

## TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN BUILDING THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ERA OF DISRUPTIONS; A CONCEPTUAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

Ferry Agung Nugraha <sup>1\*</sup>, Iksan Muliawan <sup>1</sup>, Deni Effendi <sup>1</sup>, Abdillah <sup>1</sup>, Yeti Rohayati <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Langlangbuana Bandung

---

### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received May 30, 2026

Revised June 6, 2026

Accepted June 9, 2026

---

#### Keywords:

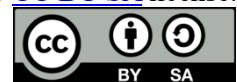
*Transformational Leadership, Public Organization, Bureaucratic Reform, Disruption, Leadership Philosophy*

---

### ABSTRACT

Transformational leadership is a leadership model that focuses on organizational change through inspiration, strategic vision, and individual empowerment. In public organizations, this model is important to face the challenges of the era of disruption characterized by rapid social, political, and technological change. This study uses a literature study method to analyze the role of transformational leadership in improving the performance of public organizations. The results of the study indicate that transformational leadership is able to increase organizational effectiveness through the development of an innovative work culture, increasing employee motivation, and strengthening commitment to organizational goals and public services. Philosophically, transformational leadership is seen as a process of organizational humanization, in which leaders act as agents of change who build awareness, meaning, and moral orientation. Therefore, this leadership model is relevant to support bureaucratic reform that is more responsive, adaptive, and oriented towards the interests of society. The success of public organizations in the era of disruption does not only depend on the system and structure, but also on the quality of leadership that is able to drive meaningful change.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](#) license.



---

### Corresponding Author:

Feri Agung Nugraha | Universitas Langlangbuana Bandung

Email: feriagungnugraha@gmail.com

---

## INTRODUCTION

The leadership crisis in public organizations today can no longer be understood merely as a structural or administrative issue, but has developed into a crisis that touches on the dimensions of values, awareness, and moral orientation of the bureaucracy. The phenomenon of bureaucracy that tends to be rigid, hierarchical, and minimal innovation reflects the stagnation in leadership patterns that are still oriented towards control, procedural compliance, and pseudo-stability. In this context, public organizations are often trapped in mechanistic routines that ignore the dynamics of increasingly complex and rapid social change.

The development of the disruptive era marked by technological advances, globalization, and increasing public expectations for the quality of public services demands the presence of a leadership model that is not only adaptive, but also transformative. The leadership needed is

no longer merely capable of maintaining the existing system ( status quo), but is able to initiate change , build a vision of the future , and move all elements of the organization to transform collectively . In other words, the main challenge for public organizations today is not only how to " manage ", but how to " change " .

Within this framework , the concept of transformational leadership introduced by James MacGregor Burns and further developed by Bernard M. Bass has become a relevant and strategic paradigm . Burns emphasized that transformational leadership is a process of interaction between leaders and followers that mutually enhances the level of motivation and morality . Meanwhile , Bass developed the concept by adding operational dimensions that emphasize the leader's ability to inspire , stimulate intellectually , and provide individual attention to his followers .

Transformational leadership is not only oriented towards achieving organizational goals in the narrow sense , but also towards the process of transforming values , attitudes , and individual awareness within the organization . Transformational leaders act as agents of change who are able to build collective commitment , foster trust , and create a work environment conducive to innovation and continuous learning . Thus , leadership is no longer understood as a top - down power relationship , but rather as a dialogical process involving the active participation of all members of the organization .

Philosophically , transformational leadership can be understood as an effort to shift the leadership paradigm from an instrumental orientation to an existential orientation . Leadership is no longer viewed merely as a tool to achieve organizational goals , but as a process of meaning -making in organizational life . From this perspective , leaders are not only tasked with directing actions but also with shaping the way members think and interpret reality .

Furthermore , transformational leadership contains a strong ethical dimension , where leaders are expected to integrate moral values into every decision and action . This is crucial in the context of public organizations that have direct responsibility for the interests of the wider community . Leadership that focuses solely on efficiency without considering the values of justice and humanity has the potential to produce policies that are not in the public interest .

Thus , it can be understood that transformational leadership is not just a managerial concept , but rather a holistic approach that integrates structural , cultural , and philosophical aspects in an organization . Therefore , this research is important to examine in more depth how transformational leadership can play a role in improving the performance of public organizations , while transforming collective awareness towards more adaptive , innovative , and human - value - oriented governance .

