

TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP STYLE AND STUDENTS' LEARNING MOTIVATION IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Teachers' leadership style is a critical determinant of instructional effectiveness, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts where student engagement is essential. This study aims to identify the dominant leadership styles applied by English teachers and to evaluate the level and characteristics of students' learning motivation in junior high schools on Bangka Island. Employing a quantitative survey design, data were collected from 20 English teachers and 20 seventh-grade students. The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) and a multi-dimensional motivation scale were utilized. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and mapping into the Ohio State leadership quadrants. Findings reveal that teachers predominantly exhibit a "High Initiating Structure and High Consideration" style (Quadrant III), indicating an effective balance between task-oriented and relationship-oriented behaviors. Students' motivation was generally high, driven by strong internal factors such as sense of agency (84%) and need for action (76%). However, external support from "significant others" showed significant variability. The study suggests that teacher leadership is not a fixed trait but a situational capability to synchronize instructional structure with students' psychological needs, thereby fostering an optimal EFL learning environment.

Keywords: Teacher leadership style, Learning motivation, English Foreign Language (EFL), Ohio State Model, Junior high school



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INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century's era of globalization, English proficiency has become a fundamental competency that determines individual competitiveness at the international level. As a global *lingua franca*, English serves not only as a means of cross-cultural communication but also as a primary

gateway to access to science, technology, and the digital economy. Globally, the effectiveness of English (English Foreign Language/EFL) teaching is a primary concern for educational policymakers to ensure graduates possess adequate global literacy. However, the success of foreign language acquisition in secondary schools is not simply a matter of curriculum or the availability of facilities; it is highly dependent on the interactional dynamics within the classroom. Within the learning ecosystem, the role of teachers transforms from mere transmitters of material to learning leaders who profoundly influence student psychology and performance.

Theoretically, classroom leadership is a manifestation of a teacher's ability to influence, motivate, and direct students toward achieving specific instructional goals. The Behavioral Leadership Theory from Ohio State University provides a comprehensive framework through two main dimensions: *initiating structure* and *consideration*. *Initiating structure* emphasizes the extent to which teachers establish clear performance standards, work structures, and tasks, while *consideration* focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships, concern for emotional needs, and student well-being. On the other hand, student learning motivation, as stated by (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021a), is the primary driver that determines persistence and success in learning a foreign language. This motivation is multidimensional, encompassing intrinsic aspects, intensity of effort, and the influence of the social environment.

The ideal hope in modern education is the creation of relationships that are no longer rigidly hierarchical, where teachers and students actively collaborate in an egalitarian learning process (Junaidah et al., 2025). Teachers are expected to be able to adapt their leadership style situationally to stimulate students' autonomous motivation. However, the reality on the ground often shows a contradictory phenomenon. Many English language learning processes in secondary schools are still trapped in monotonous instructional patterns, where teachers are too dominant in the task structure without allowing space for supportive interpersonal relationships. As a result, student motivation often fluctuates; students feel pressured by heavy assignments but lack emotional connection with the teacher, or conversely, the classroom atmosphere is too relaxed without a clear structure, preventing learning objectives from being achieved. In fact, supportive interpersonal relationships between teachers and students have been proven to be able to reduce affective barriers and increase students' courage in using the target language (Bećirović, 2023).

Problem identification in the educational context on Bangka Island shows that there are variations in teacher leadership styles that have not been systematically mapped. Several determinants that influence teacher leadership effectiveness include school culture, the developmental characteristics of adolescent students (grade VII), and the teacher's own professional background. Furthermore, students' motivation to learn English is not only influenced by internal factors such as *a sense of agency* (self-responsibility), but also depends heavily on external factors such as the role of *significant others* (parents, teachers, and friends) and the quality of daily classroom interactions. The lack of synchrony between teachers' instructional styles and the psychological needs of grade VII students, who are in a transitional period, can be a major obstacle to achieving English language competency.

