

Transformational Leadership and the GROW ME Coaching Model as Catalysts for Instructional Innovation: A Quantitative Study in Public Elementary School of Bulu District Rembang Regency

Safikin¹, Rasiman², Supandi³

¹ Universitas PGRI Semarang; xavikeane@gmail.com

² Universitas PGRI Semarang; rasiman@upgris.ac.id

³ Universitas PGRI Semarang; supandi@upgris.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Transformational Leadership;
GROW ME Coaching Model;
Instructional Innovation;
Elementary School;
Quantitative Research

Article history:

Received 2025-01-12

Revised 2025-04-17

Accepted 2025-08-31

ABSTRACT

This quantitative research examines the influence of transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model on enhancing teachers' instructional innovation in public elementary schools in Bulu District, Rembang Regency. Framed within the context of educational leadership and teacher professional development, the study adopts an ex post facto causal design, collecting data from 103 teachers through proportional random sampling. Transformational leadership was assessed through four dimensions—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—while the GROW ME coaching model was evaluated across six stages: Goal, Reality, Options, Will, Monitoring, and Evaluation. Instructional innovation was measured in terms of idea creation, implementation, and continuous development. Data were analyzed using prerequisite tests (normality, linearity, multicollinearity) and multiple linear regression. The results indicate that both transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model significantly and positively impact instructional innovation, both independently and jointly, explaining 52.7% of its variance ($R = 0.726$; $F = 71.95$; $p < 0.05$). These findings highlight the novelty of integrating leadership styles with structured coaching frameworks to foster sustainable instructional innovation, offering practical implications for policymakers, school leaders, and teacher training programs.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Safikin

Universitas PGRI Semarang; xavikeane@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Profound transformations in various dimensions of life, particularly in education, have emerged alongside rapid technological advancements, globalization, and shifting socio-economic dynamics (Yanti, Hawi, & Syarnubi, 2021). These changes have heightened the urgency for reform in learning approaches emphasizing not only mastery of subject content but also the development of critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and digital literacy as essential competencies to meet the demands of future challenges (Alimron, Syarnubi, & Maryamah, 2023). This urgency has been reinforced by the implementation of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which promotes flexible, student-centered learning that adapts to the rapidly evolving context of the modern era. Nusantara (2024) outlines five main reasons for the importance of 21st-century instructional

innovation: adaptability to rapid change, mastery of digital literacy, fostering creativity and innovation, enhancing learning motivation, and strengthening socio-emotional skills (Nusantara, 2024).

Within this dynamic landscape, teachers play a pivotal role as agents of change and innovation. Kurniyati, emphasizes that teachers who fail to update their pedagogical approaches risk diminished teaching effectiveness, whereas adaptive teachers can design meaningful and engaging learning experiences(Kurniyati, 2021). Wannesia, further note that effective teachers are those who continuously learn, remain open to change, and refine their practice to provide optimal learning outcomes for students. The development of digital technology offers both opportunities and challenges. Since 2021, the government has distributed Chromebooks to support technology-based learning; however, data from Bulu District indicate that only 26% of teachers utilize them in classroom instruction (Wannesia, F., Sutrisno, A., & Putri, 2022). Hazizah and Rigianti attribute this gap to limited infrastructure and generational disparities in digital proficiency, while Sutirna underscores the necessity of technological mastery for advancing education in a positive and sustainable direction (Hazizah, N., & Rigianti, 2021) (Sutirna, 2019).

Recent findings from the 2025 Education Report reveal persistent disparities in innovative teaching practices among schools. Several institutions have experienced declining innovation scores, reflecting limited use of technology, minimal engagement in ongoing professional development, and inadequate internal support systems. Hapsari and Fatimah (2021) argue that teachers must develop novel instructional ideas to create active, creative, effective, and enjoyable learning environments (Hapsari, D. I., & Fatimah, 2021). Similarly, Kurniyati (2021) and Ekawati, R. (2014) stress that cultivating an innovation-oriented culture is essential to sustaining educational competitiveness.

