

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS THE BASIS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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Abstract

Transformational leadership plays a crucial role in improving the effectiveness of public services in Indonesia. This leadership style emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and empower subordinates to work more optimally in achieving organizational goals. In the public service sector, transformational leadership is crucial because it creates a more positive work culture, increases employee morale, and encourages innovation and collaboration in providing public services. Research shows that leaders who implement transformational leadership can build more harmonious working relationships, increase employee participation, and create a more open and collaborative organizational environment. Furthermore, transformational leadership also influences the quality of public services because leaders are able to provide role models, direction, and support that encourage employees to work professionally and responsibly. This condition has an impact on increasing organizational effectiveness and the quality of service perceived by the public. Thus, transformational leadership not only plays a role in strengthening organizational performance but also plays a crucial role in driving positive change in the public service environment. Through visionary, communicative leadership that is able to build work motivation, public service organizations can develop better and be able to provide quality, responsive services that are in line with community needs.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Public Service.

A. INTRODUCTION

The role of leadership in the delivery of public services in Indonesia has become increasingly important along with the growing public demand for services that are fast, accurate, transparent, and responsive. Various problems in public service delivery, such as slow service processes, suboptimal coordination among employees, low work discipline, and uneven service quality across regions, indicate that the effectiveness of public services still faces many challenges. These conditions are not only influenced by limited facilities and work systems, but are also closely related to the quality of leadership within public organizations. Leadership that is unable to build communication, motivation, and cooperation often results in low employee morale, weak organizational culture, and suboptimal services provided to the public.

In this context, the presence of qualified leaders becomes a decisive factor in creating effective public services that are oriented toward the needs of the community. Leaders do not only function as decision-makers, but also as directors, motivators, role models, and drivers of change within the organization. A good leader must be able to develop a clear vision, create a harmonious work atmosphere, and encourage employees to work with responsibility and professionalism. In addition, leaders also need to have strong communication skills in

order to build open and collaborative relationships with both employees and the community. Through humanistic and participatory leadership, public organizations will find it easier to create a positive work culture and improve the quality of public services.

However, efforts to improve leadership quality in the public sector still face various obstacles. Some leaders still tend to use one-way communication patterns, provide limited space for employee participation, and have not optimally developed innovation and human resources. On the other hand, leadership training that is aligned with the needs of public service delivery also remains limited, causing the managerial and leadership abilities of some public officials to be less developed. Structural barriers and bureaucratic organizational cultures often slow down the process of change. Therefore, strengthening leadership capacity through continuous education and training, developing a professional work culture, and creating a more open and adaptive organizational system are necessary.

One leadership approach considered relevant for improving the quality of public services is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and empower subordinates to achieve common goals. Transformational leaders do not only focus on achieving organizational targets, but also pay attention to employee potential development, build self-confidence, and create high work enthusiasm within the organization. Through this approach, employees do not work merely because of job demands, but are also encouraged to contribute their best efforts in serving the public.

In practice, transformational leadership is able to create an organizational culture that is more innovative, collaborative, and responsive to public needs. Transformational leaders tend to build more harmonious working relationships, increase employee participation in decision-making, and foster a sense of belonging to the organization. This condition is very important in public service because service quality is not only determined by rules and procedures, but also by the attitudes, commitment, and enthusiasm of public officials in serving the community. Previous studies have also shown that transformational leadership has a positive influence on improving organizational performance, employee job satisfaction, and public service effectiveness in various sectors.

Nevertheless, the implementation of transformational leadership in the context of public services in Indonesia still requires adjustment to existing social, cultural, and bureaucratic characteristics. Each public organization has different challenges and dynamics, so the application of transformational leadership needs to be adapted to the needs and environment of each organization. Therefore, further studies and deeper research are needed to understand how transformational leadership can be effectively implemented to improve the quality of public services in Indonesia. With visionary, communicative leadership that is able to empower employees, public services in Indonesia are expected to become more professional, innovative, and capable of providing better services to the community.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes the leader's ability to build inspiration, motivation, and the development of subordinates' potential so that they are able to work beyond personal interests for the sake of organizational goals. In the context of public service, this theory is important because leaders are not only required to carry out administrative functions, but also to provide direction, enthusiasm, and positive change within the work environment. It should be noted that transformational leaders serve as role models, vision providers, trust builders, and drivers of innovation that can strengthen service

quality. This theory is relevant to the study because public service requires leaders who are able to encourage employees to work professionally, responsively, and with an orientation toward community needs. Transformational leadership is generally explained through four main dimensions, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Indicators:

