



The Female Principals' Transformational Leadership in Implementing School-Based Management in Public and Private Senior High Schools of Berau Regency

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Abstract

The role of leadership, especially the transformational leadership of the principal, plays a crucial role in driving the implementation of school-based management. This study aims to describe and analyze the transformational leadership characteristics of female principals in the implementation of School-Based Management in public and private high schools in Berau Regency. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach, as the research subjects are female principals at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah. Data were collected using interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The data was then analyzed with a cycle of data collection, data presentation, data reduction and conclusion drawing. As for the implementation of School-Based Management, the researchers focused on the components of educators and education personnel, school and community relations. The results showed the leadership characteristics of female principals at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah as follows: (1) Leading with exemplary and high empathy, (2) Providing inspiring motivation, (3) Building collaboration and monitoring the activities of educators and education personnel so as to create a conducive climate, (4) Building a solid team with a positive interpersonal approach. The conclusion of this study is that the transformational leadership of female principals contributes positively to the effectiveness of MBS implementation, especially in improving the quality of education and school performance. The implication of this finding can be the basis in the development of education policy.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Female School Principals, School-Based Management

Abstrak

Peran kepemimpinan, terutama kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah memiliki peran yang sangat penting dalam menggerakkan implementasi manajemen berbasis sekolah (MBS). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis karakteristik kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah perempuan dalam implementasi Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah di SMA Negeri dan Swasta di Kabupaten Berau. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, sebagai subjek penelitian adalah kepala sekolah Perempuan di SMAN 12 Berau dan SMAIT Ash Shohwah. Data dikumpulkan dengan teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Data kemudian di analisis dengan siklus pengumpulan data, penyajian data, reduksi data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Adapun dalam implementasi Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah peneliti fokuskan pada komponen pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan, hubungan sekolah dan masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan karakteristik kepemimpinan kepala sekolah perempuan di SMAN 12 Berau dan SMAIT Ash Shohwah sebagai berikut: (1) Memimpin dengan penuh keteladanan dan empati yang tinggi, (2) Memberikan motivasi yang menginspirasi, (3) Membangun kolaborasi dan memonitoring aktivitas pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan sehingga tercipta iklim yang kondusif, (4) Membentuk tim yang solid dengan pendekatan interpersonal yang positif. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah perempuan berkontribusi positif terhadap efektivitas implementasi MBS, terutama dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan dan kinerja sekolah. Implikasi dari temuan ini dapat menjadi dasar dalam pengembangan kebijakan pendidikan yang mendukung peran kepala sekolah perempuan dalam sistem pendidikan.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Kepala Sekolah Perempuan, Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental element in developing high-quality and competitive human resources. In facing the increasingly complex challenges of globalization, improving the quality of education is a key factor in determining the progress of a nation. Quality education not only produces graduates with strong academic competencies, but also shapes character, life skills, and the ability to compete at the global level. This is in line with Government Regulation No. 4 of 2022 Article 6 Paragraph 2, which stipulates that the competency standards for general secondary education graduates aim to equip students with values of faith, piety, character based on Pancasila, and knowledge that supports independence and readiness to continue to higher levels of education.

School-Based Management (SBM) is an education management strategy that aims to improve the quality of education through the involvement of various stakeholders. Thus, the central government encourages the involvement of schools, teachers, parents, and the community in education management, while giving greater authority to local governments and schools to tailor education policies to local needs.

The shift from a centralized management system to School-Based Management is an ongoing process that requires the involvement of all relevant parties. SBM has three main pillars, namely effective management, improvement of learning quality, and active community participation (Setiawan et al., 2022). The implementation of this model has been proven to increase community involvement in the education process, as stated by Aliyyah (2021), which states that SBM emphasizes broad participation from various parties, including school staff, parents, students, and the community in decision-making related to education.

The annual evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture on the implementation of MBS in Indonesia refers to five main indicators: (1) increased transparency, participation, democracy, and accountability in school management, (2) improved quality of education, (3) reduced dropout rates, (4) implementation of more student-centered learning, and (5) increased community participation in education at the high school level (Hendri, 2023).

The success of MBS implementation greatly depends on the leadership of school principals in developing and advancing educational institutions, teaching staff, and student learning outcomes. As a management model that supports the decentralization of education, MBS is a strategic instrument in strengthening the democratization of education by giving greater authority to schools (Ambarita, 2016). With the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, leaders who are capable of being agents of change and applying adaptive leadership models to face ever-evolving challenges are needed.