School principals occupy a strategic position in fostering teachers' instructional innovation. Ningrum and Abdullah highlight that both internal and external factors shape teachers' innovative behavior, with transformational leadership serving as a critical external driver (Ningrum, R., & Abdullah, 2021). Bass, as cited in Insan, explains that transformational leadership transforms the work environment, motivation, work patterns, and professional values of subordinates to achieve long-term organizational goals (Insan, 2017). Empirical studies by Rahayu and Iskandar confirm that principals who adopt a transformational leadership style inspire teachers to innovate, encourage collaboration, and integrate technology into teaching (Rahayu, S., & Iskandar, 2023). Taoefik et al, found a positive and significant impact of transformational leadership on teachers' innovative behaviors (Taoefik, M., Rahman, A., & Wibowo, 2017).

Beyond leadership, structured academic supervision through coaching has demonstrated effectiveness in enhancing teacher competence. Asbari and Prasetya note that well-implemented coaching can boost teachers' confidence, morale, knowledge, and pedagogical skills (Asbari, M., & Prasetya, 2021). The GROW ME coaching model comprising Goal, Reality, Options, Will, Monitoring, and Evaluation has been recognized as an effective framework to guide teachers in designing creative, contextual, and student-centered instruction (Kemendikbud, 2014)(Ng, 2005). Despite its potential, field data indicate that 67% of principals have yet to optimally exercise transformational leadership and 80% have never systematically applied coaching in academic supervision.

Field observations in Bulu District reveal that some teachers remain passive, rely on unmodified teaching tools, exhibit inconsistent discipline, and lack engagement in developing innovative instructional methodsconditions that signal low motivation as a barrier to achieving adaptive teaching practices aligned with the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Grounded in these realities, this study investigates the role of transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model as catalysts for enhancing instructional innovation in public elementary schools of Bulu District, Rembang Regency, while also considering the mediating influence of work motivation. By bridging the gap between theoretical expectations and field practices, this research aims to provide empirical evidence and practical recommendations for developing strategies that strengthen the culture of instructional innovation in elementary education.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that inspires and motivates subordinates to go beyond personal interests for the sake of the organization. According to Bass (as cited in Insan, 2017), transformational leadership can transform the work environment, motivation, patterns, and work values of subordinates to achieve long-term goals. This leadership style has four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Research by Rahayu and Iskandar, demonstrates that school principals with transformational leadership can encourage teachers to innovate, foster collaboration, and integrate technology into teaching (Rahayu, S., & Iskandar, 2023). Taoefik et al, also show a positive and significant influence of transformational leadership on teachers' innovative behavior. In the context of primary education, the implementation of transformational leadership plays a crucial role in creating an innovative culture that is adaptive to change, including in the application of instructional technology (Taoefik, M., Rahman, A., & Wibowo, 2017).

GROW ME Coaching Model

Coaching in academic supervision is a mentoring process focused on developing teachers' competencies and potential through constructive dialogue. Asbari and Prasetya, emphasize that effective coaching can enhance teachers' confidence, morale, knowledge, and skills (Asbari, M., & Prasetya, 2021). The GROW ME model is an extension of the GROW model and consists of six stages: Goal, Reality, Options, Will, Monitoring, and Evaluation. Kemendikbud (2014) explains that applying the GROW ME model in academic supervision helps teachers set clear learning goals, analyze actual classroom conditions, identify alternative strategies, build commitment to action, conduct periodic monitoring, and evaluate learning outcomes. Ng A, adds that this model is effective in facilitating teachers to design creative, contextual, and student-centered learning(Ng, 2005).

Instructional Innovation

Instructional innovation is the process of creating, developing, and applying new ideas in teaching and learning activities to improve students' learning outcomes. Hapsari and Fatimah state that instructional innovation aims to create active, creative, effective, and enjoyable learning environments (Hapsari, D. I., & Fatimah, 2021). Kurniyati, emphasizes that an innovation culture is key to maintaining the competitiveness of education. Innovations may take the form of new teaching methods, the development of digital learning media, the use of educational technology, and differentiated strategies based on students' characteristics (Kurniyati, 2021). Ekawati and Wardono, underline that instructional innovation must be adaptive to technological developments and societal needs. In the framework of this study, teachers' instructional innovation in elementary schools is seen as the result of the interaction between transformational leadership, the GROW ME coaching model, and work motivation (Ekawati, R., 2014).

