
**ELITICAL AND ANTIDEMOCRATIC TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP CRITICS: IS IT STILL RELEVANT?
(A LITERATURE STUDY)**

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Abstract - This paper aims to analyze the statements of Bass & Riggio (2006) regarding criticisms of the transformational leadership style which is often considered elitist and anti-democratic. Is the Transformational Leadership style still relevant to today's increasingly dynamic era with the increasing complexity of the organizational environment. With the analysis model using literature study methods from several relevant journals, the results of the analysis show that there is still a strong relevance between transformational leadership patterns and the company's desire to innovate. Transformational leadership is able to maintain continuous and sustainable organizational innovation. Making organizations more agile is also discussed in this article as an antecedent of organizational innovation.

Keywords: Agility, innovation, transformational leadership.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays organizations need increased knowledge and awareness about the influence of the environment on changes in the organization. The role of all leaders, to drive change in the organization, a leader also needs to recognize and be able to identify the effects of today's dynamic environment. So that leaders can bring the desired changes to be relevant to environmental changes facing the organization. Referring to the book Bass & Riggio (2006), on Transformational Leadership, one of the criticisms is that transformational leadership is often elitist, and is even suspected to be anti-democratic (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass's statement has relevance to several studies, according to (Northouse, 2007) which describe Transformational Leadership as too broad and less clear. This leadership style factor is not clearly defined to make it exclusive from other leadership styles. (Tejeda, Scandura, quarterly, & 2001) support this by claiming that some factors of transformational models are not unique, some researchers also say: It is clear that the notion of 'transformational leadership' looms large in contemporary administrative theory and research (Bennis, 1987, Gronn, 1995).

Almost all organizations and companies today strive to increase speed and efficiency in providing information and materials related to organizational performance to provide the best service and demonstrate the importance of time-oriented competitive advantage in a very dynamic business environment, on the other hand no company can afford it. constantly maintain performance as a measure of their operational success. This fact raises a big question whether transformational leadership is still relevant in moving an adaptive organization to its environment, even though it is considered elitist and even anti-democratic. This article discusses these criticisms and their answers. In addition, the authors propose a solution to these criticisms by overcoming the complexity of the problem in today's very dynamic environmental conditions, namely by making the company agile or agile. Competitive conflict areas will be created when they are unable to react or are not responsive to environmental dynamics and unexpected challenges. Although there is an increase in operational speed and performance. Companies should try to facilitate the process of achieving goals by making the company more agile (agile) and compatible (Shin et al., 2015).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

A transformational leader can change their followers: by encouraging them to have high integrity by putting aside their own interests, increasing their awareness of certain problems, encouraging followers to develop themselves (Yukl, 2012). According to (Howell et al., 2005) modifying the organizational system to accommodate the company's vision and working within the boundaries of the existing system is related to changes made by a transformational leader (Howell & Avolio, 1993). The transformation of organizational performance from bad to satisfactory is also related to acceptable transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Organizational Complexity

Leaders in all organizations and institutions today face different levels of complexity and must also deal with new changes. According to Otto C Scharmer in his book Theory U (Scharmer, 2016), I find three different types of complexity that influence the challenges leaders must face: dynamic complexity, social complexity, and emergent complexity. Dynamic complexity means that there is a systematic distance or delay between cause and effect in space or time. Take, for example, the dynamic complexities of global warming. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in part will have a long-term impact on the future of our planet. The greenhouse effect we observe today is mainly due to emissions from the 1970s. If a company decides to reduce CO₂ emissions in its production process, it will reduce its impact on the global climate. Or what about the emissions generated by the process of transporting goods. The longer and more complex the chain of cause and effect, the higher the dynamic complexity problem. If the dynamic complexity is low, it can be handled partially (part by part). Where dynamic complexity is high, only a "whole system" approach and paying adequate attention to cross-system interdependence is the appropriate approach. The managerial implications of dynamic complexity are immediate: the greater the dynamic complexity, the higher the interdependence among the subcomponents of the system, therefore, using a system-wide approach to problem solving becomes more important.

Once the dynamic complexity of a problem is addressed, the more likely it is that the type of complexity will move to social complexity. Social complexity is a product of the diversity of interests and world views among stakeholders. For example, the Kyoto protocol on climate change and reducing CO₂ emissions has been agreed upon and supported by most international experts. However, this protocol has limited use because the three most polluted countries, the United States, India, and Brazil, have not signed the treaty. This issue clearly illustrates a variety of interests, world views and values. The lower the social complexity, the more we can rely on experts to guide decision and policy making. The greater the social complexity, the more important a multi-stakeholder approach to solving real problems that includes all the voices of relevant stakeholders.

Disruption is a sign of change from emergent complexity, usually can be recognized by the following three characteristics: the solution to the problem is unknown, the statement of the problem itself is still open, who the main stakeholders are not clear. When the future cannot be predicted by data trends from the past, we must face an evolving and competitive situation. The greater the complexity that appears, the less we can rely on past experiences (old procedures). Of the three, dynamic complexity is used more often and is most easily recognized (Scharmer, 2016)

Agility

A literature review presents different frameworks and models by explaining the idea that determines agility or at least the various items proposed to measure agility. Finally, 28 interchangeable frameworks or concepts can be identified which can be classified into four domains which are briefly introduced below: (1) Agile Manufacturing, (2) Agile Development, (3) Software (Software Development), (4) Agile Organization / Agile Enterprise, (5) Agile Workforce. Arteta & Giachetti (2004) in their research show that agility refers to the company's ability to respond to these changes as a central aspect. A priori definition of change contradicts their general description of agility. This is the main reason why some of its measurement methods are unable to

predict how the company will react to change because the proposed method is retrospective. Flexibility that is considered competence is focused internally, by setting up processes and infrastructure that allow the company to get another kind of flexibility, this is what really differentiates it, which is considered capability. Agility contains various types of flexibility and combines the ability to carry out new activities in response to unexpected changes that are not desired according to market needs or customer demands (Narasimhan et al., 2006). Another perspective on agility in the context of emergencies has a critical effect on organizational response, as recovery from events with a potential disaster impact, so that the designer of an organizational system for emergency response must ensure discipline (structure, doctrine, and processes) and agility (creativity, improvisation), and adaptability (Harrald, 2006). Even though they do not have a reliable road map, non-profit / non-profit organizations respond with unusual speed and agility to urgent humanitarian needs (Kapucu, 2006). So in conclusion, we can interpret that: Agility or agility of a company / organization is the ability to respond to change.

