

The Role of Transformational Leadership in Improving Employee Performance at the NTB Provincial Cultural Park

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Abstract

This study analyzes how transformational leadership improves employee performance at the Cultural Park of West Nusa Tenggara Province. As a regional cultural preservation institution, the Cultural Park faces complex operational demands requiring adaptive human resource management. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, this research explores employee experiences with transformational leadership implementation through in-depth interviews with 10 employees of varying tenure, participatory observation, and documentation analysis. Thematic analysis was applied focusing on Bass and Riggio's four dimensions of transformational leadership. Findings reveal that all four dimensions are effectively implemented. Leaders demonstrate idealized influence through caring behavior that serves as a role model. Inspirational motivation manifests in consistent vision communication and efforts to secure work facilities. Intellectual stimulation appears through openness to innovative ideas, particularly regarding digital adaptation. Individualized consideration is realized via personal attention and recognition aligned with employee characteristics. These practices significantly enhance performance by creating a conducive work environment and strengthening motivation. The study enriches transformational leadership theory in public sector cultural organizations and offers practical guidance for developing leadership quality in similar institutions, emphasizing the importance of supporting systems including adequate staffing, welfare improvement, and continuous capacity development for sustainable organizational performance.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Employee Performance, Cultural Organization, Public Sector, NTB Cultural Park

INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership has become a critical approach in addressing employee performance challenges within public organizations. One of its defining characteristics is the ability to inspire and motivate employees to contribute maximally and creatively toward organizational goals. Bass & Riggio (2006) explain that transformational leadership consists of four main components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which together drive increased dedication and innovation among employees. Transformational leadership is conceptualized as a paradigm emphasizing long-term vision, fostering intrinsic motivation, and promoting individual empowerment to facilitate collective goal achievement. Transformational leaders not only guide the realization of administrative objectives but also function as catalysts for change, promoting innovation, creativity, and organizational capacity enhancement (Abdul Sahid et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant in the context of the NTB Cultural Park, which manages not only administrative aspects but also develops local arts and culture requiring high creativity and commitment.

The NTB Cultural Park, as a regional cultural preservation institution, faces different dynamics compared to other public organizations. The complexity of its tasks includes organizing art performances, training artists, and maintaining cultural heritage, demanding human resource management that is adaptive and responsive to change. This condition creates a need for leadership capable of combining strategic direction with deep personal coaching, so employees feel valued and motivated to perform better in a challenging work environment (Gang Wang et al., 2011).

Data from several studies show that implementing transformational leadership in the cultural sector has proven effective in creating a positive work climate and increasing employee emotional engagement (Xu & Zhao, 2022). In NTB itself, although there have not been many studies focused on the Cultural Park, research related to education and other cultural institutions shows that this leadership style plays an important role in driving employee motivation and performance, especially in facing organizational pressures and creative development demands (Putra & Dewi, 2019).

Besides internal challenges such as suboptimal communication and high employee workload, the NTB Cultural Park must also respond to dynamic cultural development demands and resource competition at the regional level. This opens opportunities for transformational leadership to encourage innovation and cross-unit collaboration so that cultural preservation and development goals can be achieved sustainably.

However, there has been no empirical research specifically examining the implementation of transformational leadership and its impact on employee performance at the NTB Cultural Park. This study offers novelty by focusing on a public sector cultural organization, where non-commercial objectives, diverse artistic personnel, and a distinct organizational culture differentiate it from conventional public institutions. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for the management of the Cultural Park in preserving and developing regional culture through improved leadership quality and employee performance.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological study to deeply understand employee experiences related to the implementation of transformational leadership and its impact on performance at the NTB Cultural Park. This method was chosen because it can explore unique social aspects and work contexts in arts and cultural organizations that combine creativity and bureaucracy (Suryadi et al., 2024).

The research took place over four months, from September to December 2025 at the NTB Cultural Park, located on Jl. Airlangga, Kekalik Jaya, Sekarbelia District, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara. This timeframe allowed researchers to observe and document the institution's routine activities and conduct intensive interviews with employees under actual working conditions.