In this context, transformational leadership plays an important role in creating effective schools. This leadership style emphasizes emotional awareness, self-management, and the ability to build positive social relationships (Nurmiyanti & Candra, 2019). Transformational leadership encourages leaders to inspire and motivate their followers, create a synergistic work environment, and achieve organizational goals (Nurmiyanti & Candra, 2019). The popularity of this leadership style is driven by its ability to enhance intrinsic motivation and empower individuals to face organizational challenges amid dynamic conditions (Roni Harsoyo, 2022).

In practice, transformational leadership is highly relevant in school management, including in remote areas. The MBS policy provides opportunities for schools in these areas to improve the quality of education, despite still facing obstacles such as limited human resources and a lack of managerial skills among school principals. In addition, gender is often a barrier to educational leadership, due to stereotypes that assume women lack strong leadership characteristics compared to men Hikmah (2019).

However, various studies show that female principals have effective communication and leadership skills in improving the quality of education. For example, a study by

Nasikhah(2022) shows that female principals at Al-Huda Islamic Elementary School are able to provide clear directions, monitor program development, and overcome obstacles in its implementation. Similarly, female principals in West Kutai Regency have proven their success in improving student achievement in various academic and non-academic events (Mulawarman & Srihandari, 2021) . Rahayu(2023) also found that female principals at SDN 2 Pakemitan successfully implemented effective educational management in planning, controlling, and improving the quality of education.

Gender stigma against female school principals is beginning to fade as evidence of their success in leading educational institutions grows. Helilah, in a study cited by Agustin(2023) reveals that women have an advantage in creating organizational effectiveness by improving school performance, building family relationships, and empowering educators and educational staff. Amalia Yunia Rahmawati (2020) also emphasizes that the transformative leadership style applied by women, such as listening, being calm, and providing ample space for dialogue, is an important factor in their success as leaders.

In Berau Regency, East Kalimantan, SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash-Shohwah are examples of schools that have implemented MBS under the leadership of female principals. At SMAN 12 Berau, the principal plays an active role in building a culture of discipline, encouraging the use of technology in learning, and improving teacher competence. This school also has the highest number of Motivational Teachers at the high school level in Berau Regency.

Meanwhile, SMAIT Ash-Shohwah is known as a leading private school that focuses on character building among its students. The female principal of this school has successfully built harmonious relationships with the entire school community and the wider community, and has implemented innovative programs such as PROKAJADI (Character and Identity Building Program), SKN (Real Work School), and IEP (International Education Program). In the SKN program, for example, students learn to socialize and contribute to society through direct experiences in various villages, with the principal providing guidance in the field of creative economy.

The effectiveness of female school principals in Berau Regency requires more attention from policymakers and academics. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Data Portal (2023) shows that the number of female teachers at the high school level in Berau Regency reached 277, while the number of male teachers was only 207. However, there are only four female principals in 15 public high schools and two female principals in four private high schools in the region. Although the number of female teachers is quite large, their opportunities to develop their careers to the position of principal are still limited.

Based on initial observations at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash-Shohwah, this study seeks to further examine the role of transformational leadership of female principals in the implementation of MBS to improve the quality of education in public and private schools in Berau Regency. This study is expected to contribute to the study of educational leadership, particularly regarding the role of female principals as transformational leaders who contribute to improving the quality of education in the region.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. A qualitative approach was chosen because the researcher intended to interpret the phenomena that occurred and was carried out in various ways involving various existing methods. Straus and Cobin in Murdiyanto (2020) said that qualitative research can be used to study various phenomena, such as community life, history, and organizational functionalization. The data obtained can be in written or oral form and comes from the things that are the focus of the research.

The method used in this research is a case study, where the research focuses on a specific object that is raised as a case to be studied in depth so that it can uncover the reality behind the

phenomenon (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022) . In this study, the case study examined was how the transformational leadership of female principals in implementing School-Based Management to improve the quality of education at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah.