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach , which aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of transformational leadership in the context of public organizations through exploring the meanings , concepts , and values contained therein . The qualitative approach was chosen because the characteristics of the object of study are abstract , dynamic , and cannot be reduced to quantitative numbers , but rather require a comprehensive interpretation of social and conceptual realities .

The method used in this research is a literature study (library research), which is a research method that relies on the collection and analysis of secondary data sourced from various scientific references. Data were obtained through a study of leadership theory books, national and international scientific journal articles, and public policy documents relevant to the theme of transformational leadership and public organizations. The selection of sources was carried out selectively by considering the credibility, relevance, and actuality of the references, especially those related to the development of leadership concepts in the era of disruption.

Data collection techniques are carried out by means of identification, classification, and comparison of literature, which is then analyzed systematically to find patterns, similarities, and differences in views from various scientific perspectives. Furthermore, the data analysis technique uses a content analysis approach, **namely** by interpreting and constructing meaning from various sources that have been collected, so as to produce a complete and in-depth conceptual synthesis.

This approach allows the author to comprehensively examine the conceptual, theoretical, and philosophical dimensions of transformational leadership. Not only stopping at a theoretical description, this study also seeks to integrate various perspectives to understand how transformational leadership plays a role in shaping collective consciousness, organizational culture, and the direction of change in public organizations.

Philosophically, the use of the literature study method in this research is not only intended as a process of collecting information, but also as a reflective effort to trace the development of human thought about leadership. In this case, research is positioned not merely as an academic activity, but as a dialectical process between theory and reality, between concepts and practices, and between scientific rationality and human values.

Thus, the methodology used in this study is expected to be able to produce an analysis that is not only descriptive, but also interpretative and reflective, thus providing a scientific contribution to the development of transformational leadership studies, especially in the context of public organizations in the era of disruption.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is one of the modern leadership paradigms that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and transform followers to transcend personal interests in order to achieve higher collective goals. This concept is rooted in the thinking of James MacGregor Burns who views leadership as a moral process involving dynamic interactions between leaders and followers, which together increase the level of motivation and morality of both. Furthermore, this concept was developed more operationally by Bernard M. Bass, who emphasized the behavioral aspects of leaders in influencing and moving organizations towards change.

Conceptually, transformational leadership focuses not only on achieving organizational targets but also on the process of internalizing values, changing mindsets, and developing individual potential within the organization. Transformational leaders act as catalysts for change, not simply organizing but also igniting the collective energy of the organization through inspiring vision and meaningful action.

In this framework , there are four main dimensions that characterize transformational leadership , namely :

1. Idealized Influence (Pengaruh Ideal)

This dimension positions leaders as exemplary figures who possess high integrity , moral commitment , and consistency between values and actions . Leaders are respected not only for their positions , but also for their personal qualities that reflect trust and credibility . In the context of public organizations , this dimension is important because it builds moral legitimacy , which forms the basis of public trust in the institution .

2. Inspirational Motivation (Motivasi Inspiratif)

Transformational leaders are able to articulate a clear , compelling , and challenging vision , thereby inspiring the enthusiasm and optimism of their followers . This vision not only serves as the direction of the organization but also as a source of meaning that motivates individuals to contribute maximally . In this sense , leadership functions as a symbolic energy that mobilizes the collective .

3. Intellectual Stimulation (Stimulasi Intelektual)

This dimension emphasizes a leader's ability to foster creativity , innovation , and the courage to think critically . Leaders do not limit followers' thinking , but instead open up space for dialogue, reflection , and the exploration of new ideas . In public organizations , this is key to addressing complex problems that cannot be solved with conventional approaches .

4. Individualized Consideration (Perhatian Individual)

Transformational leaders treat each individual as a unique entity with different needs , potential , and aspirations . This approach reflects a concern for the personal development of organizational members , both professionally and psychologically . Thus , the relationship between leader and follower is not mechanistic , but rather humanistic and dialogical .

These four dimensions are integrated and form a leadership framework that is not only oriented towards results , but also towards the process of developing people within the organization . In other words, transformational leadership not only changes the organization but also transforms the individuals within it .

### **Philosophical Perspectives on Leadership**

From a philosophical perspective , transformational leadership can be understood as a process of “ becoming , ” not simply the act of “ *leading* ” in the technical sense . The concept of *becoming* emphasizes that leadership is a dynamic , ever - evolving process , in which leaders and followers jointly experience a transformation of consciousness and meaning .