Informant selection was conducted purposively. Informants consisted of leaders and employees from various work units considered to have significant experience related to leadership and performance issues. This purposive sampling technique is effective for obtaining rich and relevant data to the research problem (Shintyawati et al., 2023).

Data collection relied on semi-structured interviews to explore participants' views and experiences, participatory observation to capture work interaction dynamics, and documentation studies involving analysis of official documents and activity reports. This combination of techniques ensures comprehensive and diverse data obtained (Klingebiel et al., 2024).

Data analysis was conducted thematically, starting with organizing and reducing data, followed by searching for patterns and main themes related to transformational leadership and employee performance. Research validity was enhanced through data triangulation and rechecking findings with informants. The entire process was carried out with attention to research ethics, including obtaining consent and maintaining participant identity confidentiality.

RESULT and DISCUSSIONS

Result

This research involved in-depth interviews with ten employees of the NTB Cultural Park with tenure ranging from four to eighteen years. The principle of data adequacy, also known as "data saturation," occurs when additional interviews do not produce new themes or information related to the research topic. Thus, the number of informants was determined. In qualitative research, meaning repetition and result stability among informants indicate data saturation; therefore, the number of informants is not determined by statistical sample size but by data depth (Hennink et al., 2017). In this research, data saturation began to appear in the 9th and 10th interviews, so the number of 10 informants was considered adequate.

Tabel 1. Research Findings Summary Based on Transformational Leadership Dimensions

Transformational Leadership Dimension	Findings Summary
Idealized Influence	Leaders serve as role models, act protectively, are not arrogant, and cultivate employee respect and trust.
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders communicate work vision, provide motivation, and supply facilities and supportive work environment.
Intellectual Stimulation	Leaders encourage creativity, openness to ideas, work innovation, and digital media utilization.
Individualized Consideration	Leaders provide personal attention, appreciation, and support according to employee needs and competencies.
Employee Performance	Employee performance is assessed as good, supported by work environment and facilities, but still constrained by workload and limited human resources.

(Source: NTB Cultural Park Employee Interview Responses)

The findings summary in Table 1 above is further explained in detail for each transformational leadership dimension below:

Idealized Influence

Interview results show that the leader of the NTB Cultural Park is assessed as capable of providing a good example to employees. The majority of informants stated that the leader has a protective attitude, is not arrogant, and can embrace all employee levels from security to civil servants. The leader's style is described as relaxed yet responsible, not pressuring but still ensuring work completion. The leader's closeness to employees is evident from the habit of listening to employee complaints and providing quick responses to emerging problems. All informants agreed that the leader has attitudes and behaviors that make employees feel respect and trust.

Inspirational Motivation

Findings show that the leader consistently communicates long-term vision and work direction to employees, both through morning assembly and work meetings. The leader actively fights for budget allocation to procure work facilities such as air conditioning, drones, laptops, and cameras to improve facility and infrastructure quality. In motivating employees, the leader provides guidance with the core message that employees should work as well as possible without thinking too much about financial rewards first. The leader also emphasizes the importance of cooperation and mutual support among employees. Additionally, the leader provides comfort-supporting facilities such as rest rooms for employees. Overall, employees assess that the work environment at the Cultural Park is quite positive and inspirational, although there are still several things that need improvement.

Intellectual Stimulation

Interview results indicate that the leader provides wide space for employees to convey new ideas and proposals. Ideas deemed positive and beneficial for the organization are followed up concretely. The leader encourages employees to think creatively and innovatively, especially in facing digitalization era developments. Examples of intellectual stimulation implementation include encouragement to document activities and publish through social media so the public becomes more familiar with the Cultural Park. The leader also provides opportunities for employees to develop abilities, including job promotions for competent staff. Informants assess that the leader is very open to input and provides freedom for employees to innovate.

Individualized Consideration

Findings show that the leader provides personal attention to each employee according to their individual characteristics and abilities. The leader understands employee needs and provides direction and tasks according to individual competencies. Forms of individual attention are also visible from providing appreciation in the form of praise, encouragement, and opportunities to participate in out-of-town activities such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Kalimantan in rotation for fairness. The leader is also responsive to employee complaints and strives to provide facilities supporting work comfort. Informants stated that the leader is very concerned about employee welfare and provides necessary support for work smoothness.

