

Transformational Leadership Mentoring to Form the Religious and Disciplinary Character of Elementary School Principals in Central Lombok

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Abstract

Transformational leadership is a style focused on change and the development of positive values within educational institutions. The principal, as a leader in learning, has the duty to direct all members of the school towards developing a robust religious and disciplined character. Nonetheless, observations conducted in various elementary schools in Central Lombok Regency reveal that the application of transformational leadership values remains limited, particularly concerning the principals' roles as religious role models and their discipline. This community service initiative seeks to offer transformational leadership support to elementary school principals in Central Lombok to cultivate a religious and disciplined character in school administration. The activity method is executed in four stages: (1) preparation and collaboration with the local education office, (2) training and workshops in transformational leadership, (3) direct support at schools, and (4) assessment and reflection on the outcomes of the activity. This initiative engaged 35 elementary school principals from Praya District, Central Lombok over a period of three day. The activity's outcomes demonstrated a notable improvement in the principals' comprehension of transformational leadership, their capacity to create a vision and mission rooted in religious values, and their consistency in enforcing work discipline within the school setting. Moreover, a network of key communities was established aimed at enhancing religious culture and discipline within their individual schools. This mentoring initiative showcased the success of a transformational leadership style as a character-development strategy for elementary school principals in Central Lombok. There are hopes that comparable initiatives can persistently evolve in a sustainable manner to enhance the quality of leadership and educational administration at the primary school level.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a strategic means to cultivate human resources characterized by integrity, belief, and competitiveness. A key factor in achieving educational success in schools is the leadership role of the principal as the main force in fostering a positive, religious, and disciplined school environment. The principal acts not just as an administrative manager but also as a transformational leader who can inspire, motivate, and positively alter the behavior of school members (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the age of globalization and advancements in information technology, moral and ethical challenges are becoming more intricate. The issue of waning discipline, inadequate role models, and a decrease in religiosity within the educational setting has raised significant concerns among multiple stakeholders (Zubaedi, 2015). The principal, as a key figure in the school structure, is anticipated to set an example by incorporating religious values

and discipline into every facet of school activities. Transformational leadership is a pertinent method as it focuses on altering the values and actions of followers via role models, idealistic influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and personalized attention (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Transformational leadership focuses on managerial efficiency while also establishing a robust value system rooted in ethics and spirituality (Northouse, 2019). Principals who adopt this leadership approach can promote teacher engagement, enhance discipline, and reinforce dedication to the school's vision and mission (Mulyasa, 2013). In elementary education, transformational leadership can significantly cultivate religious character qualities like faith, honesty, and sincerity, alongside disciplinary traits such as responsibility, consistency, and punctuality among all members of the school. Nevertheless, initial observations and interviews with various elementary school principals in Central Lombok Regency revealed that most principals remain focused on administrative duties and have not fully applied transformational leadership values in their daily activities. The absence of strong religious role models and inadequate managerial discipline lead to a school culture that fails to embody the desired values of character. Central Lombok is recognized as an area with a solid religious foundation, where Islamic principles and local traditions are intricately woven into the fabric of community life. This potential ought to act as social capital for cultivating disciplined and religious values.

Given these conditions, a community service program focused on providing transformational leadership mentoring to elementary school principals in Central Lombok is needed. This activity aims to help principals understand the concept of transformational leadership in practice, internalize religious values and discipline in their leadership style, and apply them in school management. Through a continuous mentoring approach, it is hoped that principals will be able to become agents of change with character and integrity, and be able to build a sustainable religious and disciplined school culture. Thus, this community service activity is not only oriented towards increasing the capacity of individual principals, but also strengthening the organizational character of elementary schools in Central Lombok. The success of this program is expected to become a mentoring model that can be replicated in other regions in an effort to build educational leadership with religious and disciplined character.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

1. Activity Type and Approach

This activity is a community service program based on participatory mentoring aimed at improving the leadership capacity of school principals. The approach used is a transformational educational approach, a mentoring model that emphasizes the process of changing values, behaviors, and organizational culture through training, reflection, and direct practice in the field (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This activity also integrates service learning principles, where the implementing team acts as facilitator and mentor, assisting participants in internalizing religious values and discipline in their daily leadership practices. The activity was conducted in Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, specifically in and around Praya District, the administrative center for basic education in the region. The target group was 35 public elementary school principals appointed by the Central Lombok Regency Education and Culture Office. Participants were selected based on the following considerations: active principals with a minimum tenure of two years, having never participated in transformational leadership training, and having a commitment to developing religious character and discipline in their schools. The activity was held for three days in October 2025, with the following implementation schedule.

2. Implementation Stages

This community service activity is carried out through four main stages, namely:

a. Preparation Stage

At this point, coordination took place with the Central Lombok Regency Education Office, involved school principals, and school supervisors to establish the location, schedule, and training needs. The community service team carried out a needs assessment by using

interviews and a straightforward questionnaire to pinpoint leadership areas that required enhancement, specifically in religiosity and discipline

b. Training and Workshop Stage

The training took place over two days as an interactive workshop featuring materials on: Fundamental principles of transformational leadership, Integration of religious values in educational leadership, Approaches for cultivating a culture of discipline within schools, and Exercises in reflection and examples set by school principals. The training strategy employed an andragogical method (adult education), incorporating interactive lectures, group discussions, role playing, and simulations of leadership scenarios in elementary schools.



