



The Role of Transformational Teachers in School Climate Improvement and Students Well-Being

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of Transformational Teachers in improving the school climate and student well-being at SMP Negeri 1 Raya. It has two main objectives: first, to analyze how Transformational Teachers contribute to these aspects, and second, to evaluate the effects of their practices. Using a qualitative approach, this research provides an in-depth understanding of the complex interactions involved. The study focuses on Transformational Teachers, students, school administrators, and the overall school climate. Through semi-structured interviews and direct observations, it examines the experiences, perspectives, and strategies of these key stakeholders. The findings reveal that Transformational Teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Raya play a crucial role in fostering a positive school environment and enhancing student well-being through various initiatives. Their commitment to innovative teaching strategies, such as 'Student-Based Learning' and 'Differential Learning,' creates dynamic and inclusive classrooms that address individual student needs, ultimately boosting academic achievement and enthusiasm for learning. Additionally, their active involvement in extracurricular programs and efforts to tackle issues like bullying and character development contribute to a safer and more supportive school atmosphere. Their collaborative leadership approach also strengthens teamwork among staff, cultivating a positive work culture and more effective school management. Overall, the influence of Transformational Teachers extends beyond academics, supporting students' holistic development and ensuring that SMP Negeri 1 Raya maintains a nurturing and thriving educational environment.

Keywords: Transformational teachers, School climate, Students well-being:

INTRODUCTION

Transformational Teachers is educational leaders who go beyond merely delivering academic content (Damayanti & Asbari, 2024, p. 6). They possess the ability to inspire, motivate, and positively impact students' lives. They often exhibit strong leadership qualities, forming deep connections with students and influencing their academic, emotional, and social development. Moreover, Transformational Teachers serve as transformative agents within the educational ecosystem, actively and proactively fostering holistic growth in students (Kusumah & Alawiyah, 2021, p. 5). They not only nurture students but also support the development of other educators to implement student-centered learning, serve as role models, and create an educational environment aligned with the profile of Pancasila Learners (Faiz & Faridah, 2022, p. 83).

The study of Transformational Teachers, colloquially referred to as *Guru Penggerak*, assumes paramount importance owing to multifaceted reasons (Sunarti et al., 2024, p. 117). Primarily, they function as agents of change, wielding considerable influence in the enhancement of educational quality (Kusumah & Alawiyah, 2021, p. 15). Examination into their roles, practices, and strategic approaches offers invaluable insights conducive to the holistic advancement of teaching professionalism within the educational domain (Surahman et al., 2022, p. 378). Secondly, Transformational Teachers exemplify the effective application of innovation in pedagogy and learning within the continually evolving educational landscape (Imron et al., 2023, p. 1132). An in-depth analysis of their methodologies serves as a compass for crafting more dynamic and tailored curricula responsive to students' needs. Thirdly, these educators serve as inspirational benchmarks for both peers and students, fostering a motivational impetus towards ameliorating the overall educational caliber (Surahman et al., 2022, p. 377). Through an academic exploration of *Guru Penggerak*, educators and policymakers stand to gain a comprehensive understanding of refining students' learning experiences and spearheading constructive transformations within the educational framework (Tahajudin et al., 2023, p. 1968).

Transformational Teachers, assume multifaceted roles pivotal to the educational milieu. Firstly, they act as vanguards of innovation, propelling advancements in pedagogy and learning methodologies (Tahajudin et al., 2023, p. 1969). Their initiatives foster an environment conducive to experimentation and ideation, thereby nurturing a culture of continuous improvement within education (Jannati et al., 2023, p. 333). Secondly, these educators serve as catalysts in elevating the professionalism of their peers by sharing best practices, initiating dialogues, and encouraging the refinement of teaching quality. Moreover, they wield considerable influence in reshaping curricular frameworks, championing the development of dynamic, responsive curricula tailored to students' evolving needs and contemporary trends. Their aspirational role as inspirational models not only motivates fellow educators but also inspires students to strive for academic excellence. Ultimately, through their innovative, collaborative, and motivational approaches, Transformational Teachers significantly enhance the overall learning experiences of students, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability essential for future success (Tahajudin et al., 2023, p. 1969).

