

# Relationship Between School Principals' Transformational Leadership, Teachers' Job Satisfaction, and Teachers' Work Morale at State Elementary Schools in Boven Digoel Regency, Papua, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** *Teachers' work morale is greatly affect to students' academic achievement and the school environment. The research aimed to investigate the relationship between school principals' transformational leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. The research sampels included 123 teachers at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua. Questionairres were the main tool of data collecting. The data were given quantitative treatment. In order to have an acurate results of data analysis, the researcher using the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 for windows. Based on the data analysis, the research revealed that: (a) there was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at state elementary in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia; (b) there was a significant relationship between principals' transformasional leadership and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia; and (c) there was a significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** teachers, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, work morale, state elementary schools, Boven Digoel regency, Papua

## 1. Introduction

Morale is a psychological concept that indicate the attitudes of individuals and groups in an organisation towards their job, their superior, and their organizational environment (Francis, 2010). Morale can be defined as the capacity of a group of people to pull together persistently and consistently in pursuit of a common purpose (Leighton, as cited by Francis, 2010). Morale can also be defined as a way of describing how people feel about their jobs, employers and companies, and those feelings are tied to the behaviors and attitudes that employees exhibit in the workplace (Seahan, in <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/morale-organizations-346.html>).

Teachers' work morale is greatly affect to students' academic achievement and the school environment. Rowland (2008) said,

Teachers are the largerst professional body in a school, have the most contact of with students throughout the day, and influence the environment of the school greatly. When teachers feel positively about their position, feeling referred to as teacher morale, they have tremendous positive influence on the students and the school. The reverse is also true; when teachers have negative feelings about the school, they may negatively influence the students and the school. Teachers have the power as a group and as individuals to greatly influence a school's environment. It is very important for educational leaders to be aware of factors that affect teacher morale and how they may affect student achievement (p. 1).

There are some prevalent factors that believed to affect to high or low level of teachers' work morale. Keeping on the awareness of the role of other prevalent factors that related to teachers' work morale, the researcher has made a study of two prevalent factors follows. First, principals' transformational leadership. Transformational leadership "focuses more on change, and inspires followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support" (Bass and Riggo, 2006, as cited by Horn-Turpin, 2009, p. 16).

Transformational leadership Transformational leadership is about getting eveyone involved in decision making (Rowland, 2008). Leitwood (1994 as cited by Horn-Turpin, 2009, p. 16-17) pointed out four components of transformational leadership as follows:

### a. Individual Consideration

Individualized consideration occurs when new learning opportunities are created in conjunction with a supportive climate. In their demonstration of individual consideration, the transformational leader is an effective listener, and recognizes and is accepting of employee's individual differences. Two-way communication is encouraged, and interactions with followers are personalized. An individually considerate leader will delegate tasks as a means of developing followers. Delegated tasks are monitored to determine whether the followers need additional direction or support and to assess progress; however, the followers do not feel they are being checked on or monitored (Bass &

Riggo, 2006).

#### **b. Intellectual Stimulation**

Transformational leaders encourage innovation and creativity by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. In addition, leaders who practice a transformational leadership style solicit new ideas and creative solutions to problems from followers, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. When individual members make mistakes, the transformational leader does not publicly criticize them nor are their ideas criticized because they differ from the leaders' ideas (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

#### **c. Inspirational Motivation**

Transformational leaders demonstrate behaviors that inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. They also arouse team spirit, enthusiasm and optimism. Transformational leaders involve their followers by clearly communicating stated expectations they followers to meet and also demonstrate commitment to goals and a shared vision. These leaders articulate a compelling vision of the future (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

#### **d. Idealized Influence**

Transformational leaders demonstrate behaviors that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. In addition to admiring, respecting, and trusting them, followers tend to identify with the leaders and want to emulate them. Followers view their leaders as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. In addition, leaders who exhibit idealized influence are willing to take risks and are consistent. They can be counted on to do the right thing as they demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral conduct (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

Transformational leadership is one of the factors which believed to affect to teachers' work morale. Lumsden (1998) said, "By treating teachers in ways that empowered them, such as involving them in decisions about policies and acknowledging their expertise, administrators can help sustain teacher morale" (p. 2). Similarly, Littleford (2007 as cited by Werang, 2014, p. 692) stated, High teacher morale occurs when the work environment is optimistic and teachers feel they have a purposeful job. These positive feelings are encouraged and promoted through principal's leadership. When teachers feel enthusiastic about their purpose, they become more productive, set higher standards, and perform better resulting in higher achievement for students.

