# Increasing Students' Motivation in Learning through Teachers' Transformational and Transactional Leadership Style

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Abstract:     The teachers' transformational and transactional leadership styles play the important role to motivate the students' learning in the classroom. This study investigates the teachers' transformational and transactional leadership style to motivate students in learning the subjects in the classroom. The study used qualitative method in nature. To collect the data needed for this study, the authors used interview. They were interviewed one by one in relation to their ability to implement the transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students' learning. A number of 275 teachers selected randomly to represent the whole of senior high school teacher in Aceh. The collected data were analysed qualitatively using data display, data reduction, and data conclusion. The study found that transformational and transactional leadership style played an important role in motivating students to learn the subjects. Therefore, the teachers' ability and knowledge on the transformational and transactional leadership style should be well mastered by the teachers who teach the lesson in the classroom. It also found that Transformational and Transactional leadership styles are being used by teachers because the teachers see that the teaching-learning processes are not very effective if the motivation of the students is low. It can be concluded that transformational and transactional leadership from the teachers significantly influences students' motivation to learn.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Motivation in learning is one of the aspects that play an important role in learning a lesson. One who has high motivation in learning will influence the learning achievement. The world of educational leadership is identical with transformational and transactional leadership. Although many people are interested in transformational leadership, nevertheless transactional leadership certainly also gets much attention for its moral values like: honesty, fairness, faithfulness and responsibility. Quality of human resource is paramount in developing the nation to compete with other nations in the world. The quality of human being can be increased through education either at schools or university. Hoy and Miskel (2013) point "Many factors influence the quality of a school, including the culture of the organization, the leadership of the Head-master, the climate of the organization, the communications and the facilities, the performance of the teachers and the finances". Teachers in the school play a central role in producing the new

generation ready to compete. The teachers must supply the knowledge; skills and personality that the students need to face the challenges of this age with its increasing complexity. Because of that the role of the teacher is very important in the framework of success for education. It is hoped that the teachers will be more active in every effort to improve the quality of education like motivating students. Effective teaching, by the teacher, is greatly influenced by the ability and the leadership style of the teacher in the class. The influence of leadership has been studied by many organizations, businesses, schools and universities. The paradigms of transformational leadership and transactional leadership have been proven and implemented by teachers to increase the motivation of their students.

In relation to the above statement, Scheerens & Lyton (2011: 8) have written that: "In a systems context, education can be divided into three parts viz: The macro system (state) level, the school level and the level at the class. These three levels form the system of education viz: input, process and output". Transformational leadership is connected with the

results from education in various ways viz: the cognition, affectation, motivation, participation and perception of teachers to their students (Blasé & Anderson, 1995). The motivation and perceptions of students to their teachers and to their lessons is regarded as very important in the teaching-learning processes to reach the goals of the lessons and to get education that is effective. Duties performed by the teacher means that the teacher must be the leader in the class which she manages so that of the role of the teacher is something that must be done. Some theoretical orientations were used in this study.

Many studies have been conducted by experts in relation to improving students' achievements in learning lesson at senior high schools level. However, not many studies focus on the aspects of teachers' sides in term of transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning as state senior high schools in the Province of Aceh. Therefore, this study investigates the teachers' transformational and transactional leadership style to motivate students in learning the lesson in the classroom. The main focus of this study is to describe the teachers' ability to implement the transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning at state senior high schools in Aceh. Besides, this study also discusses the factors that influence the teachers to implement the transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Leadership in Education

Leadership covers how to direct, influence and supervise other people to perform duties in accordance with situations, conditions and regulations. Leadership style and transformation play an important role to motivate students in learning to achieve this optimal outcome (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt (2001). Numerous changes are always happening amongst people and these can result in a multi-dimensional crisis like that which affected Indonesia for a long time, which made it difficult to find an ideal leader who was highly committed to their duties and responsibilities. Nuri (2015:53) has proposed several criteria for a (good) leader viz: "(1) honest, (2) visionary, (3) a good communicator, (4) be a good person". Honesty is the first quality that enables a leader to mobilize his followers. Honesty is seen by his followers if what he says is the same as what he does. A leader must

have plans for the future, a vision. Followers in the organization must know what the leader will do to meet the challenges of the future. Good communications are needed to ensure interaction with the followers. Success in meeting the goals of the organization depends on good communications between the leader and his followers. If a leader is not capable of good communications with her followers then such a leader is not capable of taking the organization forward to success. As well as that appearance is of prime importance for a leader in the eyes of her followers. If a leader wants her followers to have a good attitude then she must first set the good example. Education contributes to developing quality HR (Human Resources), so that it can support the development of industry and of the economy of a country. UNESCO and the World Bank measure the level of education of a country in the Human Development Index. This indicates that the quality of education influences the quality of human development which can be seen from the quality of work that people are capable of.