SMP Negeri 1 Raya is a school located at Jln.Dr.Sutomo No.04 Pematang Raya, Raya District, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra. The area where this school is located has diverse geographical characteristics, ranging from lowlands to highlands, so it has abundant natural resources. Ongoing infrastructure development includes road networks connecting villages and essential facilities such as educational and health institutions. SMP Negeri 1 Raya is a well-known education center that plays an important role in raising the standard of education in the region. The school also has three Transformational Teachers who show great dedication in developing a relevant curriculum, introducing innovative teaching methods and actively organizing various extracurricular activities to enrich students' learning experience. These conditions make them a model school for other schools in the region.

A healthy school climate, fostered by supportive educators and engaging activities, significantly contributes to students' overall well-being in Raya District. The environment within these schools directly impacts students' mental and emotional well-being, thereby emphasizing the importance of cultivating a positive and nurturing atmosphere. A healthy school climate encompasses not only effective teaching but also a supportive network among students and staff, fostering personal and academic growth. When schools prioritize such a climate, it enhances students' mental, emotional, and social well-being. This nurturing environment not only aids in their academic performance but also alleviates stress and pressure often associated with learning environments. Students benefit from an atmosphere that encourages holistic development, ultimately shaping a positive and productive learning culture within the school community.

METHOD

This research adopts qualitative methods (Miles et al., 2013, p. 21) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Transformational Teachers in fostering a healthy school climate and its impact on student well-being in SMP Negeri 1 Raya. Qualitative research is

particularly well-suited for exploring complex phenomena, capturing nuanced experiences, and gaining in-depth insights into the perspectives of participants. This study is primarily exploratory and explanatory. It aims to explore the practices and roles of Transformational Teachers in SMP Negeri 1 Raya, and explain how these practices contribute to a positive school climate and student well-being. The subject of this research involves various key subjects, each contributing to the comprehensive understanding of my research questions. Here are the main subjects involved: 1.

Transformational Teachers, Students, School Administrators, School Climate, Student Well-being, SMP Negeri 1 Raya; SMP Negeri 1 Raya is a school located at Jln.Dr.Sutomo No.04 Pematang Raya, Raya District, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra. SMP Negeri 1 Raya is a well-known education center that plays an important role in raising the standard of education in the region. The school also has three transformational teachers who show great dedication in developing a relevant curriculum, introducing innovative teaching methods and actively organizing various extracurricular activities to enrich students' learning experience. In collection of data the researcher used; 1. Interviews: Qualitative data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with Transformational Teachers and school administrators. The interviews will explore in-depth insights into their practices, challenges faced, and perceived impact on school climate and student well-being; 2. Observations: Direct observations of Transformational Teachers' practices will be conducted to observe teaching methodologies, interactions with students, and the overall environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Role of Transformational Teachers

Transformational Teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Raya play multifaceted roles in the improvement of school climate and students' well-being, as evidenced by their dedication to creating dynamic and inclusive learning environments through innovative teaching methodologies such as 'Student-Based Learning' and 'Differential Learning', which cater to individual student needs and abilities, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness and enjoyment of the learning process. Additionally, these teachers actively support extracurricular activities, initiating and managing programs like paskibra and English Club with the provision of professional trainers, facilities, and even international educators, enriching students' experiences beyond academics and fostering skills and interests outside the traditional curriculum. Moreover, they take firm action against bullying, both within and outside school premises, implementing disciplinary measures to ensure a safe environment for all students, while also emphasizing character building through various interventions aimed at promoting positive values like respect, responsibility, and empathy among the student body. Furthermore, Transformational Teachers serve as inspirational mentors and guides, providing emotional support, motivation, and guidance to help students navigate challenges and realize their full potential, thus contributing to their overall well-being and personal growth. Additionally, these educators are agents of innovation and change within the school community, leading by example through active engagement in self-development and continuous efforts to improve the quality of education, inspiring colleagues and students alike to embrace positive changes and contribute to a vibrant and progressive school climate. Lastly, they foster collaboration and team spirit among school staff, creating a positive work environment through encouragement of interpersonal relationships, motivation of colleagues, and sharing of innovative ideas, ultimately enhancing the overall school climate and contributing to a thriving academic, social, and emotional environment for all stakeholders involved.