Previous literature has extensively explored the relationship between principal managerial leadership and teacher performance, but research specifically examining "teacher leadership in the classroom" in an EFL context in an island region like Bangka is still limited. Most motivation studies tend to view it as an independent variable, without linking it to the two-dimensional leadership model (the Ohio State Model). This study takes a unique position by integrating behavioral leadership theory with students' English learning motivation profiles in detail. Using a quantitative survey approach, this study maps teacher leadership styles into four leadership quadrants to more precisely assess their effectiveness.

The novelty of this study lies in the use of the *Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ) instrument adapted specifically for the English instructional context at the junior high school level, combined with an analysis of 10 dimensions of learning motivation. This study goes beyond simple correlation by providing a visualization of leadership quadrants (G1 to G4) that show that teacher effectiveness is not determined by a single style, but rather by the balance between task orientation and relationship orientation. The scientific contribution of this study is to provide an empirical model of the "High Structure-High Consideration" leadership style as the main catalyst for high motivation in EFL students in the local Indonesian context.

Based on this background, this study aims to in-depth investigate the leadership styles implemented by English teachers at a junior high school on Bangka Island and analyze their impact on students' learning motivation profiles. Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. Identifying the dominant dimensions (initiation vs consideration structure) in the leadership styles of English teachers.
2. Mapping teacher leadership style positions into the Ohio State Model leadership quadrants.
3. Describes the level and characteristics of students' English learning motivation based on ten motivational aspects.
4. Analyzing how the fit between teacher leadership style and learning situation can optimize student motivation.

THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE RESEARCH

This research is based on behavioral leadership theory from Ohio State University, which proposes two main dimensions of leadership: initiating structure and consideration. Initiating structure refers to the extent to which a leader establishes tasks, work structures, and performance standards, while consideration relates to the leader's attention to interpersonal relationships, needs, and the well-being of group members. (Halpin & Winer, 1957)

In an educational context, teachers act as learning leaders, managing the classroom, directing learning activities, and building positive relationships with students. An effective teacher leadership style is believed to create a conducive learning climate and increase student motivation.

In addition to the behavioral leadership theory from Ohio State University, this research is also supported by the situational leadership theory proposed by (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) This theory emphasizes that no single leadership style is most effective in all situations. Leadership effectiveness is largely determined by the leader's ability to adapt their leadership behavior to the level of readiness or maturity of followers, which includes their ability and willingness to carry out tasks.

In the context of education, teachers as learning leaders are required to be able to apply flexible leadership styles, both task-oriented and relationship-oriented, according to the conditions and characteristics of students (Ghofar, 2017; Sahertian, 2010). Teachers can be more directive when students still need intensive guidance, and more supportive when students have demonstrated independence in learning. This adjustment of leadership style is believed to create a more effective learning atmosphere and increase student motivation.

In the perspective of contemporary educational psychology, students' intrinsic motivation and sense of agency play a significant role in maintaining long-term learning engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000); (Macintyre et al., 2020).

Learning motivation in this study refers to the theory of foreign language learning motivation which emphasizes the role of intrinsic and extrinsic factors in successful language learning. (Dörnyei, 2001) states that motivation is the primary driver determining a person's success in learning a foreign language. The motivational aspects examined in this study include intrinsic interest in activity, motivational intensity, mastery, need for action, sense of agency, learning environment, and the role of significant others.

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter explains in detail the methods used in the research on teacher leadership styles and student learning motivation in English learning in Junior High Schools (SMP) on Bangka Island. The description of the research methods is arranged systematically including the research design, theoretical basis, time and place of the research, research subjects, research procedures, data collection instruments and techniques, instrument validity and reliability tests, homogeneity tests, and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey method. This approach was chosen because it aimed to objectively measure and describe phenomena through numerical data obtained from respondents. The survey method was used to collect data on teacher leadership styles and student learning motivation through the distribution of questionnaires.