In connection with this problem, Sallis (2008: 1) has written that "there are several factors that are the source of quality in education, amongst them are the orientation of the teachers, high morals, excellent examination results, parental support, strong leadership and a balanced curriculum". From the above, it can be seen how important strong leadership is in the field of education, especially for the teachers who are entrusted with teaching the children of the nation.

### 2.2 The Teacher as a Leader in Education

In this era of democracy, the teacher is openly challenged to provide teaching and leadership. However, the teacher is not the only source of learning for her students. Because of this, in giving lessons the teacher must use democratic methods far from using force (authoritarian). For that, the teacher must have the ability to display leadership to influence her students. In this aspect, Mulyasa (2011:16) has said that "As a teacher is a leader of education, the first level of education must have a foundation of strong leadership". The teacher's style of leadership has a big role in motivating her students to achieve maximal results; a leadership style between transformational and transactional is often adopted by teachers in this democratic era. In this case, Umiarso (2010:256) has said that, "democratic teaching-learning is one alternative which is of much benefit for teachers in motivating

students". In connection with this problem, Di Paola and Moran (2001: 43) have said that: "Schools cannot achieve their purpose if the contribution of the teachers is limited to what is in their job description". Furthermore, Hughes (2006: 70) wrote that: the satisfaction of the teacher is on a higher level above what has been achieved by the teacher. Job satisfaction is one characteristic that improves the performance of teachers, Because of that to increase the performance of teachers in teaching, especially in teaching in schools several factors need to be attended to that can determine the satisfaction they get from teaching work. Furthermore, Muhsin (Nugrahani & Margunani, 2014:456) has said: "From the results of studies, the positive influence from teacher leadership contributes 20% and the communication from the teacher contributes 36% to the motivation of the students". From the explanations above one can see the importance of teacher leadership in the teaching-learning processes.

## 2.3 Transformational Leadership

To lead, needs various types of activities, to easily influence other people, including transformational leadership. In connection with this issue, Rivai and Arifin (2013:190) have proposed that "Transformational leadership coaches followers in the direction of the program by explaining the role and the rules governing the work and transformational leadership inspires followers to give their best work for the interests of the organization over their private interests, also leaders must provide an outstanding influence for their followers to follow". In accordance with the above, Munawaroh (2011:137) has earlier said that: "Transformational leadership can provide the answers to the challenges of implementing school based management in three ways viz: through charisma, individual considerations and intellectual stimulation from the teacher or head-master". In the context of leadership it is important that someone plants influence for others to follow.

Transformational leadership indicates the process of development in a commitment to the goals of the organization and believing that the followers will reach the targets set. Transformational theory also teaches how leaders can change the culture and the structure of an organization to be more consistent with the strategy of management in order to reach goals. In this context, Krishnan and Ekkirala (1998:4) have said that: "The model of transformational leadership in fact stresses that a leader needs to motivate those under her to perform their responsibilities to a higher level than they had intended to do. Transformational leadership by definition must be capable of communicating and articulating the vision of an organization so that the followers must follow". In connection with transformational leadership as described above, Stewart (2006:12) pointed that transformational leadership has four dimensions:

1) The first Dimension is called Idealized Influence, this dimension is seen as the behavior of the leader which makes her followers admire, respect and at the same time believe in her.

2) The second Dimension is Inspirational Motivation where the transformational leader is seen as a leader who is capable of articulating the clear hopes for prestige of her followers, demonstrates her commitment to all the goals of the organization and is capable of stimulating team spirit within the organization through stimulating the growth of enthusiasm and optimism..

3) The third Dimension is called Intellectual Stimulation: The transformational leader must be capable of generating new ideas, providing creative solutions to problems faced by those under her and providing motivation for those under her to find new approaches to perform the duties of the organisation.

