Learning Quality

The results of interviews with the principals showed that the implementation of transformational leadership contributed to improving the quality of learning at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa. The principal stated: *"We always try to create a fun and innovative learning atmosphere. In this way, we hope that children can learn optimally."*

Observations showed that teachers used various creative learning methods, such as role-playing and project-based learning, which increased student interaction in the learning process. The quality of learning also increased with the development of a flexible curriculum that was in accordance with the needs of children. Triangulation data showed that principals who applied transformational leadership principles succeeded in creating a more effective learning environment

#### b) Teacher Motivation and Performance

Interviews with several teachers showed that the principal's transformational leadership improved their motivation and performance. One teacher said: *"We feel empowered and motivated to give our best because the principal always supports us in developing ourselves."*

Observations also noted an increase in teacher participation in training and professional development activities. Teachers are more enthusiastic in planning learning and paying more attention to student needs. This data triangulation shows that the principal has succeeded in increasing teacher motivation through an inclusive and personal approach

#### c) Positive and Conducive School Environment

The results of interviews with several parents of students revealed that the school environment is very positive and conducive. One parent said: *"This school is very supportive of our children to develop well. We feel comfortable and trust the principal who always creates a harmonious atmosphere."*

Observations show a calm and harmonious school atmosphere, where teachers, staff, and students respect and work together. The principal acts as a figure who is able to maintain good relationships between all parties in the school, which creates a school climate that is conducive to child development

#### d) Student Character Development and Student Development and Achievement

The results of interviews with teachers and principals indicate that the principal pays great attention to student character development. The principal stated: *"We do not only focus on academic aspects, but also on student character. We want them to grow into independent and responsible individuals."*

Observations show school activities that not only focus on academic learning, but also character development through extracurricular activities and learning moral values. In addition, many students showed progress in social skills, such as the ability to work in groups and respect the opinions of others. This data triangulation confirms that student character development is one of the significant impacts of the principal's transformational leadership.

#### e) Innovation and Creativity

Interviews with the principal indicate that one of the main focuses of transformational leadership is the encouragement of innovation and creativity, both from teachers and students. The principal stated: "*We always encourage teachers and students to think creatively and try new things in learning.*"

Observations show that teachers at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa often use new and interesting media and learning methods. Some activities, such as the use of technology-based or art-based teaching aids, demonstrate high creativity in designing the learning process. Data triangulation shows that the success in facilitating this innovation and creativity is a direct impact of the principal's transformational leadership, which gives freedom and support to teachers and students to experiment in the learning process.

## 4. Discussion

This study reveals various aspects related to the implementation of transformational leadership by the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa and its impact on the quality of early childhood education. Each dimension of transformational leadership, from charisma to individual attention, has been shown to contribute to creating a conducive educational environment. However, this implementation is not free from challenges, especially in the diverse socio-cultural context of Indonesia. The following discussion explores the implications of the findings of this study by linking relevant theories and research results.

Hellriegel, D., & Slocum, J. W. (2011) "*Principles of Organizational Behavior.*" South-Western Cengage Learning by providing an overview of leadership theory and its application in an organizational context, with a focus on behavioral and transformational approaches. Whitehead, M. (2010). "*Leadership in Early Childhood.*" McGraw-Hill Education can provide a perspective that specifically focuses on the role of mentors in the education of Asian children, analyzing the role of mentors in creating a sustainable learning environment. Ayu Rahayu (2022) "*The Effect of Principal Transformational Leadership and Organizational Climate on PAUD Teacher Performance*" by providing a view that principal transformational leadership and a conducive organizational climate have a positive and significant influence on PAUD teacher performance. Transformational leadership plays an important role in creating an organizational culture that supports improving the quality of learning in PAUD institutions.