Innovation

The concept of innovation developed by Joseph Schumpeter in the first half of the twentieth century is based on the principles of creative destruction and the economic cycle according to (Schumpeter, 1939), economic development driven by innovation through a dynamic evolutionary process, capable of destroying the old model, replacing it with one new. According to the Oslo Manual (2005), innovation can be classified into four types: product, process, marketing and organization. Utterback & Abernathy (1975) describe product innovation as a new technology or combination of technologies introduced in the market to meet their demands and needs. In turn, the innovation process is differentiated based on the use of new labor, information flow and, job specifications, input materials used in the production process. Innovation can be defined as "the implementation of new products or significant feature enhancements (goods or services), or process improvements, new marketing methods, or new organizational methods in business practices, workplace organizations or external relations". In addition to this definition, Tidd (2006) defines innovation as a process for developing practical use of previously conceived inventions, so as to represent the diffusion and effectiveness of an idea. It is worth paying attention to in this way the difference between invention and innovation, because not every invention becomes an innovation, considering that innovation is only truly effective if it is implemented and accepted by the market. Innovation is a must so that products can compete in the market competitively. An important factor for competitive advantage and the achievement of high company business results is product or service innovation (Ognjanović, 2019).

III. METHOD

This research is a research with literature study. The results of the study are based on information analyzed and reviewed from each article whose subject is criticism of transformational leadership (TL) on the point of assumption that TL is elitist and anti-democratic. The first step is to search for articles that match the material above, using journal databases such as: Scencedirect.com and Google Scholar. The second step is to explore scientific articles related to agility, which is one of the organizational antecedents proposed by the author as an alternative to making organizations remain adaptive and sustainable.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Transformational leadership theory has been the target of criticism, and its potential weaknesses have been identified (eg, Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013; Yukl, 1999). One criticism is that transformational leadership is elitist and anti-democratic, and too much emphasis is placed on the 'heroic' aspects of leadership (Northouse,

2007). Because transformational leaders create and communicate a vision in pursuit of change, it appears that transformational leaders act independently of their followers. This criticism has been challenged by other researchers including Bass & Riggio (2006), who argue that transformational leaders can be directive or participative, and authoritarian or democratic. Further, proponents of transformational leadership point out that both the MLQ and the Full Range of Leadership models are designed as an attempt to go beyond the charismatic 'great guy' scenario by placing a lot of emphasis on follower behavior (Lee, 2014). Also, as Bass argues, charisma is only one part of the concept of transformational leadership (Northouse, 2007).

Related to this criticism, the idea of transformational leadership has the potential to be misused. Transformational leaders change employee values and provide a new vision for the future. Who decides if the new vision is better than the old? Who determines whether the new direction is good? History provides us with examples of leaders who have exploited their followers and where their visions ultimately led to the deaths of their followers. This is problematic, and one that transformational leadership researchers are trying to solve in a number of ways. Bass initially argued that transformational leadership is not always useful leadership (Bass, 1985), but later changed his view that transformational leadership is moral leadership that serves the good of a group, organization or country and should not harm followers (Bass, 1997; Bass & Riggio, 2006).). The term 'pseudotransformational' has been proposed to include leaders who exhibit transformational behavior but fulfill their own self-interest (Bass & Riggio, 2006). However, partly as a reaction to the problem of charisma inherent in transformational leadership, Avolio & Gardner (2005) developed the concept of authentic leadership, sometimes described as transformational leadership without charisma. It includes aspects such as leader self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing.

Another concern is that transformational leadership may be personality traits or personal tendencies that may be difficult to change, rather than behaviors that can be trained and developed (Bryman, 2007). Although many experts such as Weber, House, and Bass emphasize that transformational leadership is related to leader behavior, empirical studies have shown a link between personality and transformational leadership. Bono & Judge (2004) found in their meta-analysis that extraversion was the strongest predictor of transformational leadership. In addition, studies of transformational leadership interventions have revealed that transformational leadership can be learned, and transformational leadership training can result, not only in increasing transformational behavior but also in increased employee commitment and performance (Barling et al., 1996).

Finally, that organizational agility is an important antecedent to organizational innovation capabilities. Many researchers have proven the influence of organizational agility on innovation and change, both together with transformational leadership and partially (for example: (Akkaya & Tabak, 2020; Bigley, 2018; Burchardt & Maisch, 2019; de Oliveira et al., 2012; Kohtamäki et al., 2020; Muafi & Uyun, 2019; Veisoh et al., 2014)

V. CONCLUSION

From the results of the analysis of several journals above, it can be concluded that transformational leadership is still relevant to be applied, where the current global world conditions are very uncertain, very vulnerable to contemporary issues, and also a competitive business climate. The transformational leadership mindset can encourage organizations to innovate by involving all stakeholders in the organization. Likewise, installing organizational agility is able to make organizations more responsive and appropriate in responding to changes that are moving so fast and excessively.

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