Koerner (1990, as cited by Houchard, 2005, pp. 30-31) recognized 13 essential factors of leadership that determined high morale: (a) allow teachers to have input into decision making that directly effect curriculum, instruction, and school climate; (b) recognize and appreciate teacher and student achievement; (c) promote a school climate that reflects a feeling of unity, pride, cooperation, acceptance of differences, and security; (d) maintain good communication; (e) promote opportunities for meaningful, professional growth; (f) encourage clear, shared goals; (g) endorse strong, supportive leadership; (h) provide quality time for collegial interaction—planning, educational dialogue, decision-

making, problem solving; (i) provide a well maintained physical environment; (j) encourage good human relations, both within school and between school community; (k) encourage and reward risk-taking, innovation, and good teaching; (l) give attention to professional needs such as salary and benefits; and (m) give attention to personal needs such as stress management, good health, and social interaction.

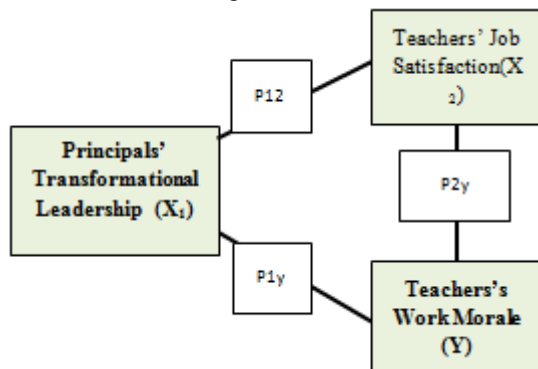
Besides, principal transformational leadership is also known as factor that affect to teachers' job satisfaction. Recent studies conducted by some scholars, such as Ross and Gray (2006), revealed that school principals who demonstrate a transformational leadership style have teaching staffs with increased job satisfaction, a greater sense of teaching efficacy, demonstrate high levels of organizational commitment, and have less staff turnover. Similarly, in a study conducted by Ejimofor (2007) stated that principals who create opportunities for teacher professional development are more likely to increase job satisfaction of their teachers than principals who would not create such opportunities for their teachers (p. 89).

Second prevalent factor related to teachers' work morale is teachers' job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as a positive emotional state that reflects an effective response to their job situation (Locke, 1976). According to Mullins (2006), job satisfaction is an attitude or an internal state that could, for instance, be associated with a personal feeling of achievement, either qualitative or quantitative. Haorei (2012, p. 50) defined job satisfaction as "how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs. Besides, job satisfaction is also defined as "an effective (emotional) reaction to a job that results from the incumbent's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired" (Cranny, et al. as cited by Islam, et al., 2012, p. 152).

Teachers' job satisfaction refers to the positive or negative aspects of teachers' attitude towards their jobs of teaching. Teachers' job satisfaction is "an evaluative judgement about the degree of pleasure of a teacher derives from his or her job that consists of both effective and cognitive components" (Hulin & Judge, 2003 as cited by Edwards, et al., 2008, p. 442). Teachers' job satisfaction provides a meaningful insight into total return from the job of teaching since it indicates how teachers value the whole package of both pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards according to their own expectations and personal preferences (Amador, et al., p. 3). Agyei-Kyeremateng (2011, p. xii) concluded that "job satisfaction has a positive correlation with employee morale. Workers with high morale tend to perform better on the job. Job satisfaction and morale is associated with absenteeism, lateness to work, complaints, less effort towards delivery and turnover". Islam, et al. (2012), in their study, suggested that "job satisfaction can affect employee morale, turnover, absenteeism, and prosocial behavior which can be crucial for organizational success".

## 2. Method

The main objective of this empirical research was to investigate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. Conceptual model of the research was as follow (Figure 1).