According to (Creswell, 2012), survey research allows researchers to obtain a general overview of the attitudes, perceptions, and characteristics of a population by collecting data from a specific sample. In this study, surveys were used to determine the tendencies of teacher leadership styles and the levels and aspects of student motivation in English learning.

This research was conducted in 2017. The research locations included several public junior high schools (SMP) spread across five districts on Bangka Island. The selection of research locations was based on considerations of regional equity and the diversity of teacher and student characteristics.

3.2 Research Target/Subject

The research subjects consisted of junior high school teachers and students directly involved in English language learning. Specifically, the research subjects included:

1. Twenty (20) junior high school English teachers.
2. Twenty (20) grade VII junior high school students.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. This technique was chosen because the researchers established specific criteria for respondents: English teachers and students currently studying English at the junior high school level.

3.3 Research Procedures

The research procedure is carried out through several systematic stages, namely:

1. The preparation stage includes literature studies, preparation of research instruments, and adaptation of the LBDQ questionnaire and learning motivation questionnaire.
2. Instrument trial stage, to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument.
3. The data collection stage, namely distributing questionnaires to teachers and students as research respondents.
4. The data processing stage includes coding, scoring, and data tabulation.
5. Stage of data analysis and drawing conclusions.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

The main instrument in this research was a questionnaire. According to (Arikunto, 2010), a research instrument is a tool used by researchers to collect data more easily and systematically. The instruments used in this research consisted of:

1. A teacher leadership style questionnaire, adapted from the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), measures two dimensions of leadership: initiating structure and consideration.
2. English language learning motivation questionnaire for students, which is based on foreign language learning motivation theory and covers several aspects of motivation.

The data collection technique was carried out by distributing questionnaires directly to respondents and providing a brief explanation of how to fill them out.

Instrument reliability testing was conducted to determine the level of consistency of the measuring instrument. Instrument reliability was analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha formula with the help of SPSS version 15. According to (Arikunto, 2010), an instrument is considered reliable if its reliability coefficient is in the moderate to high category.

The results of the reliability test show that the leadership style and learning motivation instruments have adequate reliability coefficients, so they are suitable for use in research.

3.5 Sample Homogeneity Test

A sample homogeneity test was conducted to ensure that the data came from a homogeneous population. The homogeneity test was performed using the Bartlett test. The test results showed that the calculated Chi-square value was smaller than the table Chi-square value at a significance level of 0.05, thus concluding that the data were homogeneous.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the tendencies of teacher leadership styles and the level of student learning motivation. The data analysis steps included:

1. Scoring of each respondent's answer is based on a five-level Likert scale.
2. Add up each respondent's scores for each dimension and aspect.
3. Calculating the average score of teacher leadership style and student learning motivation.
4. Grouping teacher leadership style scores into four leadership quadrants based on a combination of initiating structure and consideration.
5. Categorize the level of student learning motivation into five categories, namely very low, low, sufficient, high, and very high.

The results of the data analysis are then used to answer the research objectives and form the basis for discussion and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research result

The research results are presented in the form of statistical descriptions, tables, and graphic visualizations to provide a clear picture of the leadership styles of teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka, viewed from two main dimensions: initiation structure and consideration. The data obtained were first analyzed descriptively before being discussed based on a relevant theoretical framework.

1. Initiation Structure Dimensions

Based on the data processing results, teacher leadership behavior scores in the initiation structure dimension tended to be in the high category. The distribution of respondents' scores can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Scores for the Initiation Structure Dimension of Teacher Leadership Style

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
41–45	5	25
46–50	5	25
51–55	8	40
56–60	2	10
Amount	20	100

Source: Processed primary data, 2025.

Based on the table, the majority of teachers, 8 (40%), scored in the 51–55 range. This indicates that teacher leadership behavior in the initiation structure dimension is in the high category, reflecting the teacher's ability to direct, organize, and establish a clear work structure in the learning process.

