



## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

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# Transformational Leadership and Teacher Performance at MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan: A Qualitative Case Study

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines how the principal of MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan practices the four dimensions of transformational leadership and how teachers describe their professional work. Fieldwork from May to July 2026 involved purposively selected interviews with one principal, two vice principals, and seven teachers, three observation visits, and institutional documents. Thematic interpretation identified exemplary conduct and discipline (idealized influence), a shared educational purpose and recognition (inspirational motivation), opportunities for professional learning and instructional experimentation (intellectual stimulation), and private guidance responsive to individual needs (individualized consideration). Participants associated these practices with stronger teacher motivation, responsibility, collaboration, and creativity in instruction. Open communication and collegial support facilitated implementation, whereas limited computer facilities, uneven readiness, and restricted development budgets constrained it. Findings describe participants' perceptions and observed practices in one madrasah; the design does not establish a causal improvement in teacher performance. Further evaluation should track classroom practice and student learning over time.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership; Madrasah Principal; Teacher Performance; Qualitative Case Study; Professional Learning



## ABSTRAK

Studi kasus kualitatif ini mengkaji empat dimensi kepemimpinan transformasional kepala MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan dan kaitannya dengan pekerjaan profesional guru. Penelitian lapangan pada Mei–Juli 2026 melibatkan wawancara dengan satu kepala madrasah, dua wakil kepala, dan tujuh guru, tiga kunjungan observasi, serta dokumen lembaga. Temuan menunjukkan keteladanan dan kedisiplinan, komunikasi tujuan bersama dan penghargaan, kesempatan belajar profesional serta percobaan pembelajaran, dan bimbingan pribadi sesuai kebutuhan guru. Para informan mengaitkan praktik tersebut dengan motivasi, tanggung jawab, kolaborasi, dan kreativitas guru. Komunikasi terbuka dan dukungan sejawat membantu pelaksanaan, sedangkan sarana komputer, kesiapan guru, dan anggaran pengembangan menjadi kendala. Temuan menggambarkan persepsi informan dan praktik yang diamati pada satu madrasah; rancangan penelitian ini tidak membuktikan peningkatan kinerja secara kausal.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Transformasional; Kepala Madrasah; Kinerja Guru; Studi Kasus; Pengembangan Profesional

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance reflects instructional judgment, professional responsibility, and the capacity to respond to learners. School leadership may shape the conditions in which these practices develop, including teachers' opportunities to collaborate and learn. Reviews link leadership to teacher and student outcomes through several pathways, while emphasizing differences among leadership practices (Robinson et al., 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Transformational leadership is often described through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In a madrasah, these dimensions may be expressed through exemplary conduct, shared educational goals, instructional innovation, and personal guidance. The framework offers categories for interpreting leadership behavior rather than proof that a principal causes performance gains.

At MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan, the supplied field study describes a principal who models discipline, coordinates teachers, encourages professional development, and responds to individual problems. It also notes resource and budget constraints that may limit teachers' opportunities to act on encouragement. Examining these accounts together can clarify which practices staff experience and what supports or obstructs them.

This article asks how the four dimensions of transformational leadership appear in this single madrasah, how teachers interpret their relevance to professional work, and which contextual factors matter. Its qualitative evidence permits a situated account of practices and perceptions, not a before-and-after estimate of effects on teacher performance.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

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The study used a qualitative case study design at MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan, Lampung, with fieldwork conducted from May to July 2026. This design allows the leadership practices described by staff to be considered alongside their institutional setting (Yin, 2018). The case is one school and was not selected for statistical generalization.

Ten informants were selected purposively for their direct knowledge of the principal's work: one principal, two vice principals, and seven teachers. The source reports interview sessions of approximately 30 minutes, audio recording and transcription, and follow-up clarification when needed. It does not report a formal interview schedule or demographic profiles, so these details are not inferred.

The researcher made three observation visits over two weeks, each about three hours, focusing on meetings, communication, supervision, classroom practice, and collegial interaction. Documents included madrasah work programs, supervision records, and teacher attendance. Interviews, observations, and documents were compared through source and technique triangulation.

Analysis followed data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, with material organized around the four leadership dimensions and enabling or limiting conditions (Miles et al., 2019). The source gives selected quotations and field summaries but no full coding audit trail or quantitative baseline. Descriptions of improved performance are therefore interpreted as participants' perceptions rather than measured change.