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative ex post facto causal-comparative design, which is appropriate for examining cause-and-effect relationships without direct manipulation of variables (Creswell, 2014). The research aimed to investigate the influence of transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model on teachers' instructional innovation.

The research population consisted of all 142 public elementary school teachers in Bulu District, Rembang Regency. The sample size of 103 teachers was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, and respondents were selected through proportional random sampling to ensure each school was represented proportionally (Sugiyono, 2019).

The independent variables were (1) *Transformational Leadership*, measured across four dimensions—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994); and (2) *GROW ME Coaching Model*, measured through six dimensions: Goal, Reality, Options, Will, Monitoring, and Evaluation (Whitmore, 2009).

The dependent variable was *Instructional Innovation*, assessed based on idea creation, idea implementation, and continuous development (Azwar, 2014).

Each variable was measured using a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of 5-point scales from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The questionnaire items were adapted from validated instruments in previous studies and underwent content validation by three education experts. The validity of each item was tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation, and reliability was measured with Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients exceeding 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Ramdhani, 2021).

Data were collected through direct distribution of questionnaires to teachers, preceded by an explanation of the study's objectives and assurance of respondent confidentiality. Completion time for the questionnaire averaged 20–25 minutes. Data analysis was conducted in several stages: (1) Prerequisite tests including normality (Kolmogorov–Smirnov), linearity (ANOVA test for linearity), and multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor/VIF); (2) Hypothesis testing using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model on instructional innovation both partially and simultaneously. The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS version 25 (Ghozali, 2018).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research data were collected from questionnaires completed by 132 public elementary school teachers in Bulu District, Rembang Regency, representing 18 schools. The analysis focused on two independent variables transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model and one dependent variable, instructional innovation. Descriptive statistics showed that the highest mean score was obtained by the GROW ME coaching model (mean = 111.85), while the lowest mean score was found in instructional innovation (mean = 125.37). The widest score range was recorded in transformational leadership (range = 62), while the narrowest was in instructional innovation (range = 61). The maximum score for all variables was the same (150), whereas the lowest minimum score occurred in the GROW ME coaching model (score = 78). The standard deviation was highest for transformational leadership ($SD = 14.24$) and lowest for the GROW ME coaching model ($SD = 12.68$).

The dimension analysis revealed that, within transformational leadership, the highest average score was found in the *inspirational motivation* dimension (mean = 32.50; 27.1% of the total score), while *individualized consideration* had the lowest (mean = 29.80; 24.8%). For the GROW ME coaching model, the *Goal* dimension scored the highest (mean = 22.40; 18.2%), while *Monitoring* scored the lowest (mean = 19.30; 15.7%). Instructional innovation was measured through three dimensions: *idea creation*, *idea implementation*, and *continuous development*. Among these, *idea creation* achieved the highest average score (mean = 42.10; 33.6%), while *continuous development* had the lowest (mean = 39.00; 31.2%).

The results of the assumption tests showed that the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test produced significance values greater than 0.05 for all variables, indicating that the data were normally distributed. Linearity tests confirmed a significant linear relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable ($p < 0.05$). Multicollinearity tests demonstrated that Tolerance values were above 0.10 and VIF values were below 10, meaning there was no multicollinearity problem.

The multiple linear regression analysis demonstrated that transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on instructional innovation, contributing 37.1% to its variance, with a significance value of less than 0.05. Similarly, the GROW ME coaching model also had a positive and significant effect, contributing 39.1%. The F-test results indicated that both independent variables simultaneously had a significant influence on instructional innovation, with a combined contribution (R^2) of 52.7%, while the remaining 47.3% was influenced by other factors outside the research model.

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Instructional Innovation

The results of the analysis indicate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on instructional innovation among public elementary school teachers in Bulu District, Rembang Regency. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.610 (strong category) with a significance value of 0.000 demonstrates a close and meaningful relationship between the two variables. ANOVA testing further supports this finding, with an F-value of 59.698 greater than the F-table value of 3.934 and an R² of 37.1%, meaning that more than one-third of the variation in instructional innovation can be explained by transformational leadership.