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). "*Transformational Leadership.*" Psychology Press has the ability to clarify the concept of transformational leadership, including its components and applications in organizations. Research by Yoyo Sunaryo, University of Science Malaysia (2018). "*The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Learning Motivation of Early Childhood Education Students in Malaysia*" by providing a view that teacher transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on early childhood learning motivation in Malaysia. Teachers who apply a transformational leadership style can increase enthusiasm, involvement, and willingness to learn in children. Research by Kyung-Hwa Lee, Seoul National University, South Korea (2020). "*Transformational Leadership and Learning Motivation in Early Childhood Education: A Study in South Korea*" by providing a view that the transformational leadership of kindergarten principals in South Korea is positively and significantly correlated with early childhood learning motivation. This leadership style can increase children's enthusiasm, interest, and involvement in the learning process.

Siti Aisyah (2022) "*The Influence of Transformational Leadership on the Motivation and Performance of PAUD Teachers in Semarang City*". The results of the study are that transformational leadership has been proven to have a positive effect on the motivation and performance of PAUD teachers. The relevance to this study shows that transformational leadership can improve the quality of PAUD education by increasing teacher motivation and performance. Ali Muhammad (2020) "*Implementation of Transformational Leadership in Improving the Quality of PAUD Education in X Regency*". The results of the study are that the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD

is still not optimal. The relevance to this study identifies factors that support and inhibit the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD

Rahayu Tutik (2019) *"Factors Affecting the Quality of Early Childhood Education in Indonesia"*. The results are that the factors that affect the quality of early childhood education include leadership, curriculum, teachers, facilities and infrastructure, and parental support. The relevance to this study shows that leadership is an important factor in improving the quality of early childhood education. Transformational School Leadership for Large-Scale Reform: Effects on Students, Teachers, and Their Classroom Practices." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2), 201-227 can present research findings on the implementation of transformational leadership in educational settings and its characteristics on students, teachers, and classroom practices (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L. L., Kupzyk, K. A., Edwards, C. P., Marvin, C. A., & Cline, K. D. (2011). *"A Randomized Trial Examining the Effects of Parent Engagement on Early Language and Literacy: The Getting Ready Intervention."* *Journal of School Psychology*, 49(3), 361-383 by examining parental involvement in early childhood language and literacy development.

#### 4.1 The Role of Charisma in Building Trust

The charisma of the principal has been shown to be a major factor in building trust and commitment among teachers and parents. This is reflected in the interview results, where most teacher respondents stated that they felt motivated by the charismatic leadership of the principal who brought a clear direction for the progress of the school. Parents of students also mentioned that the principal often acts as an active liaison in addressing children's educational issues.

However, the effectiveness of this charisma depends on the principal's ability to adjust the communication style with various parties. As found by Bass (1990), successful charisma is one that is able to create group identification and loyalty to the leader's vision. This confirms that charismatic leaders also need to have high interpersonal skills to optimize the positive impact of their charisma. In addition to Bass and Riggio (2006), Yukl (2013) provides additional insight into how charisma drives organizational commitment. Yukl emphasizes that charismatic leaders act as role models and articulate an attractive vision, in line with findings on building trust.

Charisma and parent involvement. Research by Cotton (2003) showed that charismatic leadership increases parent-teacher communication and collaboration, supporting discussions about the role of the principal in involving parents.

#### 4.2 Challenges in Implementing Intellectual Stimulation in PAUD

Principals actively conduct regular training to improve teacher skills. For example, observations show that there are workshops twice per semester, which are attended by the majority of teachers with high enthusiasm. However, limited access to additional training is an obstacle in rural areas. Interview results indicate that almost all teachers feel the need for more training opportunities, especially for technology-based teaching methods.

This finding is in line with research by Joyce and Showers (2002), which emphasizes the importance of continuous training to support teaching innovation. In this context, the involvement of the government or educational organizations in providing additional resources is needed to bridge the gap. Conger & Kanungo (1998) stated that inspirational leaders influence followers by aligning organizational goals with personal aspirations. This is in line with observations about principals who motivate teachers to innovate.

#### 4.3 Individual Attention and Personal Approach

Observation results show that the principal routinely holds personal meetings with teachers every month. Teachers appreciate this approach, with the majority of respondents stating that the principal's individual attention increases their work motivation. However, in PAUD with a large number of students, time is a challenge. The principal stated that a busy schedule often makes it difficult to provide individual attention optimally.