Employee Performance at NTB Cultural Park

In general, informants assess that employee performance at the Cultural Park has been running well according to respective duties and functions. Arts and cultural activities, both at local and out-of-town levels, can be implemented successfully. Factors supporting employee performance include work environment comfort created by the leader, adequate work facility availability, and harmonious working relationships among employees. However, there are several constraints faced, such as activity accumulation at year-end causing some work to be suboptimal, insufficient employee numbers resulting in uneven workload distribution, and limitations in work-supporting facilities. Employee backgrounds and characters, especially diverse artists, also become a particular challenge in human resource management.

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

All informants agreed that the leader's style plays an important role in employee performance. Informants explained that the comfort provided by the leader makes employees work more maximally and feel at home. Creative leaders encourage employees to also think creatively in completing tasks. Clear responsibility provision and full support from the leader facilitate effective work completion. Informants also stated that good leadership greatly influences employee work spirit. Nevertheless, informants suggest the need for discipline improvement, employee addition, financial welfare enhancement, and work system improvement to optimize organizational performance sustainably.

Discussion

Idealized Influence and Employee Performance

Research findings show that the leader of the NTB Cultural Park is capable of becoming an effective role model through leadership behavior that is protective, not arrogant, and able to embrace all employee levels. In the context of organizational culture in Indonesia's public sector, the leader's role as an exemplar is very important because employees tend to observe and imitate their leaders' behavior. The leader's closeness to employees and ability to listen to complaints creates trust that becomes the foundation of organizational performance.

This aligns with findings by Koveshnikov & Ehrnrooth (2018) that idealized influence facilitates employee organizational identification, especially in collectivist cultures like Indonesia. Leadership practices that do not pressure but still ensure work completion reflect a balanced transformational approach. In the context of the Cultural Park as a cultural organization, this approach is relevant because employees need creative space as well as clear direction to produce quality cultural programs.

Inspirational Motivation and Building Shared Vision

Consistent long-term vision communication and the leader's efforts to fight for budget allocation for work facilities demonstrate effective inspirational motivation practices. In the context of the Cultural Park as a public sector cultural organization, the leader's ability to communicate vision about organizational advancement and employee welfare becomes key to increasing work motivation. The moral message in assembly, namely "work as well as possible, don't think about money first," reflects efforts to build employee intrinsic motivation consistent with public service motivation characteristics in Indonesia.

This approach is supported by research by Fareed & Su (2022) showing that inspirational motivation has a significant positive effect on public sector employee performance through public service motivation mediation. The leader's ability to provide facilities such as rest rooms and adequate work equipment demonstrates concrete implementation of the communicated vision. This is important in the local context where public sector employees often face work facility limitations, so the leader's efforts to fight for these facilities become tangible evidence of commitment to employee welfare.

Intellectual Stimulation and Innovation Culture

The leader's openness to employee ideas and proposals as well as encouragement to use creative approaches demonstrate good intellectual stimulation practices. In the context of digital transformation of cultural organizations in Indonesia, this is very important considering the Cultural Park needs to adapt to technological developments and social media to reach a wider community. Encouragement for

activity documentation and social media use reflects the leader's efforts to adapt the organization to the times.

The practice of following up on employees' positive ideas shows that intellectual stimulation is implemented concretely, not just rhetoric. Risma Putri Ashari et al. (2024) found that transformational leadership supports an innovation culture where employees are encouraged to discuss freely and try creative approaches. In the context of the NTB Cultural Park, this approach enables employees to develop innovative cultural programs according to local characteristics, such as cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and workshops that attract public interest.

Individualized Consideration and Employee Development

The leader's attention to employees' personal needs and task distribution according to individual abilities reflects strong individualized consideration practices. The practice of providing rewards in the form of opportunities to participate in out-of-town events in rotation demonstrates fairness and attention to employee experience development. In the context of cultural organizations with diverse employee backgrounds and competencies, this individual approach becomes important to optimize each employee's contribution.

The leader's ability to understand each employee's characteristics and abilities to assign appropriate job descriptions demonstrates mature individualized consideration implementation. This aligns with findings by Viitala et al. (2023) that individualized consideration through coaching and leader supportive climate shows significant correlation with employee resourcefulness, including adaptability and creativity. This approach is relevant in the Cultural Park which requires employees with adaptive abilities in managing various types of cultural activities.