Theoretically, this finding aligns with Harsoyo's explanation, citing Yukl, that transformational leadership is a process of influencing individuals to undergo profound changes in attitudes, beliefs, and values, thus driving performance beyond expectations (Harsoyo, 2022). Empirical support is also evident in the studies of Ariyani and Hidayati as well as Hariyanti and Izzati, which demonstrate that transformational leaders inspire, stimulate critical thinking, and create an environment conducive to innovative teacher behavior (Ariyani, 2017)(Hariyanti, D., & Izzati, 2024). In the context of elementary schools, principals who provide individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspiration are able to encourage teachers to experiment with new teaching methods. This is reinforced by Kurniyati's research, which shows that intellectual stimulation significantly contributes to innovative behavior, while attention to individual needs fosters teachers' ability to adapt to students' learning needs (Kurniyati, 2018).

The Influence of the GROW ME Coaching Model on Instructional Innovation

The correlation analysis shows a coefficient of 0.626 (strong category) with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a significant relationship between the implementation of the GROW ME coaching model and instructional innovation. ANOVA results reveal an F-value of 64.958 greater than the F-table value of 3.934, with an R² of 39.1%, suggesting that coaching makes a substantial contribution to instructional innovation.

The GROW ME model (Goals, Reality, Options, Will, Monitoring, Evaluation) has proven effective in helping teachers identify goals, assess current realities, explore various options, plan concrete actions, and monitor and evaluate their achievements. Consistent with Pasloe in (Kuswidiarti, 2020) and (Ng, 2005), coaching is a structured process designed to enhance potential and performance through self-awareness and personal responsibility (Pasloe, 1999). The findings of Irawati, Winoto, and Andriono (2024) confirm that the application of the GROW ME coaching model improves teachers' creativity in designing diverse teaching strategies (Irawati, T., Winoto, H., & Andriono, 2024). Additional evidence comes from Sekianti and Yulia (2024), who reported a positive influence of coaching on employee performance findings that are analogously relevant to the role of school principals in guiding and empowering teachers (Sekianti, A., & Yulia, 2024).

The Simultaneous Influence of Transformational Leadership and the GROW ME Coaching Model on Instructional Innovation

Multiple regression analysis reveals that transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model, when combined, have a significant effect on instructional innovation, with a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.726 (strong category), an R² of 52.7%, and an F-value of 71.950 greater than the F-table value of 3.070. This indicates that the simultaneous application of effective transformational leadership and a structured coaching process creates a synergistic effect, resulting in a more conducive environment for developing and implementing innovative teaching practices. From a leadership perspective, Andriani, Kesumawati, and Kristiawan, emphasize that transformative principals cultivate a school climate that supports innovation (Andriani, S., Kesumawati, N., & Kristiawan, 2018). From a coaching perspective, Asbari highlights that effective coaching enhances teachers' self-efficacy, which becomes a crucial foundation for the willingness and courage to innovate in instructional practices (Asbari, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model have a significant and positive effect on fostering instructional innovation in public elementary schools in Bulu District, Rembang Regency. Beyond the statistical evidence, these findings contribute to the theoretical development of educational leadership by demonstrating how a leadership style that inspires, motivates, and develops teachers' professional capacity can be synergistically enhanced through structured coaching approaches such as GROW ME. Practically, the results provide actionable insights for policymakers and school leaders to integrate leadership training with coaching programs as part of teacher professional development initiatives, thereby fostering a culture of continuous pedagogical improvement. While this study offers a solid empirical foundation, its scope is limited to one district, suggesting the need for further research across different educational contexts and levels to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

This study makes a significant contribution by integrating transformational leadership and the GROW ME coaching model within a single analytical framework to enhance instructional innovation. The findings offer practical guidance for educational stakeholders in designing strategies to foster sustainable innovation. For future research, it is recommended to expand the sample scope to different regions or educational levels to improve the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, adopting a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data would provide a more comprehensive understanding. Other factors, such as organizational culture and technological support, should also be examined to enrich the insights into the drivers of instructional innovation.

REFERENCES

Alimron, A., Syarnubi, S., & Maryamah, M. (2023). Character Education Model in Islamic Higher Education. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(3), 3334–3345. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i3.1452>

Andriani, S., Kesumawati, N., & Kristiawan, M. (2018). The influence of the transformational leadership and work motivation on teachers' performance. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 7(7), 19–29.