Burns (2003) emphasized the importance of a personal approach in transformational leadership to create a strong emotional bond. However, this study suggests the need for an administrative support role to reduce the burden on the principal so that individual attention can still be given without sacrificing work efficiency. The concept of a learning organization by Peter Senge (1990) can complement the analysis stating that the principal can stimulate

intellectually in learning. Senge highlighted how intellectual stimulation contributes to building a school that encourages continuous learning and critical thinking.

#### 4.4 Socio-Cultural Implications in the Implementation of Transformational Leadership

Indonesia's collectivist culture, as explained by Hofstede (2011), influences how transformational leadership is implemented. Interviews with principals showed that community-based approaches, such as involving parents in decision-making, were more acceptable than authoritative approaches.

Sergiovanni's (1992) research also emphasized that leaders who understand the local cultural context are better able to build harmonious relationships in the educational community. Therefore, principals need to integrate local values with global leadership principles to create effective collaboration.

#### 4.5 Limitations and Potential for Further Research

This study focuses on one PAUD institution in an urban setting, so the results do not yet cover the contextual variations that exist in other regions in Indonesia. For example, different infrastructure in rural areas may affect the implementation of leadership strategies.

For further research, testing in various geographic and cultural contexts is needed to broaden the understanding of the effectiveness of transformational leadership. In addition, research can integrate quantitative analysis to measure the specific impact of each leadership dimension on student learning outcomes.

Through this discussion, the study highlights the importance of contextualization in the application of transformational leadership theory. The combination of a local data-driven approach and ongoing policy support is expected to maximize the quality of education in PAUD throughout Indonesia.

Comparative research in different regions can provide deeper insight into how the socio-cultural environment influences the effectiveness of transformational leadership. For example, comparisons between institutions in regions with different socio-cultural characteristics can help in understanding the factors that contribute to success or challenges in implementing this leadership style.

Overall, this discussion highlights the importance of support from various parties, including the government and educational institutions, to strengthen aspects of transformational leadership in PAUD. This can be done through training programs for school principals as well as policies that support ongoing professional development. The findings of this research not only make a significant contribution to improving the quality of early childhood education in Indonesia, but also open up opportunities for further research to explore specific aspects of transformational leadership in more diverse contexts.

##### a) Relationship of Findings to Research Questions and Objectives

This research aims to understand the implementation of transformational leadership by school principals at PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa, with a focus on how aspects of transformational leadership—charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention—influence teacher performance and parental involvement. The findings show that each of these aspects contributes significantly to creating a positive learning environment, supporting teacher commitment, and increasing parental involvement in early childhood education. In particular, the principal's charisma appears to greatly influence the trust of teachers and parents, and promotes strong attachment and respect within the school community.

The leadership charisma of a school principal, for example, is in line with Bass and Riggio's (2006) definition, namely an attraction that fosters follower trust and commitment. This influence makes the school principal a figure followed by teachers and parents, thus creating harmony in the educational process. In the PAUD context, this charisma supports an inclusive and collaborative organizational culture, where the principal is seen as a model in social and professional interactions.

### b) Interpretation of Findings

Each finding in this research can be explained through transformational leadership theory. For example, the principal's charisma builds trust and increases teacher motivation to develop creative and innovative teaching methods. This is related to the theory of inspirational motivation by Bass and Riggio (2006), which shows that inspirational motivation can strengthen teacher involvement and increase their commitment and loyalty to the institution. With the inspirational spirit of the school principal, teachers are more encouraged to innovate and design learning activities that are fun and meaningful for children.

Other findings show that intellectual stimulation through workshops and seminars organized by school principals really helps improve the quality of teaching. In support of this theory, research by Siti Aisyah (2022) shows that intellectual stimulation allows teachers to think critically and creatively, thereby improving the quality of education. In addition, the principal's approach to individual attention is directly related to meeting the needs of teachers and students. These findings are supported by Bass and Riggio (2006), who emphasize that transformational leaders pay attention to the unique needs of each individual, creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

### c) Consistency with Previous Research

The results of this research are in line with previous studies on the influence of transformational leadership in educational contexts. For example, findings regarding the positive impact of principal charisma in motivating teachers are consistent with the findings of Yukl (2013) and Anwar (2022), who also show that charismatic leaders can increase teacher morale and overall teacher performance. Findings regarding inspirational motivation are also supported by research by Kyung-Hwa Lee & Siegle (2020) in South Korea, which found that inspirational motivation can strengthen teacher loyalty and commitment.