The research locations were SMAN 12 Berau, located on Jl. SMA Bangun Kampung Sei Bebanir Bangun, Sambaliung District, and SMAIT Ash Shohwah on Jl. Albina Atas, Kel. Gunung Panjang, Berau Regency, East Kalimantan. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain accurate and complete data. Meanwhile, data analysis was carried out through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the characteristics of transformational leadership exhibited by female principals in the implementation of School-Based Management at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah refer to leaders who motivate and inspire, positively influence their subordinates based on religious values and discipline. These leadership characteristics are in line with the theory described by Bass and Avolio in " regarding *idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration*. In the implementation of School-Based Management, the researcher focused on the components of educators and educational staff, as well as the relationship between schools and the community.

Based on the results of the study, the characteristics of transformational leadership of female principals in the implementation of School-Based Management at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah are as follows:

Leading with High Exemplary Behavior and Empathy

The principal of SMAN 12 Berau strives to increase the participation of educators and educational staff by continuously promoting the use of technology to advance the quality of learning at the school with empathy and care. The principal encourages the active participation of the entire school community in decision-making, creating a comfortable learning environment, and developing individual potential to the fullest. Additionally, the female principal at SMAN 12 Berau is firm and always opens opportunities for her subordinates to contribute and improve their competence, as well as setting an example in shaping a disciplined character. This is in line with the research by which states that female principals, driven by strong beliefs and determination by educators and educational staff, will feel confident in their leadership concepts and methods, especially when guiding teachers towards important and clear goals.

The relationship between the principal and the entire community at SMAN 12 Berau is built on the principal's belief in the performance of his staff. Delegating tasks and encouraging the participation of all educators and educational staff are important for creating a positive work culture at SMAN 12 Berau. Shaked & Benoliel (2020) conducted a meta-analysis showing that women are more active instructional leaders due to their greater instructional expertise and stronger focus on relationships.

As an integrated Islamic school, the principal of SMAIT Ash Shohwah has implemented religious influence that emphasizes strengthening religious character for educators and educational staff, which must then be instilled in students in the classroom. Mental changes in Islamic spirituality are based on the Qur'an and Hadith as the main sources of life values. This effort is realized through various religious activities, such as reading the Qur'an together, praying Dhuha, Dhuhr, and Asr in congregation, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, and other Islamic programs. The principal serves as a role model for all educators and educational staff in exercising complete obedience and compliance to Allah.

The above strategy is in line with the opinion of in his journal, which states that in order to help teachers connect the concepts learned by students with real life, educators can discuss how they behave towards Allah SWT.

Providing Inspiring Motivation

Through transformational leadership, female principals also play a role in shaping an adaptive and innovative organizational culture. They not only ensure that MBS policies are implemented administratively, but also foster a spirit of change by instilling values of trust, appreciation, and motivation in all school stakeholders. Transformational leadership at SMAN 12 Berau is reflected in the high enthusiasm in leading and giving autonomy to individuals so that they can contribute according to their abilities. Leaders also consistently appreciate achievements and provide feedback to improve performance. Based on observations, the principal always provides direct support to teachers and students participating in competitions. Her presence among educators and educational staff has proven to boost their enthusiasm to give their best.

The principal of SMAN 12 Berau always shows optimism to his team, is able to adapt to changes and the demands of the times, is not afraid to take risks to make improvements, is participatory, and focuses on improving teacher competence. This motivation boosts the performance of educators and educational staff to be motivated to develop themselves. As stated by Shemahonge (2022), through participatory leadership, female leaders ensure that all parties are involved in the decision-making process and collectively overcome institutional problems. This is in line with the research Nurlaili (2022) in her journal, which states that teachers who have high enthusiasm and motivation tend to show better work results.

The inspiring motivational characteristics of transformational leadership at SMAIT Ash Shohwah Berau are demonstrated by building good cooperation between *stakeholders* and giving autonomy to each individual to contribute according to their abilities. As an effort of transformational leadership in realizing common goals, the principal of SMAIT Ash Shohwah becomes a *role model* with concrete actions, creating harmonious relationships by providing advice and motivation, instilling a sense of discipline to create a conducive and effective learning environment, and forming a school community that cares about the environment. This is in line with the literature cited by Ahmad Esa (2013), which highlights the ability of female school leaders to create clear goals and facilitate school change.