- Idealized influence/leader role modeling
- Inspirational motivation/motivation and vision
- Intellectual stimulation/encouragement of innovation
- Individualized consideration/attention to employees

New Public Service Theory

New Public Service theory views public administration as a process of serving citizens, not merely as a bureaucratic activity oriented toward control, procedures, or administrative efficiency. Interestingly, this theory positions the public not only as service recipients, but also as citizens who have the right to be served fairly, participatively, and democratically. In this study, New Public Service is relevant because the quality of public service cannot only be seen from the speed of the service process, but also from responsiveness, care, accountability, and respect for community needs. This theory strengthens the argument that transformational leadership needs to be directed toward building public services that are more humane, open, and oriented toward the public interest. Denhardt and Denhardt emphasize that public service must be based on the principle of “serving rather than steering,” meaning serving the public rather than merely directing or controlling them (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000).

Indicators:

- Orientation toward the public interest
- Service to citizens
- Community participation
- Service accountability
- Responsiveness to community needs

Organizational Culture Theory

Organizational culture theory explains that the behavior of organizational members does not stand alone, but is influenced by the values, norms, beliefs, habits, and work patterns formed within the organizational environment. In public service, organizational culture plays a fairly decisive role because service quality is closely related to employee discipline, cooperation, communication, integrity, and commitment. However, organizational culture does not emerge automatically; rather, it is formed through leadership processes, value habituation, and behavioral consistency within the organization. This theory is relevant to the study because transformational leadership not only influences individual employees, but can also shape a more positive, collaborative, and service-oriented work culture. Schein explains organizational culture through three main layers, namely *artifacts*, *espoused values*, and *basic underlying assumptions* (Schein, 2010). Indicators:

- Organizational values
- Work norms

- Communication patterns
- Employee cooperation
- Commitment to service

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative approach to obtain a deeper understanding of the role of transformational leadership in public service delivery in Indonesia. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to provide a more detailed description of the experiences, views, and perceptions of informants regarding leadership practices implemented in public service organizations. Through this approach, the researcher can understand how a leader builds communication, provides motivation, creates innovation, and influences employee performance in improving the quality of services delivered to the public.

The informants in this study consist of various parties involved in the delivery of public services, such as government officials, public service managers, employees, and members of the community as service recipients. The selection of diverse informants is intended to ensure that the data obtained are more comprehensive and able to describe the condition of public services more objectively. By involving various stakeholders, this study is expected to provide a broader understanding of the influence of transformational leadership on public service effectiveness, organizational culture, and the relationship between government and society in the public service process in Indonesia.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study include in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews are used to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and views of informants regarding transformational leadership in public service delivery (Andarista & Kriswibowo, 2023; Asmara et al., 2023). In addition, observation helps the researcher obtain direct insight into leadership practices in the field. Document analysis is also conducted to collect relevant secondary data, such as policies, reports, and official documents related to public services in Indonesia.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this study are analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This approach is carried out through the process of coding data, grouping data based on specific themes, and interpreting the research findings in depth (Pradana & Sutisna, 2023; Rohaeni, 2023). Through thematic analysis, the researcher can identify various patterns, meanings, and important findings that emerge from interviews, observations, and documentation obtained during the research process.

This approach enables the researcher to understand more comprehensively how transformational leadership is implemented in public service delivery in Indonesia and how it influences organizational performance, work culture, and the quality of services provided to the public. In addition, thematic analysis also helps the researcher describe the relationship between leadership behavior, employee motivation, organizational communication, and public service effectiveness in a more in-depth and systematic manner. Therefore, the results of the analysis do not merely describe facts in the field, but also provide a more meaningful understanding of the role of transformational leadership in encouraging the improvement of public service quality in Indonesia.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that transformational leadership plays a very important role as a foundation in the delivery of public services in Indonesia. Through qualitative analysis conducted with various informants, such as government officials, public service managers, employees, and members of the community, it can be seen that leadership quality greatly influences the effectiveness of services provided to the public. Leaders who are able to apply transformational leadership tend to be more successful in building a positive work atmosphere, increasing employee motivation, and creating services that are more responsive to community needs. This indicates that the success of public service delivery is not only determined by administrative rules and systems, but is also strongly influenced by how a leader is able to mobilize and empower human resources within the organization.

Transformational leadership is reflected in the leader's ability to provide a clear vision, build work enthusiasm, pay attention to employee needs, and serve as a role model in carrying out duties and responsibilities. Leaders with transformational characteristics are able to create more harmonious and collaborative working relationships, making employees feel valued, supported, and motivated to deliver their best performance. In the public service environment, this condition is very important because employees with high motivation and work enthusiasm will find it easier to provide friendly, fast, and quality services to the public. In addition, transformational leadership is also able to encourage innovation and creativity within the organization, enabling public services to continue developing and adapting to increasingly dynamic community needs.