c. Field Assistance Stage

The mentoring program took place for six weeks at the school of each participant. The community service team carried out site visits and provided one-on-one mentoring to assist principals in implementing transformational leadership concepts in practical situations. The mentoring's emphasis comprised: Incorporating religious values into school events (e.g., conducting prayer, tadarus, or collective religious activities), Enhancing time management, accountability, and work ethics among principals and teachers, and Fostering motivating communication among principals, teachers, and students. The mentoring program was implemented consistently with a reflective mindset: every week, participants were required to maintain a journal reflecting on their leadership practices and how these influenced school culture.

d. Refleksi Evaluation and Reflection Stage

Evaluation takes place both formatively and summatively; formative evaluation occurs throughout the mentoring process to gauge participant involvement and material application, while summative evaluation happens at the program's conclusion to measure shifts in participants' understanding, attitudes, and leadership behaviors.

e. Success Indicators

The effectiveness of the activity is evaluated using various indicators, specifically: Enhancing the principal's comprehension of transformational leadership principles, Execution of school initiatives that embody religious values and discipline, Developing the principal's awareness to serve as a role model in religiosity and discipline, Creation of a network for principals as a platform for exchanging effective practices in character-based leadership

f. Partners and Community Participation

The key collaborator for this initiative is the Education and Culture Office of Central Lombok Regency. Additionally, this activity includes school supervisors, senior educators, and community religious leaders as supportive resource individuals in the training of religious values. Engagement from the school community, particularly teachers and the school committee, is essential for the effectiveness of this mentoring program

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outcomes from mentoring activities in transformational leadership training for school leaders

1.1. Activity Results

Transformational leadership mentoring for elementary school principals in Central Lombok Regency took place over a span of three months, with 15 principals participating actively. From assessments, on-site observations, and reflective discussions, several important conclusions were reached, as detailed below:

a. Improving Understanding of Transformational Leadership

The results from the pre-test and post-test indicated a notable improvement in the participants' grasp of the concepts and principles related to transformational leadership. Prior to the training, the majority of participants perceived leadership as simply an administrative task. Following the training and mentoring, 86% of participants could describe the four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006), and could connect these to religious values and discipline within the school environment.

b. Leadership Behavior Change

Field observations indicated modifications in principals' leadership conduct regarding exemplary behavior and communication. Principals started applying a model of spiritual leadership, which includes conducting morning prayers, demonstrating integrity in management, and showing time discipline and accountability. Thirty-two out of the 35 principals showed enhanced discipline, encompassing attendance, time management during meetings, and oversight of both teacher and student activities.

c. Strengthening Religious and Disciplinary School Culture

The mentoring also contributed to enhancing the school culture. The school started introducing religious practices like morning Quran recitation, group Dhuha prayer, and student sermons, along with discipline measures such as digital attendance and exemplary teacher journals. Religious values and discipline started to integrate into the school's vision and mission, along with internal regulations restructured by the principal and staff.

d. Transformational Formation of a Transformational Principal Community

Another significant result was the establishment of the Central Lombok Inspirational Principals Forum, a community of practice that acts as a platform for exchanging experiences and best practices in religious leadership and discipline. This forum is dedicated to maintaining its mentoring and monthly reflection activities autonomously.

1.2. Discussion

a. Effectiveness of Transformational Mentoring Model

The outcomes of the activity show that the mentoring model implemented, which relies on reflective training and on-site mentoring, has been successful in enhancing the leadership skills of school principals. This is consistent with the research of Avolio & Bass (2004), who indicated that transformational leadership can be cultivated through a learning process that prioritizes self-awareness, reflecting on values, and hands-on experience in the workplace. This method not only enhances understanding but also alters the actions of school leaders in guiding, inspiring educators, and maintaining character values in educational institutions.

b. Integration of Religious Values and Discipline in Leadership

The incorporation of religious values and discipline in school leadership within Central Lombok is essential since these two principles serve as the moral basis for the Sasak community, which possesses a robust Islamic culture. Studies indicate that principals employing a religious approach (like promoting prayer and integrity) have demonstrated enhanced discipline among teachers and students. This aligns with Zubaedi's (2015)

perspective that character education should be grounded in religious principles to cultivate spiritual resilience that embodies discipline and accountability.

c. Changes in School Organizational Culture

This task shows that leadership transition directly affects the transformation of the school's organizational culture. Principals, serving as change agents, can foster a positive work environment and cultivate a culture of mutual respect within the school community. This discovery aligns with Mulyasa's (2013) study, which claims that principal leadership is crucial for fostering a disciplined and religious school culture.

d. Formation of Sustainable Communities

The establishment of the Inspirational Principals Forum demonstrates the durability of this community service initiative. This community shows a shift in social dynamics among participants, evolving from simple training recipients to autonomous learners. This model corresponds with Mezirow's (2000) idea of transformational learning, highlighting the significance of critical reflection in cultivating leaders with integrity and strong moral consciousness.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Community service initiatives aimed at offering transformational leadership mentoring to elementary school principals in Central Lombok Regency have positively influenced leadership capacity enhancement, religious character development, and discipline reinforcement within the school setting. Through reflective training, personal mentoring, and practical support, principals showed noticeable improvements in their comprehension, attitudes, and leadership actions. They not only understood the idea of transformational leadership in theory but also applied it in their management practices through exemplary behavior each day.

Religious principles like honesty, accountability, and sincerity started to be incorporated into school activities via spiritual practices, while discipline was evident in better punctuality, work ethic, and professional accountability. These modifications directly influenced the school culture, fostering a more positive, cooperative, and character-driven environment. Additionally, these initiatives effectively encouraged the creation of a community of transformational leaders, functioning as a foundation for ongoing learning. This shows that the mentoring approach based on transformational leadership effectively enhances the character of elementary school principals in Central Lombok and could act as a model for developing educational leadership in other areas.

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