Ariyani, R. (2017). Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dalam Pengembangan Profesionalisme Guru. *Al-Afkar: Jurnal Keislaman & Peradaban*, 5(1).

Asbari, M., & Prasetya, A. B. (2021). Coaching untuk meningkatkan kinerja guru: Studi pada supervisi akademik. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 6(3), 490–506.

Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Asbari, M. (2024). Pengaruh coaching terhadap efikasi diri guru sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 9(1), 55–65.

Azwar, S. (2014). *Metode Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

Ekawati, R., & W. (2014). Inovasi pembelajaran sebagai upaya meningkatkan daya saing pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika*, 3(9), 739–747.

Ghozali, I. (2018). *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariate dengan Program IBM SPSS 25* (5th ed.). Semarang: Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.

Hapsari, D. I., & Fatimah, M. (2021). Pengembangan pembelajaran aktif, kreatif, efektif, dan menyenangkan (PAKEM) untuk meningkatkan kualitas belajar. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 12(2), 188–197.

Hariyanti, D., & Izzati, F. (2024). Kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah dan pengaruhnya terhadap inovasi pembelajaran guru. *Jurnal Kependidikan Dasar Indonesia*, 9(2), 112–123.

Harsoyo. (2022). *Kepemimpinan pendidikan*. Yogyakarta: Deepublish.

Hazizah, N., & Rigitanti, H. A. (2021). Penggunaan teknologi dalam pembelajaran oleh guru sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar*, 9(1), 1–7.

Insan, A. N. (2017). Kepemimpinan transformasional dalam pendidikan. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 24(1), 13–20.

Irawati, T., Winoto, H., & Andriono, T. (2024). Implementasi coaching model GROW ME dalam meningkatkan kreativitas guru. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 15(1), 35–46.

Kemendikbud. (2014). *Pedoman Pengelolaan Pendidikan*. Jakarta.

Kurniyati, T. (2018). Pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional terhadap perilaku inovatif guru. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 25(1), 15–25.

Kurniyati, T. (2021). Inovasi pembelajaran guru dalam menghadapi tantangan abad ke-21. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 15(1), 32–33.

Kuswidiarti. (2020). *Pengembangan kompetensi guru melalui coaching*. Jakarta: Prenada Media.

Ng, A. (2005). *Coaching for performance using the GROW ME model*. London: McGraw Hill Education.

Ningrum, R., & Abdullah, M. (2021). Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi perilaku inovatif guru. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 9(2), 211–220.

Nusantara, R. (2024). Inovasi pembelajaran abad ke-21 dan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. *Jurnal Pendidikan Inovatif*, 18(1), 12–20.

Pasloe, E. (1999). *The complete guide to coaching*. London: Kogan Page.

Rahayu, S., & Iskandar, J. (2023). Kepemimpinan transformasional kepala sekolah dalam mendorong inovasi pembelajaran. *Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 5(3), 278–286.

Ramdhani, M. (2021). *Metode penelitian*. Cipta Media Nusantara.

Sekianti, A., & Yulia, R. (2024). Pengaruh coaching dan loyalitas terhadap kinerja karyawan Black and Veatch International Company. *Jurnal Manajemen Diversitas*, 4(1), 42–53.

Sugiyono, S. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*. Jakarta: Alfabeta.

Sutirna. (2019). Pemanfaatan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan*, 21(2), 1–5.

Taoefik, M., Rahman, A., & Wibowo, S. (2017). Pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional terhadap perilaku inovatif guru. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 4(2), 74–80.

Wannessa, F., Sutrisno, A., & Putri, N. (2022). Efektivitas guru abad ke-21: Kompetensi, kreativitas, dan adaptasi perubahan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar*, 10(1), 1–10.

Yanti, S. H., Hawi, A., & Syarnubi, S. (2021). Pengaruh Penerapan Strategi Firing Line Terhadap Pemahaman Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Kelas Vii Di Smp N Sukaraya Kecamatan Karang Jaya Kabupaten Musi Rawas. *Jurnal PAI Raden Fatah*, 3(1), 55–65. <https://doi.org/10.19109/pairf.v3i1.5324>