Transformational leaders do not create external obedience , but rather build internal awareness that encourages individuals to act authentically and responsibly . In this context , leadership is no longer a relationship of domination , but a dialogical relationship that allows for shared growth .

Ontologically , transformational leadership views humans as subjects with freedom and the potential to develop . Therefore , leadership must not reduce humans to mere organizational instruments , but must facilitate the process of self -actualization . From this perspective , organizations are not only workspaces , but also spaces for the formation of meaning and identity .

Furthermore , in the epistemological dimension , transformational leadership rejects a single approach to understanding reality . Leaders are required to open up space for diverse perspectives , encourage critical dialogue , and integrate diverse knowledge into decision - making . This reflects that leadership is not simply about certainty , but also the ability to reflectively manage uncertainty .

Meanwhile , in the axiological dimension , transformational leadership is rooted in ethical and humanitarian values . Every leadership action must consider its impact on people and society at large . Thus , the success of leadership is not only measured from efficiency and effectiveness , but also from the extent to which it is able to present justice , well - being , and meaning for life together . In this framework , it can be affirmed that :

“ True leadership is not the ability to control others, but rather the ability to generate meaning in every action taken together .”

Thus , transformational leadership is not only a managerial concept , but also a philosophical practice that integrates rational , moral , and existential dimensions in organizational life . It presents leadership as a process of liberation ( emancipation ) that enables humans to transcend their limitations and contribute more meaningfully to collective life .

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Relevance in Public Organizations**

Transformational leadership has significant relevance in the context of public organizations , particularly amidst demands for bureaucratic reform and increasingly complex dynamics of change . Public organizations currently face pressure to improve service quality , performance efficiency , and responsiveness to the evolving needs of society . In such situations , conventional and bureaucratic leadership models are no longer adequate to address the challenges of the times .

Transformational leadership presents an approach capable of driving substantial bureaucratic reform , not only at the structural level , but also in the cultural and mental dimensions of the apparatus . Reform is no longer understood as merely procedural changes , but rather as changes in ways of thinking , working , and interpreting public service . Transformational leaders act as drivers of change , capable of building a shared vision and instilling the values of integrity , professionalism , and service orientation .

Furthermore , transformational leadership also encourages innovation in public services . In an era of disruption , the public demands fast , transparent , and technology - based services . Transformational leaders will open up space for creativity , encourage policy experimentation , and create a work environment that supports continuous renewal . Thus , public organizations become not only policy implementers but also laboratories for social innovation .

Furthermore , transformational leadership contributes to increased adaptation to change . Current changes are nonlinear and often unpredictable , requiring flexible and visionary leadership . Transformational leaders are able to predict the direction of change , anticipate challenges , and steer the organization to remain relevant in various situations .

The implication is that transformationally led public organizations tend to be more responsive to public needs . This responsiveness is reflected not only in the speed of service but also in the ability to understand public aspirations and integrate them into policies and work programs .

### **Legal and Policy Perspectives**

From a legal and public policy perspective , transformational leadership is closely linked to the principles of good governance, which emphasize transparent , accountable , and participatory governance . Transformational leadership functions not only as a regulatory implementer but also as an actor who embodies legal values in government practice .

The principle of transparency is realized through open information and honest communication between the government and the public . Transformational leaders encourage an open organizational culture , where information is not monopolized by a few parties , but becomes part of a public control mechanism .

Furthermore , the principle of accountability is reflected in the leader's ability to be morally and administratively responsible for every policy and action . In this regard , transformational leadership emphasizes not only compliance with regulations but also ethical awareness in carrying out public responsibilities .

The principle of participation is a crucial element in creating inclusive and equitable policies . Transformational leaders create dialogue with the community , engage various stakeholders , and value diverse perspectives in the decision - making process .

Thus , transformational leadership not only strengthens the implementation of law but also internalizes the value of justice in every policy practice . Law is no longer understood as a rigid instrument of power , but rather as a living and evolving value system within social interactions.

### **Philosophical Analysis of Transformational Leadership**

Philosophically , transformational leadership can be understood as a multidimensional transformation process , which includes changes in power structures , communication patterns , and the way humans interpret organizational reality .

The transformation from power to consciousness represents a paradigm shift from dominant leadership to emancipatory leadership . In this paradigm , leaders are no longer the center of control , but rather facilitators who awaken collective consciousness .