The distribution of teacher leadership behavior scores on the initiation structure dimension is then visualized in graphic form in Figure 4.1.

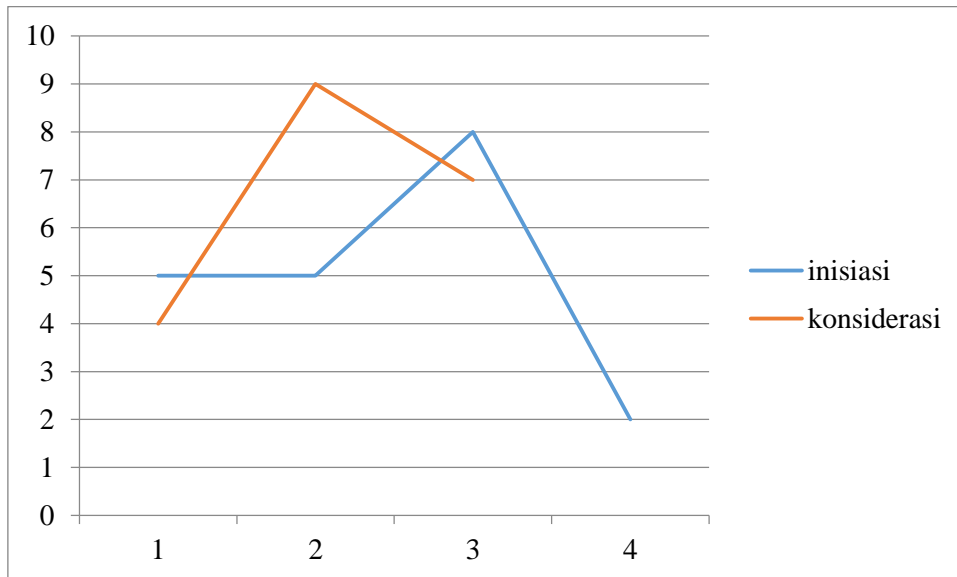


Figure 1. Distribution of Scores for the Initiation Structure Dimension of Leadership Style of Teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka

2. Dimension of Consideration

The results of the data analysis on the consideration dimension also show that most teachers scored relatively high. The distribution of consideration dimension scores is presented in Table 2.

K O N S I D E R A S I		36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60
	51-55					2
	46-50			7		
	41-45		9		6	
	36-40	4				
		36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60

initiation

Table 2. Distribution of Scores for the Consideration Dimension of Teacher Leadership Style

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
36-40	4	20%
41-45	9	45%
46-50	7	35%
Amount	20	100%

Source: Processed primary data, 2025.

The table above shows that 9 teachers (45%) scored between 41 and 45, indicating that the consideration dimension of teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka is considered high. This indicates teachers' attention to interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, and concern for students' needs.

3. Relationship between Initiation and Consideration Structure

Based on the scatterplot in Figure 2, it can be seen that teachers who score high on the initiation structure dimension also tend to score high on the consideration dimension. Thus, the distribution of these two leadership dimensions indicates a positive linear relationship.

These findings indicate that teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka generally apply a balanced two-dimensional leadership style, namely being able to organize and direct learning clearly, while at the same time establishing harmonious relationships with students.

4. Teacher Leadership Style Quadrants

Based on the average scores for initiation and consideration structures, teacher leadership styles were then mapped into Halpin's leadership style quadrants. This mapping is presented in Figure 2.

An explanation of each leadership style quadrant is presented in Table 3.