The Impact of Transformational Teachers

The impact of Transformational Teachers on the improvement of school climate and student well-being in SMP Negeri 1 Raya is profound and multifaceted. Through their innovative teaching methods such as 'Student-Based Learning' and 'Differential Learning,' Transformational Teachers

create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that enhances students' academic performance and enthusiasm for learning. Additionally, their proactive approach to supporting student welfare, including initiatives like social coaching, mental health seminars, and character-building activities, fosters a safer and more supportive school environment. Transformational Teachers also play a key role in expanding extracurricular opportunities such as paskibra and English club, providing avenues for holistic student development beyond academics. Moreover, their collaborative leadership style promotes teamwork among staff, leading to a more positive work culture and efficient school administration. By empowering student voice and continuously innovating to meet evolving needs, Transformational Teachers ensure that SMP Negeri 1 Raya maintains a dynamic, inclusive, and supportive climate conducive to students' overall well-being and success.

Discussion

Expanding on the conclusions drawn from this study, it's evident that the role of transformational teachers is paramount in shaping not just the academic environment but also the overall well-being of students at SMP Negeri 1 Raya. The findings underscore the effectiveness of various strategies employed by these teachers, ranging from infrastructure improvements to innovative teaching methods, in fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning atmosphere. Moreover, the positive impact perceived by students highlights the transformative influence of these educators as agents of change who inspire, guide, and create a nurturing educational environment.

Furthermore, the study reveals the ripple effect of transformational teaching on various stakeholders within the school community. School administrators, as highlighted by Mr. GD, acknowledge the significant contribution of transformational teachers in fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment, thereby enhancing overall staff morale and productivity. This underscores the holistic approach of transformational teaching, which not only benefits students but also empowers educators and administrators alike to contribute meaningfully to the school's mission. The implementation of specific programs such as paskibra, English Club, and student-focused learning methods has yielded tangible positive outcomes, including a reduction in bullying incidents and an enhanced sense of support and growth among students. These initiatives not only enrich the academic experience but also contribute to the socio-emotional development of students, aligning with the broader goal of holistic education.

Moreover, the study sheds light on students' expectations of continued innovation from transformational teachers, emphasizing the importance of ongoing program development and expansion. Their desire for additional extracurricular activities, inter-class competitions, and participation in Olympics reflects a hunger for diverse opportunities for growth and engagement. This underscores the need for schools and policymakers to remain responsive to evolving student needs and aspirations, thereby ensuring the sustainability and relevance of transformational teaching initiatives.

The findings of this study offer compelling evidence of the transformative potential of dedicated and innovative teaching practices in shaping a positive school climate and enhancing student well-being. By leveraging the insights gleaned from this research, educators, administrators, and policymakers can collaboratively develop and refine transformational programs that prioritize holistic student growth and development, ultimately laying the groundwork for a more vibrant and inclusive educational ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the results of this study provides a comprehensive picture of the role of transformational teachers on school climate and student well-being at SMP Negeri 1 Raya. The research was conducted through in-depth interviews and observations, involving transformational teachers, school officials, and students. The results revealed several findings that can be organized as follows:

First, the role of transformational teachers is crucial in maintaining the school climate and students' well-being. Through interviews with transformational teachers, it was revealed that they use simple but effective strategies, such as improving facilities and infrastructure, fully supporting

extracurricular activities and using innovative teaching methods. Transformational teachers such as Mr. LS and Mr. JS. underlined the importance of creating a learning environment that is dynamic, inclusive and supportive of students' character development.

Second, students' views on the role of transformational teachers show a positive impact on school climate and student well-being. Students rated transformational teachers as agents of change who not only deliver information but also inspire, guide and create a pleasant learning environment. They noted improvements in the learning atmosphere and increased student well-being after the implementation of the transformational teacher program.

Third, school administrators, such as Mr. GD, stated that the role of transformational teachers had a significant impact on their work. Transformational teachers create a positive, collaborative and dynamic work environment. They motivate school staff to contribute maximally, strengthen interpersonal relationships and shape a work culture that supports students' overall growth and well-being.

Fourth, the results show that the transformational teacher programs that have been implemented, such as paskibra, English Club and student-focused learning methods, have had a positive impact on school climate and student well-being. Students feel positive changes in the learning atmosphere, avoid bullying cases, and get support to grow and develop.

Fifth, students' expectations of transformational teachers involve the expectation to continue to innovate and provide new surprises. They want additional extracurricular activities, inter-class competitions, and participation in Olympics.

The results of this study illustrate how important the role of transformational teachers is in shaping a positive school climate and improving student well-being. The transformational teacher program has brought about real change, and students' expectations show support for the continued development of this initiative. The findings can provide valuable insights for schools and education policy makers in developing transformational programs that support holistic student growth and well-being.

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