Transformational Leadership and Public Sector Organizational Performance

Research findings show that transformational leadership significantly influences employee performance at the NTB Cultural Park. The influence of leadership on employee performance described by informants with the analogy "like a good head, the body follows suit" reflects the cascading effect of transformational leadership understood in the local cultural context. The leader's ability to create work comfort so employees feel at home and work maximally demonstrates the importance of psychological factors in performance.

This is consistent with research by Alharafsheh et al. (2023) finding that transformational leadership has a positive impact on public service motivation, which subsequently increases job satisfaction and job performance of public sector employees. In the Indonesian context, these findings indicate that transformational leadership is relevant to be applied in various types of public sector organizations, including cultural organizations like the Cultural Park which has unique characteristics in terms of work flexibility and orientation toward public service in the cultural field.

Challenges and Development Needs

Although transformational leadership has been running well, several challenges are still faced. Insufficient employee numbers and activity accumulation at year-end become obstacles that need to be addressed. This aligns with findings by Baporikar (2022) identifying that competing goals and red tape are typical public sector challenges that can reduce performance management effectiveness. The need for discipline improvement and employee development shows that transformational leadership needs to be supported by a comprehensive human resource management system.

The importance of improving employees' financial welfare mentioned by informants shows that although transformational leadership is effective in building intrinsic motivation, extrinsic aspects such as compensation remain relevant. In the context of the NTB Cultural Park, the combination of transformational leadership and welfare improvement can create a more conducive work environment, so employees can focus on cultural preservation and development tasks without being burdened by financial problems.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This research strengthens Bass & Riggio (2006) transformational leadership theory in the context of Indonesian public sector cultural organizations. All four dimensions of transformational

leadership are proven relevant and effective in improving employee performance, albeit with specific contexts and challenges in Indonesian public sector organizations.

Practically, these findings provide operational recommendations for public sector organizations, particularly cultural organizations, to develop transformational leadership through the following concrete steps: First, strengthening role modeling by building regular communication forums between leaders and employees, such as monthly coffee mornings or gatherings to increase closeness and build trust. Second, consistent vision communication through periodic coordination meetings and concrete implementation such as work facility procurement according to employee needs. Third, creating an innovation culture by forming innovation teams tasked with accommodating and following up on employee ideas, and providing appreciation for implemented ideas. Fourth, individual attention through competency-based employee development programs and fair reward systems such as opportunities to participate in training or events in rotation.

However, transformational leadership needs to be supported by human resource management system improvements including employee addition according to organizational needs, welfare improvement through adequate performance allowances, and continuous capacity development programs such as technical and managerial training. This system support is important to ensure organizational performance can be optimal and sustainable, so the Cultural Park can carry out its function as a center for cultural preservation and development effectively.

CONCLUSION

This research finds that transformational leadership at the NTB Cultural Park significantly influences employee performance. The four dimensions of Bass & Riggio (2006) transformational leadership are proven to be effectively applicable in the context of Indonesian public sector cultural organizations.

Idealized influence is demonstrated through protective leader behavior serving as a role model, creating trust by listening to employee complaints and providing appropriate solutions. Inspirational motivation is realized in consistent organizational vision communication and efforts to fight for work facilities, building employee intrinsic motivation to work maximally without depending too much on financial compensation. Intellectual stimulation is applied by encouraging employees to develop creative ideas adapted to digital developments, such as utilizing social media for activity documentation. Individualized consideration is conducted through task distribution according to individual characteristics and abilities, as well as providing appreciation and fair self-development opportunities.

Transformational leadership implementation creates a comfortable work environment so employees are more motivated and able to achieve optimal performance. However, challenges remain in the form of limited employee numbers, activity accumulation at year-end, and the need for financial welfare improvement. Therefore, transformational leadership needs to be supported by comprehensive human resource management system improvements, including employee addition, work discipline enhancement, and continuous capacity development programs. This support is important so the Cultural Park can carry out its function as a center for local cultural preservation and development optimally and sustainably.

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