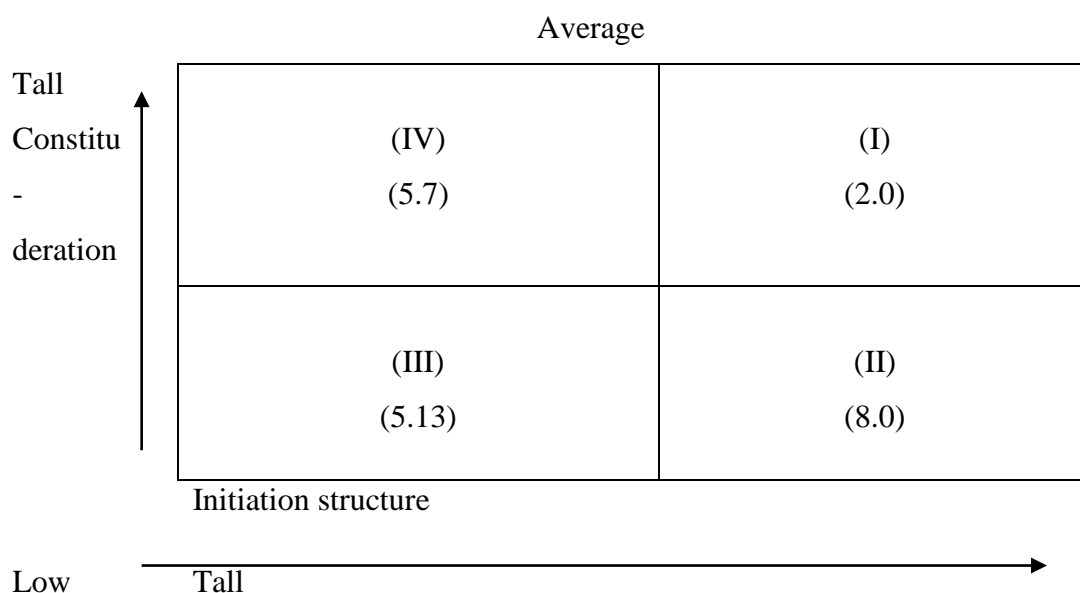


Figure 2. Quadrants of Teacher Leadership Styles Based on Initiation and Consideration Structure

Table 3. Explanation of Teacher Leadership Style Quadrants

Code	Leadership Style	Information
G1	Low initiation structure – low consideration	Teachers lack direction and pay less attention to interpersonal relationships
G2	High initiation structure – low consideration	Teachers are task-oriented but pay less attention to relationships.
G3	High initiation structure – high consideration	Teachers are effective, focused, and have good interpersonal relationships.

G4	Low initiation structure – high consideration	Teachers pay attention to relationships but are less focused on assignments.
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Source: Adaptation of Halpin's Leadership Style Quadrants.

Based on the mapping results, the majority of teachers fall into quadrant G3, which includes a high initiation structure and high consideration. This indicates that teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka tend to have an effective leadership style.

5. Analysis and Description of Student Motivation

Based on the results of processing the motivation data of students at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Bangka, the following description of the level of student learning motivation was obtained.

Based on the classification of motivation scores, the distribution of student motivation can be explained as follows:

- Score 32–57.99 (Very Low): 0 students
- Score 58–83.99 (Low): 0 students
- Score 84–108.99 (Sufficient): 2 students
- Score 109–140.99 (High): 20 students
- Score ≥ 141 (Very High): 2 students

The data shows that the majority of students are in the high motivation category (20 students), and 2 students are in the very high motivation category. No students fall into the low or very low motivation categories.