The change from instruction to inspiration confirms that leadership is no longer effective if it only relies on command and control . Transformational leaders are able to move individuals through vision , values , and meaning , so that the actions taken are not due to compulsion , but due to awareness and internal commitment .

Meanwhile , the transformation from structure to meaning demonstrates that organizations are not only understood as formal systems , but also as existential spaces where individuals seek meaning and purpose in their work . Transformational leaders are able to present work as a calling , not just an administrative obligation .

From this perspective , true leaders are those who are able to transform the organization's collective mindset and consciousness . Leadership is no longer measured by the extent of power held , but by the depth of influence it exerts in shaping shared awareness and values .

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership has several advantages that make it relevant in the context of modern organizations , particularly public organizations . First , this leadership can increase intrinsic work motivation . Individuals work not only because of formal demands , but also because of an emotional attachment and meaning to the work they do .

Second , transformational leadership can build strong organizational loyalty . The relationship between leaders and followers is based on trust , respect , and shared commitment , thus creating high social cohesion within the organization . Third , this leadership is adaptive to change because it encourages innovation , creativity , and continuous learning . This is a major advantage in facing an era of disruption full of uncertainty .

However , transformational leadership also has several limitations that require critical consideration . First , there is a tendency to become dependent on the leader figure . The success of a transformation is often highly determined by the quality of the individual leader , so when leadership changes occur , the sustainability of the change becomes vulnerable .

Second , not all organizations are ready for change , especially those with strong bureaucratic cultures and resistance to innovation . Under these conditions , a transformational approach can encounter both structural and cultural barriers .

Third , there is the potential for excessive dominance of the leader figure (leader-centric) . If not balanced with healthy control and participation mechanisms , transformational leadership can shift into a cult of personality , which is contrary to the principles of organizational democracy . Therefore , the implementation of transformational leadership needs to be carried out contextually and in a balanced manner , while still paying attention to institutional aspects , organizational culture , and the principles of good governance .

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the conceptual study and theoretical analysis that have been carried out , it can be concluded that transformational leadership is a leadership model that has high relevance and effectiveness in building adaptive , innovative , and service - oriented public organizations . This leadership not only functions as a managerial instrument in achieving organizational goals , but also as a mechanism for transforming values , work culture , and collective awareness in a bureaucratic environment .

In the context of public organizations , transformational leadership has proven capable of driving more substantive bureaucratic reform , namely changes that touch not only structural aspects , but also the cultural dimensions and mentality of the apparatus . Through the ability of leaders to inspire , motivate , and empower individuals , public organizations can move towards a more responsive , participatory , and innovative work pattern . This is very important amid the dynamics of the era of disruption that demands the speed of adaptation and the ability to respond to community needs appropriately and sustainably .

Furthermore, from a legal and policy perspective, transformational leadership has a significant contribution in strengthening the implementation of good governance principles, such as transparency, accountability, and participation. Leaders not only act as implementers of regulations, but also as actors who bring to life the values of justice and ethics in government practices. Thus, transformational leadership acts as a bridge between legal norms and social reality, so that public policy does not lose its human dimension.

Philosophically, transformational leadership can be defined as a process of organizational humanization, an effort to restore humans as the primary subject in every process of change. Leadership is no longer viewed as a dominant power relationship, but rather as a process of raising awareness, creating meaning, and strengthening existential values in organizational life. Within this framework, true leaders are those who are able to transform the way people think, act, and interpret their work as part of their contribution to shared life.

However, implementing transformational leadership also requires organizational readiness, both in terms of culture, structure, and human resources. Dependence on a leader figure and the potential for individual dominance are challenges that need to be anticipated by strengthening institutional systems and healthy control mechanisms. Therefore, the success of transformational leadership is determined not only by the quality of the individual leader, but also by the organization's collective readiness to accept and implement change.

Thus, it can be affirmed that transformational leadership is a strategic and relevant approach to be implemented in public organizations in the modern era. Its success is measured not only by performance achievements, but also by its ability to build collective awareness, strengthen human values, and create meaningful and sustainable change.

## REFERENCES

- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*. New York: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in Organizations* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2017). *Organizational Behavior* (17th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Denhardt, J. V., & Denhardt, R. B. (2015). *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Osborne, S. P. (2010). *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance*. Routledge.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.