4) The Fourth Dimension to explain these characteristics of leadership is called Individualized Consideration. In this dimension the transformational leader can be seen as a leader who wants to listen whole-heartedly to inputs from those under her and especially wants to take note of the needs of those under her.

Transformational Leadership can bring an atmosphere and feeling of innovation for the students. In this respect, Mooler (Balyer, 2012:582) says "Transformational leadership is positively linked with an innovative climate in schools and it motivates followers to do more than they expected to do in extra efforts and greater productivity". Accordingly, transformational leaders in reality are teachers who can motivate students to do things a better way, exceeding limits that they have previously set. The students are capable of developing their own potential to be optimal, creative and innovative because of quality leadership from their teacher. This indicates that the leadership of the teacher was capable of inspiring the motivation of her students. Transformational Leadership has a relationship with better results from learning, from cognitive, affective, self-motivational, satisfactory communications and student participation in learning and also with their

perception of their teacher as a leader and a teacher in their class. These matters have been raised by Bolkan et al. (2011:338) points "Transformational leadership has been shown to correlate with traditional learning outcomes including cognitive learning, effective learning, the state of motivation, satisfactory communications, students' participation and student perceptions of instructor credibility".

The need for the development of the Transformational Leadership factor was a result from research by Bass (Italiani, 2013:455) who identified three (3) factors which indicate Transformational Leadership, viz: (1) The leader can provide inspiration or be a source of inspiration for her students (inspirational); (2) The behaviour and attention to those under her provides individualized consideration; and (3) Her leadership can stimulate thinking or ideas from those under her ie. intellectual stimulation. In connection with the problems of Transformational Leadership outlined above, Timpe (2011:342) also says there are three activity programs which can be identified and associated with Transformational leadership namely; (1) Creating a Vision; (2) Mobilization of Commitment; and (3) Institutionalizing Change. Following is further explanation:

(1) Creating a Vision: A transformational leader must be able to describe to her organization a vision for the future. While this duty can be shared with key members of her organization, the vision itself remains the responsibility of the transformational leader. The transformational leader must be able to combine thinking that is analytical, creative, intuitive and deductive. Every leader must create a vision which provides direction for the organization while maintaining the style and the leadership philosophy of the organization.

(2) Mobilization of Commitment: On the side of organization, the transformational leader can receive new duties and new visions which can change the actual direction of the organization. Mobilization of commitment needs time which can be short or long, but the transformational leader can get deep understanding from her followers.

(3) Institutionalizing the Changes: An organization cannot renew itself unless the organization can adapt to new behavior/situations. The transformational leader must be able to translate her vision into reality.

## 2.4 Transactional Leadership

As well as providing transactional leadership the teacher's ability to provide transactional leadership is very important in running the teaching-learning processes (TLP). This kind of leadership can change the atmosphere of the class being run so that the planned lessons can be really effective and can achieve the purpose of the lesson. Acting as a transactional leader the teacher becomes the primary focus of the class and hence maintains a stable atmosphere in the class so that the teaching-learning runs smoothly. When the atmosphere of a class is not managed or is poorly managed there can be many recalcitrant students breaking the class regulations. To manage that sort of situation the primary key is to have clear class regulations and give punishments to those students who don't follow the class regulations and rewards to those who perform well. To become a teacher with transactional leadership qualities is not enough because one major purpose of education is to achieve change in the students. Because of that the teacher must raise the quality of her leadership higher to become a transactional teacher. Pounder and Brown (Munawaroh, 2011:137) have split transactional leadership into two dimensions: "(a) Active, the leader monitors and looks for recalcitrant who break the rules and standards and takes corrective actions and (b) Passive, the leader only intervenes if the (minimum) standards are not achieved.".

Rivai and Arifin (2013:125) have said that the characteristics of transactional leadership are as follows:

1) Based on rewards: make contracts to trade rewards for efforts, promise rewards for good performance and recognize prestige performances;

2) Management by exceptions, actively, supervise and look for deviations from rules and standards and then take corrective actions (when deviations are found);

3) Management by exceptions, passively, only intervening if standards are or may not be reached; and

4) Laissez-Faire: free from responsibility and avoids making decisions.