This study also shows that transformational leadership has a strong influence in shaping a positive organizational culture. Leaders who uphold the values of integrity, accountability, discipline, cooperation, and continuous improvement are able to create a healthy and productive work environment. A positive organizational culture will shape more orderly work patterns, increase employees' sense of responsibility, and strengthen organizational commitment to providing the best services to the community. In practice, a good organizational culture can also strengthen relationships among employees, reduce internal conflict, and improve coordination in the implementation of public service duties. Therefore, transformational leadership does not only affect individual employees, but also influences the work system and organizational culture as a whole.

The findings of this study are in line with the results of research conducted by Maruapey et al. (2023) and Rangkuti and Sihombing (2023), which state that transformational leadership has a positive relationship with improved organizational performance and employee job satisfaction. Leaders who are able to inspire and empower their subordinates tend to create a more dynamic, innovative, and productive work environment. In addition, the results of this study are also consistent with the research of Selatang et al. (2023), which explains that transformational leadership plays an important role in building an organizational culture that is collaborative, innovative, and supportive of individual growth within the organization. This is further strengthened by Wangsajaya et al. (2023), who show that a positive organizational culture has a close relationship with improved organizational performance.

In the context of public services in Indonesia, transformational leadership is becoming increasingly important because various challenges still exist, such as complex bureaucracy, low service quality in several sectors, and growing public demands for services that are fast, transparent, and responsive. Therefore, the presence of transformational leaders is greatly needed to encourage positive change and improve the quality of public services on an ongoing basis. However, the implementation of transformational leadership in Indonesia's public sector still faces several obstacles, such as rigid bureaucratic culture, less open

communication patterns, and low employee participation in organizational decision-making. In addition, the ability of some leaders to build motivation, communication, and innovation still needs to be improved.

These conditions indicate that the implementation of transformational leadership cannot be carried out instantly, but requires a continuous strengthening process through leadership training, organizational culture development, and support for more flexible and participatory work systems. This is in line with the views of Sofyan and Rianty (2023) as well as Sucipto and Gunawan (2023), who state that bureaucratic challenges and the need for rapid responses to public problems require adaptive and innovative leadership that is able to build collaboration within public service organizations. Therefore, strengthening transformational leadership needs to become an important part of bureaucratic reform and the improvement of public service quality in Indonesia.

In its implementation, transformational leadership can be applied by strengthening communication between leaders and employees, building a collaborative work culture, and providing broader space for participation in organizational decision-making. Leaders need to be good listeners, provide clear direction, and create working relationships based on mutual trust and respect. In addition, public organizations also need to provide opportunities for employees to develop their potential through training, coaching, and competency development so that they are able to adapt to changes and the growing demands of public service delivery.

This study also implies that the government and public sector organizations need to pay greater attention to the development of leadership quality through education, training, and coaching oriented toward communication skills, innovation, collaboration, and human resource development. With visionary, humanistic leaders who are able to empower employees, public services in Indonesia are expected to become more professional, effective, and responsive to community needs.

Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for future research to examine more deeply the implementation of transformational leadership in various public service sectors in Indonesia. Future research may focus on the effectiveness of transformational leadership in addressing bureaucratic challenges, increasing public satisfaction, and developing public service innovation in the digital era. Longitudinal studies and comparative studies among organizations are also important to identify the factors that influence the successful implementation of transformational leadership in the long term. Thus, the results of this study are expected to make a meaningful contribution to the development of both theory and practice of transformational leadership in improving the quality of public services in Indonesia sustainably

E. CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership plays a crucial role as a foundation for the delivery of public services in Indonesia. It was found that leaders who practice transformational leadership are able to inspire, motivate, and guide their subordinates to achieve common goals, while also shaping a positive organizational culture. The positive impact of transformational leadership is reflected not only in organizational performance, but also in public satisfaction as service recipients. Therefore, it is important for the government and public sector organizations in Indonesia to improve their understanding and practice of transformational leadership as a strategy to enhance the quality of public services. Concrete steps may include leadership training and development, performance measurement that takes leadership aspects into account, and the enforcement of integrity and accountability values within organizational culture. Thus, transformational leadership can become a key pillar in improving the

effectiveness and responsiveness of public service delivery and in promoting a more efficient and inclusive public administration system in Indonesia.

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