In addition, the leadership of SMAIT Ash Shohwah always prioritizes motivation over punishment, thereby fostering a sense of familiarity and kinship based on spiritual values. Leaders can clearly explain the school's vision, mission, and programs—encourage collaboration, and listen to input from various parties. In this dimension, transformational leadership at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah is characterized by openness to suggestions and criticism, prioritizing teamwork over overly strict coordination, which is in line with the feminine characteristics of women (Mulawarman et al., 2021). Research by (2015) also describes that female leadership tends to prioritize more polite informal communication, prefers teamwork, acts as a motivator, and has good diplomatic skills.

Building Collaboration and Monitoring the Activities of Educators and Education Personnel to Create a Conducive Climate

As a transformational leader, the principal of SMAN 12 Berau fosters open communication and respects individual opinions and differences. Particularly in relation to the use of technology, the principal always provides stimulus to encourage members to think innovatively. The impact of this stimulus has resulted in SMAN 12 Berau becoming a "Technology-Friendly School." Of course, this title was not achieved overnight, but rather through the collective efforts of all members to achieve the targets set together.

The use of the "Pijar Sekolah" platform has made school management more efficient. In addition, in training learning leaders, SMAN 12 Berau has succeeded in having the most Motivational Teachers in Berau Regency at the high school level. The education quality report card is also used by the principal as material for reflection and ultimately brings about a

technology-literate school climate by regularly holding *In-House Training* for educators, educational staff, and students so that they can be skilled in using technology-based learning. This aligns with the characteristics of educational quality regarding teacher performance in teaching effectively, providing convincing explanations, being healthy and diligent in teaching, preparing complete lesson materials, and delivering good educational services, which are marked by high learning outcomes ((, n.d.)).

As a visionary leader, the female principal is able to build a collaborative and inclusive work culture, where every teacher, educational staff, student, and parent feels they have a role in achieving educational goals. The principal of SMAN 12 Berau shows her trust in the entire school community by involving all educators and educational staff in various activities. This encourages them to feel more responsible and independent in contributing to the development of the school. In addition, the principal also actively collaborates with private partners and stakeholders to improve the quality of learning. In terms of technology utilization, the principal encourages educators and educational staff to think innovatively. Through a technology use campaign, they are given the opportunity to contribute and improve their competencies.

Support for this approach is reinforced by research Sundari (2024) which confirms that principals with a transformational leadership style actively involve various stakeholders in decision-making related to digital transformation, from infrastructure planning to technology-based learning development. Principals also respect differences of opinion and individual backgrounds, thereby creating a conducive work culture at SMAN 12 Berau.

In line with the principle of collaboration, the principal of SMAIT Ash Shohwah runs a Morning Assembly program every Tuesday, which aims to instill Islamic values and empower educators and educational staff by giving them the opportunity to lead *tadarus* or deliver motivational speeches in turn. Islamic values are the main guideline for the principal of SMAIT Ash Shohwah in carrying out his duties as a transformational leader at the school. The regular Morning Assembly held every Tuesday is a manifestation of togetherness and an effort to motivate continuous change towards a better and more dynamic direction. And the source of change towards goodness comes from within the heart. The strengthening of transformational ideas is also expressed in a hadith which reads:

Indeed, in the body there is a piece of flesh; if it is sound, the entire body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the entire body is corrupt. Indeed, it is the heart.

Meaning: "Verily, in the human body there is a piece of flesh; if it is good, the whole body will be good, but if it is corrupt, the whole body will be corrupt. That piece of flesh is the heart." (HARI Bukhari No. 52 and Muslim No. 1599)

Monitoring and evaluation for educators and educational staff at SMAIT Ash Shohwah are conducted based on data through the "Teacher Report Card." This good practice has a positive effect as a medium for reflection and stimulates its members to continue to transform to develop new assumptions and paradigms in the continuity of education at school. In addition, in an effort to improve performance, the principal uses clear data related to attendance, training attended, and other achievements. Furthermore, in terms of financial management transparency, SMAIT Ash Shohwah implements a Cash Management System (CMS) that functions to make salary payments and school fee payments. According to the statement Matheri, Eunice Wangui; Cheloti, Selper K. & Mulwa (2015) that female principals are effective in terms of financial resources and student management.

Collaborative leadership in the educational environment at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah is in line with the opinion of that by eliminating experience gaps and ensuring equal treatment for all members by respecting their opinions and involving them, it will be possible to achieve the school's goals.

Building a Solid Team with a Positive Interpersonal Approach

With an exemplary and inspiring approach, female principals become figures who can foster a spirit of togetherness and collective responsibility. In implementing school-based

management, they not only manage resources but also motivate the hearts and minds of all parties to work together to build a more advanced, high-quality, and competitive school.