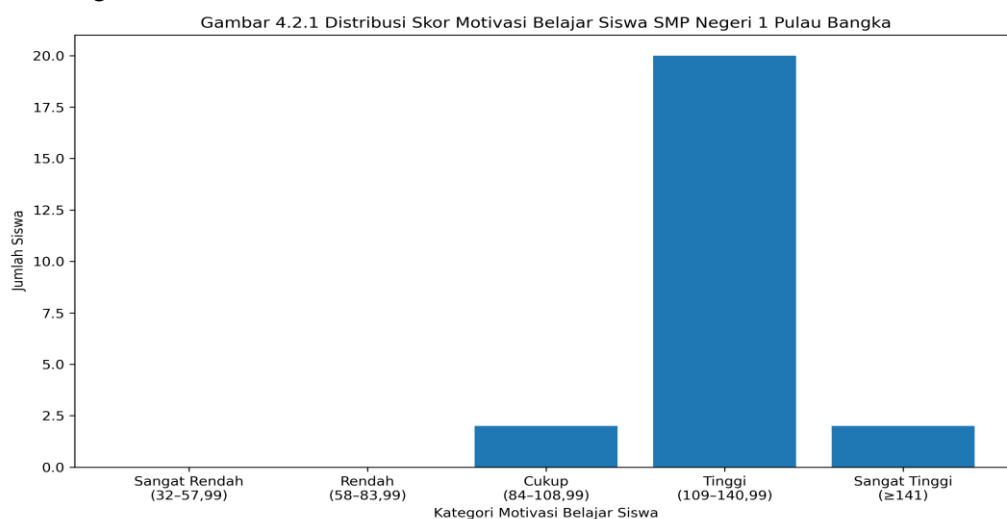


Figure 3.1 Distribution of Learning Motivation Scores of Students at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Bangka

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that student motivation scores tend to range from high to very high, although there is slight fluctuation between individuals. Overall, the average motivation of students at SMP Negeri 1 Pulau Bangka in English is classified as very high.

The high level of student learning motivation is supported by several factors, including the availability of adequate learning facilities and infrastructure, as well as the role of competent and professional teachers in their fields, so that they are able to create a conducive and interesting learning atmosphere for students.

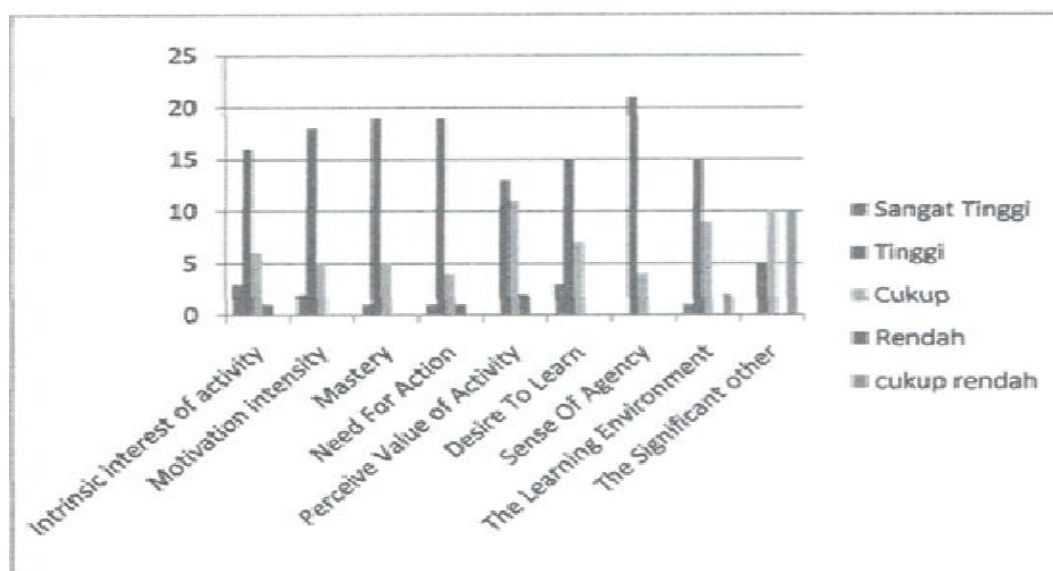


Figure 4. Motivation Bar Chart

Based on the analysis results of the Intrinsic Interest of Activity aspect, it was found that most students were in the high category (64%), followed by the sufficient category (24%) and very high (12%). Meanwhile, 12% of students were in the low category and 4% in the quite low category. These findings indicate that in general students have a good curiosity about learning English, which is reflected in the high interest and ability of students in facing the optimal level of learning challenges.