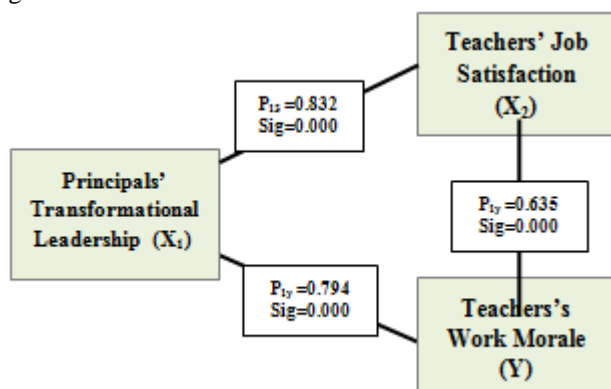
**Figure 1:** Conceptual Model of Relationship among Research Variables

Null hypothesis that were examined in this research as follow: (a) there was no significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia; (b) there was no significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia; and (c) there was no significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. Questionnaires were the main tools of collecting data. Samples of the research comprised of 123 state elementary schools' teachers. The data were given quantitative treatment. In order that data were analyzed well, the researcher using the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 16 for Windows.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Results

Based on the results of data analysis, empiric model of relationship among research variables could be reflected in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2:** Empiric Model of Relationship among Research Variables

Result of data analysis as shown on the above model revealed that:

- There was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership ( $X_1$ ) and teachers' job satisfaction ( $X_2$ ). It's indicated by Pearson coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.832 with the significance level of 0.000. It means that at the level of alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05, the null hypotheses that there was no significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency was rejected.
- There was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership ( $X_1$ ) and teachers' work morale ( $Y$ ). It's indicated by Pearson coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.794 with the significance level of 0.000. It means that at the level of alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency was rejected.
- There was a significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction ( $X_2$ ) and teachers' work morale ( $Y$ ). It's indicated by Pearson coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.635 with the significance level of 0.000. It means that at the level of alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools was rejected.

### 3.2. Discussion

The results of this present research indicate a significant relationship between principal's transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction. It means that the raise of transformational leadership causes a raise in teachers' job satisfaction. Since the transformational leadership is closely connected to the principal's way of inspiring and motivating followers to grow and to do more than required, there must be an endeavour to fit all the elementary schools' principal with the capability in that aspects (Werang, 2015). This result was consistent with Ross & Gray (2006) findings that school principals who demonstrate a transformational leadership style have teaching staffs with increased job satisfaction, a greater sense of teaching efficacy, demonstrate high levels of organizational commitment, and have less staff turnover. This result was also consistent with Ejimofor (2007) findings that principals who create opportunities for teacher professional development are more likely to increase job satisfaction of the teachers than principals who would not create such opportunities for their teachers. This inferred that effective principals' transformational leadership could improve teachers' job satisfaction at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia.

The results of this present research indicate a significant relationship between principal's transformational leadership and teachers' work morale. This inferred that effective principals' transformational leadership could improve teachers' work morale. In other words, the raise of transformational leadership could cause the raise of teachers' work morale. Since the transformational leadership is also connected closely to the principal's way of

stimulating and considering followers, it is necessary for the schools' principals to treat and recognize each of followers fairly and sympathetic (Werang, 2015). This result was consistent with Lumsden (1998) findings that "By treating teachers in ways that empowered them, such as involving them in decisions about policies and acknowledging their expertise, administrators can help sustain teacher morale". This result was also consistent with Littleford (2007) findings that "high teacher morale occurs when the work environment is optimistic and teachers feel they have a purposeful job. These positive feelings are encouraged and promoted through principal's leadership. When teachers feel enthusiastic about their purpose, they become more productive, set higher standards, and perform better resulting in higher achievement for students".

The result of this present research indicate a significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' work morale. This inferred that high teachers' job satisfaction could improve teachers' work morale. In other words, the raise of teachers' job satisfaction could cause a raise in teachers' work morale. This result was consistent with Agyei-Kyeremateng (2011, p. xii) concluded that "job satisfaction has a positive correlation with employee morale. Workers with high morale tend to perform better on the job. Job satisfaction and morale is associated with absenteeism, lateness to work, complaints, less effort towards delivery and turnover". This result was also consistent with Islam, et al. (2012) conclusion that "job satisfaction can affect employee morale, turnover, absenteeism, and prosocial behavior which can be crucial for organizational success".

#### 4. Conclusion

The objective of this empirical research was to investigate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. The following are the conclusions drawn from the results of the research:

- a. There was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. Accordingly, if the regional education administrators want to improve teachers job satisfaction, then they have to take some strategic steps to improving principals' transformational leadership.
- b. There was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. Accordingly, if the regional education administrators want to improve teachers' work morale, then they have to take an effort to improving principals' transformational leadership.
- c. There was a significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel regency, Papua, Indonesia. Accordingly, if the school principals want to improve their teacher work morale, then they have to take some strategic steps to improving teachers' job satisfaction

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