Based on findings in the field, the disciplined and realistic principal of SMAN 12 Berau shows confidence in his followers by always thinking positively and making every effort. He believes that with good management, providing equal opportunities to all his colleagues in improving their competence will pave the way to achieving the desired goals optimally. The transformational leaders at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah are individuals who have a transformative mentality, are strong in their convictions, and are forward-thinking (*visionary*). They continuously learn from all the challenges and obstacles they face, resulting in a solid, resilient, and productive team.

In line with the opinion of in her journal, which states that various scenarios can be carried out by the principal as a leader of change in schools, including encouraging an increase in teachers' work commitment and positive attitudes towards change. The principal fostered a positive learning and working culture at SMAN 12 Berau by giving teachers the freedom to develop learning according to their teaching methods and the needs of their students, as well as providing opportunities for teachers to participate in training and professional development activities both inside and outside the school. The tangible impact of this was the achievement of one of the best teachers in the Digital Teaching Materials award held by UPTD Tekkom.

The principal of SMAIT Ash Shohwah tends to use a familial interaction pattern and makes members feel important, cared for, and valued within the organization, always striving to meet the priority needs of members. The principal's role at SMAIT Ash Shohwah as a good listener creates a positive and harmonious work culture. An appreciative attitude and high level of concern bring about changes in the performance of its members. Female leaders are more likely to interact with the school community and spend more time in the classroom discussing academic matters, thereby influencing teachers.

Borrowing the *face-to-face* approach presented by Faizatun & Mufid (2020) , the behavioral approach used by the principals of SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah when approaching their members is to use their personal characteristics, as seen in how they make decisions to motivate their subordinates and accept suggestions and criticism from all members. Additionally, leaders with extensive work experience and high working hours will produce effective performance without making many mistakes that render the organization ineffective (Komariyah, 2022) .

Based on the above explanation, it was found that the important tactics used by the principals of SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah are in line with the opinions of that to develop into successful leaders, they must show respect to their personnel, be patient, delegate tasks to others, implement appropriate actions, and seek assistance from the education department and parents. The principal also strives to improve teacher performance by rewarding outstanding teachers, paying attention to teachers' welfare in both material and non-material terms, involving teachers in the development of school programs, listening to ideas presented by teachers, and providing them with a sense of security (Warman et al., 2021) .

Table 1 – Matrix of Discussion Results on the Characteristics of Transformational Leadership of Female School Principals in the Implementation of School-Based Management at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah

Aspect	Indicator	SMAN 12 Berau	SMAIT Ash Shohwah
Characteristics of Transformational Leadership of Female Principals in the Implementation	Leading with High Exemplarity and Empathy	1. Increasing the participation of all educators and teaching staff in the use of technology 2. Developing a disciplined and	1. Influencing the school community with religious values 2. Striving for mental transformation through recitation

of School-Based Management		decisive character in decision-making	of the Qur'an and congregational prayer
	Providing inspiring motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fostering a spirit of change through respect and appreciation 2. Being optimistic and adaptable to change 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prioritizing motivation over punishment 2. Always open to criticism and suggestions 3. Prioritizing teamwork over overly strict coordination
	Building collaboration and monitoring the activities of educators and educational support staff to create a conducive environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encouraging educators and educational staff to think innovatively 2. Respecting individual opinions and differences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring the performance of educators and educational staff through the provision of "Teacher Reports" 2. Instilling Islamic values through the Morning Assembly every Tuesday.
	Forming a solid team with a positive interpersonal approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Granting educators autonomy in developing learning 2. Providing equal opportunities to participate in training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementing a family-like interaction pattern 2. Demonstrating an appreciative attitude and respect toward its members

CONCLUSION

Based on the description and analysis of data from interviews, observations, and documentation, it can be concluded that the transformational leadership of female principals in the implementation of School-Based Management at SMAN 12 Berau and SMAIT Ash Shohwah has demonstrated visionary, inspirational, and change-oriented leadership characteristics. They have been able to build a collaborative work culture, increase the motivation of educators and educational staff, and implement innovative policies to improve the quality of education. With a participatory approach and a high level of empathy, this transformational leadership has contributed to the effectiveness of School-Based Management in creating a better and more competitive learning environment.

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