Bass and Rigio (2006: 8) point "Transactional leadership occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower, depending on the follower's performance. Transactional leadership depends on contingent reinforcement, either positive contingent reward or the more negative active or passive forms of management by exception". Transactional Leadership uses the concept of a path goal as a framework and adjusts it (the path) in accordance with the mission, direction and goals of the organization in the framework to achieve

effectiveness. At the present, the vision, mission and purpose of an organization appears to be something which we are required to make in the framework of achieving the purpose of the organization (Bertocci, 2009: 56).

## 2.5 Motivation in Education

Motivation is about how to encourage or stimulate workers under us or working with us e.g team-mates to want to work or play harder using all their ability and skills. According to R.Geoger and W.Leslie (Rivai & Arifin, 2013:388) motivation is: "Getting a person to exert a higher degree of effort" which means to make someone work or strive harder. Previously, Danim (2010: 116) has stated that: Motivation is the push from a leader, including head-masters and teachers, to do something in some way. Motivation basically is a mental effort or push from a leader or ones-self (self-motivation) to do something or perform some activity better and it provides strength directed to fully achieve the desires and wishes and to get satisfaction or reduce imbalance or discrimination. In the activities of teaching-learning, motivation appears to be the internal push that a participating student has to perform learning activities better. This is in line with what Sardiman (2011:75) has put down that: "Motivation can be said to be all the effort from within a student joining in the learning process to ensure she continues in the learning activities and follows the direction of the learning so that the purpose of the subject being learnt is reached". Furthermore, Uno (2013:23) has said that: "In reality motivation to learn is a push both internal and external to a student who is in the process of learning to make a change in her behavior, generally to meet some indicator or supporting element". A teacher has no meaning without a student. This shows how important the student is in the class. Because of that, a teacher must truly understand and have a capacity as a leader to motivate her students to achieve greater heights of learning.

## 3 METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The objectives of this study are to investigate the teachers' ability to implement transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning at state senior high schools in Aceh. The study used qualitative method in nature. The authors interviewed the teachers who involved in this study. The teachers were interviewed one by one to ensure that they understand and know to implement the transformational and transactional to motivate students in learning. The study lasted form two weeks. The study took place at state senior high school in Aceh. Thirteen state senior high school teachers in Aceh involved in this study.

## 3.1 Sample of Research

The study engaged 275 state senior high school teachers in the province of Aceh taken randomly. In central Aceh regency, state senior high school 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 12 were taken as the sample of the study. In Nagan Raya regency, the teachers were taken from state senior high schools as the sample were taken from state senior high schools 1 Beutong, 3 Sunagan, 1 Suka Makmur and state senior high school 3 Kuala. Another regency is Lhokseumawe, three state senior high schools teachers were taken as the sample of this study, namely; state senior high school 1, 5, Modal Bangsa.

## 3.2 Instrument and Procedures

The interview was used as the instrument of the study. The interview focused on the teachers' ability to implement the transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning. Besides, the authors also obtained the information related to factors that influence their ability to implement transformational and transactional leadership to motivate students in learning. The teachers were interviewed one by one deeply to get the data needed. The interview process took place during two weeks.

## 3.3 Data Analysis

The data collected from the interview were analyzed qualitatively using words that classified into data display, data reduction, and data conclusion. The data were transcribed firstly, then classified them into meaningful information, and lastly the data were taken the conclusion so that the findings of this study were valid and reliable. And in the end, the conclusion can be drawn.

# 4 RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

Referring to the objectives of the study, the results can be reported as the following:

1) The style of transformational and transactional leadership needed to increase the students' motivation to learn.

In principle teachers already use transformational and transactional leadership styles to run their teaching-learning processes, especially to motivate students. They do this because teachers are aware that teaching-learning is less effective if the students' motivation to learn is low. However, the implementation of transformational and transactional leadership in teaching is focused on reaching the minimum competency (KKM) and is not consistent. Indications that it is not consistent could be seen in the answers from the respondents when they were interviewed, that the concept of transformational and transactional leadership for managing teaching was still not well understood. However, after explanations about the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership for teaching, the respondents then understood that in principle they had actually been implementing some form of transformational and transactional leadership in their teaching.