On the other hand, the individual attention aspect in this research emphasizes the importance of a personal approach in supporting the needs of each teacher and student, which is also consistent with the research of Ali Muhammad (2020) and Goleman (2000). Special attention to individual needs helps build a sense of appreciation and support for teachers, which has a positive impact on the quality of teacher-student interactions and increases their work motivation. However, there are some minor differences in how this approach is applied in the context of PAUD in Indonesia, compared to overseas research, which may be due to differences in work culture and societal perceptions of the role of leaders in educational institutions.

### d) Implications of Findings in a Wider Context

The results of this research indicate that transformational leadership is not only relevant at the higher education level, but is also very important in the context of early childhood education. The finding that principals can motivate, inspire, and support teachers' professional development through a transformational approach underscores the importance of better leadership training for principals in PAUD. Training programs that focus on developing leadership skills can help principals to be more effective in creating an environment that supports innovation and collaboration among teachers and staff.

The practical implications of this research indicate that principals in other PAUDs can adopt similar approaches to improve the quality of education and parental involvement in the learning process. By applying transformational leadership principles, they can build stronger relationships with teachers, students, and parents, thereby creating a more inclusive and participatory school community.

In a broader context, this study supports literature which emphasizes that transformational leadership has a significant influence on the motivation and performance of teaching staff. This is in line with Schein's (2017) view on the importance of an organizational culture based on the values of inclusion and collaboration, which not only increases operational efficiency, but also encourages the creation of a responsive and holistic learning environment in schools. Thus, the implementation of transformational leadership can be a major driver in educational reform, especially at the PAUD level, which ultimately has a positive impact on the overall quality of education.



### e) Future Research Directions

This research opens up opportunities for further studies, especially in exploring the long-term impact of each aspect of transformational leadership in PAUD. Future research could assess the influence of each component of transformational leadership in more detail, for example, how intellectual stimulation influences instructional innovation or the impact of principal charisma in strengthening parental involvement. In addition, further research could also examine the application of the transformational approach in different PAUD contexts, such as in rural or urban areas, to see how the social and cultural context influences the effectiveness of this leadership style.

These findings can form the basis for broader education policy research on the development of leadership training programs for PAUD school principals. By strengthening aspects of transformational leadership, it is hoped that school principals can be more effective in creating a learning environment that supports children's development, while improving the quality of teaching and teacher commitment.

## 5. Conclusion

The implementation of transformational leadership principles applied by the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa effectively implements the principles of transformational leadership which include charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention. The principal acts as an inspirational figure who is able to motivate teachers and staff through an inclusive and personal approach, and facilitates a work environment that supports self-development and innovation in learning.

The instructional leadership strategy by the principal implements a learning leadership strategy that focuses on building a clear vision and mission, creating a conducive learning atmosphere, routine supervision, and teacher professional development. This effort has succeeded in strengthening learning objectives and improving the quality of teaching, thus supporting the achievement of optimal learning outcomes.

The supporting factors for the implementation of transformational leadership are significant supporting factors in the success of the implementation of transformational leadership including a strong organizational culture, support from stakeholders, a conducive work climate, and the principal's leadership competence. The existence of this support facilitates the principal in carrying out leadership functions effectively, especially in encouraging teacher motivation and involvement.

The impact of transformational leadership of the principal in implementing transformational leadership of the principal of PAUD Satria Tunas Bangsa has a significant positive impact on various aspects, including increasing teacher motivation and performance, creating a conducive learning environment, and developing student character and achievement. This leadership also contributes to the creation of innovation in the learning process which has a positive impact on the quality of education in PAUD. Overall, this study shows that the implementation of transformational leadership in PAUD has an important contribution in improving the quality of learning and encouraging teacher professional development and student learning outcomes. The results of this study underline the importance of the role of the principal in creating an inclusive, supportive, and oriented culture towards improving the quality of early childhood education.

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