In terms of Motivation Intensity, the results showed that the majority of students were in the high category (72%), followed by the moderate (20%) and very high (8%). There were no students in the low or moderately low categories. This indicates that students exhibit a good level of perseverance and hard work in the English learning process.

Furthermore, in the Mastery aspect, the majority of students were in the high category (76%), followed by the sufficient category (16%), and 4% each were in the very high and low categories. There were no students in the quite low category. These results indicate that the majority of students are confident in their abilities to complete English learning tasks.

Need for Action aspect showed a similar distribution pattern to the mastery aspect. Seventy-six percent of students were in the high category, 16% in the moderate category, and 4% each in the very high and low categories. There were no students in the moderately low category. These findings indicate that students' need to excel in English learning is quite high.

In terms of Perceived Value of Activity, the study results show that students were evenly divided between the high (44%) and moderate (44%) categories, while 12% of students were in the low category. There were no students in the very high or moderately low categories. This indicates that most students have realized the benefits and goals of learning English, although a small number of students still have not fully felt the value of these learning activities.

The analysis of the Desire to Learn aspect shows that the majority of students are in the high category (60%), followed by the moderate (28%) and very high (12%) categories. There are no students in the low or moderately low categories. These findings indicate that students' willingness to learn English is quite good.

In terms of Sense of Agency, the majority of students were in the high category (84%), while 16% were in the moderate category. There were no students in the very high, low, or moderately low categories. This indicates that students have a good sense of responsibility towards themselves, especially in setting learning goals.

The Learning Environment aspect shows that the majority of students are in the high category (60%), followed by the sufficient category (36%), and 8% are in the quite low category. There are no students in the very high and low categories. These results indicate that the learning environment, including the role of media, learning resources, time, and learning situations, has generally been able to encourage student learning motivation, although there are still a small number of students who feel that the learning environment support is less than optimal.

In the aspect of The Significant Other , the results of the study showed that 40% of students were in the sufficient category , 40% in the fairly low category , and 20% in the high category . There were no students in the very high or low category. These findings indicate that the role of others, such as parents, teachers, and friends, in motivating students still varies and is not fully optimal for all students.

Finally, in the aspect of The Nature of Interaction of the Significant Other , the majority of students are in the high category (60%) , followed by the moderate (20%) and moderately low (20%) categories. There are no students in the very high and low categories. This indicates that forms of teaching interaction, such as mediated learning experiences, giving praise, and giving punishment, have generally had a positive influence on student learning motivation, although it still needs to be improved to be more evenly distributed.

4.2 Discussion

1. Integration of Behavioral Leadership Dimensions in EFL Learning

The findings of this study confirm that the leadership behavior of English teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka is dominated by high scores on two main dimensions: initiating structure *and* consideration . Theoretically, this phenomenon indicates that teachers not only act as rigid classroom managers, but also as responsive emotional facilitators. The positive linear relationship between these two dimensions indicates that teachers' ability to organize tasks in a structured manner is in line with their attention to students' interpersonal needs. This finding is in line with previous research that emphasizes the importance of emotional engagement and clear learning structures in increasing EFL students' engagement.(Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021b)

In the context of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), high initiation structures are crucial to provide instructional clarity (e.g., grammar and syntax), while high consideration is necessary to lower students' *affective filters* , so they are more willing to experiment with the new language without fear of mistakes.

2. Leadership Quadrant Analysis and Situationality

The placement of the majority of teachers in Quadrant III (G3: High Initiating Structure – High Consideration) reflects the most effective leadership style in the secondary education ecosystem. This finding reinforces Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory which states that leader effectiveness depends on the fit between leadership style and the level of readiness or maturity of followers. This is in line with the importance of using the most effective leadership behaviors at the right time and task-oriented behaviors.(Henkel et al., 2019; Huynh & Hua, 2020)

At the junior high school level, particularly in seventh grade, students are often in a transitional phase that requires firm but supportive guidance. A concrete task structure helps students better understand learning objectives, while a democratic and caring approach boosts their self-confidence. These results align with theory, which emphasizes that a task-oriented style is most effective in situations requiring strong control and role clarity.(Wibowo & Tjahjono, 2023)

3. Dynamics of Student Motivation: Internal Forces vs. External Support

Overall, students' learning motivation ranged from high to very high. Interestingly, a thorough analysis of ten motivational aspects revealed that internal factors, such as *a sense of agency* (84%) and *a need for action* (76%), were the primary drivers of their success. This indicates that students have developed a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility in setting English learning goals.