As one way of managing teaching it needs consistency in implementation. Whenever the style of teaching or the behaviour of the teacher is still inconsistent, then that cannot be said to be the style of that teacher as was postulated by Priansa (2014:174), who said that "Leadership style is one form of consistent behaviour shown by a leader and that is felt by others when that leader tries to influence the activities of others". Consistency when applied especially affects the efforts to encourage students when studying. Transactional leadership applied by the teacher includes explanations of the learning target which the students must achieve and the rewards that they can get. As one process to motivate the students, the implementation of transactional leadership in teaching always features the minimal results which the students will achieve. This is important to help the students to make the results to be achieved a priority for motivating the students. Awards as rewards are something that cannot be separated from the management of the learning process, so too sanctions or punishments which can be handed out if students don't follow the transactions offered by the teacher in the learning process. Transactional leadership is the ability of a leader to identify the desires of those under her in

this case her students and assist them to achieve better results by providing satisfying rewards.

If a teacher uses transactional leadership in her lessons, it can be seen in her Teaching Plan (TP). In her TP the teacher always lists the activities to motivate the students at the beginning of the teaching-learning process (TLP). This shows that teachers understand the importance of motivation for students to follow the TLP. Random observations of the classes of several teachers who became the subjects of this study showed that there were still some teachers who don't follow the TP that they had made. This meant that while the teaching design had been made to implement transactional leadership, however in the implementation the realization still did not follow the prepared plan, although many ran their classes according to their plans. In a situation like this, especially for students who have chosen to follow the Social (IPS) stream and which are not the top class, the teachers tend to move to use an authoritarian and transactional style to increase the motivation of most of the students. The teacher has to build a commitment with her students for the work they have to do. According to one teacher, the use of an authoritarian style was often done because many of the students in the social stream have low motivation to study. Conversely, students in the top or science stream (IPA) classes have high motivation. In the IPA classes the students are generally highly motivated. In these classes, because the students are highly motivated the teacher can easily implement transactional leadership in her teaching.

2) The Teacher's Ability to Implement a Transactional and Transformational Leadership Style to Motivate Students to Study

The understanding of leadership styles by a teacher does not guarantee that a teacher has a good ability to implement leadership in her class. The results from this study where the teachers have been the subject of this study can be said to show that the ability to provide leadership in the class in the TLP is not solely limited to transformational and transactional leadership. Teachers tend to use a variety of leadership styles; in fact it is more realistic to say that teachers tend to use a situational style of leadership to raise the motivation of students. Student motivation to study is not only influenced by the leadership style of their teacher, however it is very much influenced by other factors like the support and background of the students' families. The hoped for transformational and transactional leadership styles of teachers can only raise the motivation to study of some students. However, they

are not capable of increasing the motivation to study of students who truly have no motivation to study. Transformational and transactional leadership by teachers of IPS (social stream) classes has not shown benefits which are truly outstanding. This has been shown as student motivation to study has not grown and increased significantly. Moreover, in IPA (science stream) classes the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles too cannot be seen as providing benefits that are truly outstanding. This is because generally students in IPA classes have been selected (for high intelligence) and already have a high motivation to study. Based on the study results above, an hypothesis has been made that transformational and transactional leadership can positively influence the motivation of students to study. This theory will become the basis for making this quantitative study. The transformational leadership style has a positive impact on the students motivation in learning (Leban, & Zulauf, 2004).

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the finding mentioned previously, the current study concluded that teachers are already using transformational and transactional leadership although not consistently. In addition, students in every school are heterogeneous due to different family backgrounds and environment. Understanding by teachers about the style of transformational and transactional leadership does not guarantee that they can implement it well in class. Besides, quantitative results show that transformational and transactional leadership have a significant influence on the motivation of students although they are still influenced by other styles. The results of the study suggest that remembering the importance of teachers implementing transformational and transactional leadership, head-masters should give more encouragement to teachers to use them consistently in their teaching-learning processes. Due to students are neither homogeneous nor very heterogeneous, teachers should use more than one style of leadership in the teaching-learning processes. Head-masters should often provide coaching to teachers about the most effective styles of teaching so that they will not become monotonous in the teaching-learning processes in class. Teachers should use a variety of approaches when doing teaching-learning processes to respond to the situation of the class.

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