## 3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

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Idealized influence appeared in accounts of the principal arriving punctually, assuming responsibility, welcoming students, and participating in madrasah activities. Teacher 1 described the principal as consistently modeling discipline and responsibility (interview, July 24, 2026). These examples link leadership credibility to conduct visible to staff, though the source does not quantify changes in teacher attendance.

Inspirational motivation appeared in monthly coordination meetings, direct communication, recognition, and reminders of teachers' educational responsibilities. Teacher 2 said the principal used meetings and guidance to connect teaching with educating and modeling conduct for students (interview, July 24, 2026). Staff described these practices as reinforcing common goals and professional motivation.

Intellectual stimulation included invitations to teacher subject groups (MGMP), seminars, workshops, and instructional experimentation. Teacher 3 reported being informed about relevant development opportunities (interview, July 25, 2026); observations described video use, group discussion, and problem-solving activities. Individualized consideration involved private conversations about difficulties and peer assistance: Teacher 4 described confidential guidance and help from experienced colleagues (interview, July 25, 2026).

Staff identified open communication and peer support as enabling conditions. Constraints included a limited computer laboratory, differences in teachers' readiness for new practices, and restricted budgets for training (Teacher 6, interview, July 27, 2026; principal, interview, July 25, 2026; Teacher 7, interview, July 27, 2026). Such constraints complicate any simple attribution of teacher performance to leadership alone.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

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The principal's visible punctuality and participation can be interpreted as idealized influence: a leader enacts standards that staff are asked to follow (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Teacher accounts show that this example had meaning for them, but they do not show whether attendance or instructional quality changed over time. Behavioral records and independent observations would strengthen that claim.

Communication of a shared purpose gives inspirational motivation a concrete form in meetings and daily guidance. Leadership research associates such practices with teacher commitment and collective efficacy (Ross & Gray, 2006). Here, the evidence is teachers' descriptions of encouragement and recognition; no validated measures of motivation or collective efficacy were administered.

Opportunities for MGMP participation, workshops, and new teaching approaches resemble intellectual stimulation. Research on professional development suggests that sustained, content-focused learning with opportunities to apply ideas is more useful than participation alone (Desimone, 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). The case documents invitations and examples of practice, but not the duration, quality, or subsequent impact of each program.

Private discussion of problems and tailored peer assistance illustrate individualized consideration. These accounts matter because teachers differ in experience and readiness, a difference the principal explicitly acknowledged. Support might be more effective when linked to a specific instructional need, a feedback conversation, and a later chance to revisit practice (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

The four dimensions overlap in day-to-day leadership. A meeting can communicate a shared goal, recognize effort, and invite a new teaching idea; a supervisory conversation can model respect while offering individualized advice. Treating these dimensions as interpretive categories helps describe that overlap without assuming each behavior operates independently (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

The resource constraints show why leadership must be interpreted within an organizational setting. A limited computer laboratory can prevent teachers from implementing technology-based lessons even when leaders support innovation. Likewise, uneven readiness and scarce funds affect access to learning opportunities. The principal's influence therefore interacts with resources and teachers' capacity to act, as broader school leadership research suggests (Robinson et al., 2008).

Participants perceived stronger discipline, responsibility, collaboration, and creativity, but this case provides no comparison school, pre-intervention measures, or systematic teacher-performance ratings. Reviews of transformational leadership document associations with performance across

contexts (Wang et al., 2011); those estimates cannot be transferred as a causal effect size for this madrasah. Future evidence should combine repeated classroom observation, teacher work, and student learning.

The study contributes a context-rich account of how staff experience principal leadership at one Islamic junior secondary school. Its limits include a small purposive sample, short observation period, and selective presentation of interview evidence. A longer study could document leadership interactions across a school year, examine dissenting accounts, and test whether individual support and professional learning correspond to observable changes in teaching.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

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At MTs Negeri 2 Way Kanan, staff described the principal's leadership through exemplary conduct, shared-purpose communication, support for new teaching ideas, and individualized guidance. These practices were perceived as supportive of teacher motivation, responsibility, collaboration, and instructional creativity. Communication and collegial support helped, while facilities, varied readiness, and budgets constrained implementation.

The single-case design cannot establish a causal improvement in teacher performance. Madrasah leaders can use the four dimensions to organize reflective supervision and development opportunities, while future studies should document change in observed teaching and student work over time.

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