However, there are discrepancies in external factors. *The significant other aspect* (the role of parents, teachers, and friends) shows significant variation, with 40% of students in the moderately low category. This finding provides an important scientific contribution, indicating that despite students' high intrinsic motivation, support from the social environment is not optimally integrated. The effectiveness of teaching interactions, such as praise and mediated learning experiences, does have a positive influence, but their intensity still needs to be increased to ensure equitable distribution across the student population.

4. Pedagogical Implications and Scientific Contributions

This study confirms that no single leadership style is universal; teachers' flexibility in adapting their leadership behavior to classroom situations is a key factor in successful learning. The study's primary contribution lies in its empirical mapping, which demonstrates that a combination of instructional assertiveness (task orientation) and relational warmth (relationship orientation) effectively maintains optimal student motivation. These findings require teachers to be flexible, innovative, and prepared to process and adapt various pedagogical information into contextual leadership behaviors. Teachers are not only required to understand theoretical leadership principles but also to be able to develop and adapt this information in their daily learning practices (Mulyanti, 2024; Walef, 2025). For educational practitioners, the results of this study suggest the importance of leadership training for teachers that focuses not only on mastering technical teaching methods but also on developing emotional intelligence and classroom management skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the leadership style of English teachers at SMPN 1 Pulau Bangka shows strong characteristics in the dimensions of initiation structure and consideration. The main findings reveal a positive linear relationship between these two dimensions, indicating that teacher leadership behavior is complementary in creating an effective learning ecosystem. The majority of teachers are in the leadership quadrant with a high initiation structure, a style that is proven to be very relevant to the developmental needs of seventh grade students who still require concrete task directions and firm classroom control.

In line with these leadership dynamics, students' overall English learning motivation ranged from high to very high. The primary strength of this motivation stems from students' internal factors, particularly their *sense of agency*, learning persistence, and need for achievement. This study confirms that teacher leadership effectiveness is not determined by a single style, but rather by the teacher's flexibility in aligning their leadership style with students' level of readiness and classroom learning situations. This situational fit is a key determinant in maintaining students' active engagement in foreign language acquisition.

Scientific Suggestions and Contributions

Although the research results show a positive trend, there are several aspects that require further attention for the development of learning quality in the future:

1. Optimizing the Role of the Social Environment: Considering that *the significant other aspect* (the role of parents and friends) still shows varying and uneven results, schools need to design more integrative programs to involve the social ecosystem in supporting students' learning motivation.
2. Improving Instructional Interactions: Teachers are advised to further intensify the provision of positive feedback and mediated learning experiences to ensure that external motivation can be transformed into more stable intrinsic motivation.
3. Teacher Professional Development: Educational institutions should provide situational leadership training for teachers to hone their ability to accurately diagnose students' maturity levels so they can apply appropriate leadership styles.
4. Directions for Future Research: Further researchers are advised to expand the scope of variables by including learning achievement factors *and* more complex situational variables in order to obtain a more comprehensive model of teacher leadership at the secondary school level.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization , SW and CN; Methodology , SW; Data Analysis , CN and SW; Writing – Original Draft Preparation , CN; Writing – Review and Editing , SW; Visualization , CN; Supervision , SW All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no known conflicts of interest, whether financial, personal, or professional, that could inappropriately influence or bias the findings of this study. This research was conducted independently, and the authors have no competing interests that would compromise the academic integrity or objectivity of the reported results .

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