



TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS AN AGENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN ORGANIZATIONAL VALUE SYSTEMS

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Abstract

This article examines transformational leadership as a catalyst for social change within organizations through shifts in shared meaning, collective values, and everyday norms. It presents a normative account of how leaders reshape interpretive frames that guide judgment, interaction, and coordination. The discussion emphasizes moral legitimacy, trust building, and consistent exemplification as foundations for durable value internalization. It argues that change emerges when organizational recognition systems align with declared values, when learning oriented dialogue replaces defensive routines, and when communication norms protect dignity while enabling responsible critique. The article also highlights the reconfiguration of informal influence networks by widening access to information and by institutionalizing cross unit deliberation with clear follow up. Emotional dynamics are treated as central, since fear and uncertainty can undermine commitment, whereas psychological safety supports experimentation and accountability. The central claim is that leadership becomes transformational when it alters the social conditions under which people define success, interpret mistakes, and coordinate action. The article closes by outlining governance principles that sustain value based change without relying on symbolic compliance.

Keywords: transformational leadership, organizational change, collective values, moral legitimacy, trust, recognition systems, dialogic governance.

Introduction

Modern organizations live within a flow of social change that constantly demands adjustments in ways of thinking, coordinating, and interpreting shared goals. This change does not always appear as an official program, but rather as an everyday experience felt in the way people speak, how they evaluate decisions, and how they define success. In certain circumstances, an organization may seem to run smoothly through routine, yet beneath that routine lies a tension of values for instance, between procedural compliance and the need for innovation, or between loyalty to tradition and the demands of social responsibility (Lin et al., 2021). This change depends heavily on our understanding of the fundamentals of human behavior when working together in a group (Darmawan, 2013). Such value tensions demonstrate that social change within an organization is a process of forming shared meaning. This process involves reaffirming what is considered important, what is deemed worthy, and who is seen as having the legitimacy to lead. This includes how a community maintains unity amidst existing differences (Özkaya, 2022). Therefore, social change cannot be understood merely as a structural replacement, but rather as a change in collective habits and the way an organization assigns meaning to the actions of its members.

In many organizations, leadership becomes a meeting point between the demands for change and the need for stability. Organizational members often wait for signals from leaders to assess whether a new idea is safe to follow, whether criticism can be voiced, and how mistakes are interpreted. These signals can emerge through decisions, language, and habits maintained consistently. Well-established communication becomes the primary bridge for maintaining quality relationships between members, even in diverse environments (Gardi et al., 2021). When leaders emphasize openness, members tend to perceive that learning is valued. When leaders emphasize control and certainty, members tend to minimize risk and choose silence. A leader's strategy in facing specific situations greatly determines how effectively change can be managed by the team (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). Thus, leadership is not limited to directing work, but extends to the formation of a social climate that determines what behaviors are considered appropriate. Social change in organizations often begins with a shift in this climate, as the climate determines whether new values can be accepted as part of a shared identity. At a certain stage, leadership becomes a process of changing the

norms that bind actions, including norms regarding communication, collaboration, and responsibility (Voegtlin, 2016).

Transformational leadership is frequently discussed as a leadership model that emphasizes vision, inspiration, and member development (Gonfa, 2019). In a broader understanding, transformational leadership can be viewed as a social practice that drives changes in how people interpret collective goals. This leadership style has been proven capable of increasing member commitment and maximizing their work outcomes (Al Hakim & Hariani, 2021). Such change occurs when leaders are able to build shared meaning that leads members to view tasks as part of a more valuable mission. In organizational experience, a meaningful mission often becomes the foundation for new discipline, as people are willing to reorganize their habits when they feel the change is connected to the dignity of work and the quality of relationships. Furthermore, this leadership pattern has also begun to touch upon environmental awareness aspects for the future sustainability of the organization (Novita et al., 2022). However, a mission can also become a source of tension if it is imposed without respect for the members' experiences. Therefore, transformational leadership should be read as a relationship, not merely as a personal attribute. This relationship is visible in how a leader listens, how they negotiate values, and how they organize the symbols used by the organization to evaluate success. From this perspective, the shift in mindsets and collective values becomes a core part of leadership work.

Social change within organizations is often visible through a shift in the perspective on authority (Lockett et al., 2014). In organizations undergoing renewal, authority is no longer understood as the right to command, but rather as the obligation to provide direction that is reasonable and accountable. Ethics and a sense of social responsibility must serve as the primary foundation in every managerial practice (Rojak & Darmawan, 2021). This shift requires changes in communication practices, as members need space to understand the reasoning behind policies rather than simply receiving orders. At the same time, organizations require mechanisms to maintain order so that renewal does not turn into chaos. Especially in the current era, the assistance of digital technology is very helpful in organizing operations to remain tidy and efficient (Putra & Arifin, 2021). Here, a need arises for leaders who are capable of maintaining

discipline while still keeping the space for reflection alive. Transformational leaders are often associated with the ability to unite these two needs through a clear vision and attention to human development. In the experience of members, this attention can manifest as a sense of being valued, the psychological safety to express ideas, and the feeling that conflict can be managed without shaming punishment. When a sense of safety is established, value change becomes possible because people dare to test old habits and propose work structures that are more aligned with shared goals.

In organizational social systems, collective values do not exist as slogans but are present in recurring habits. The value of integrity is present when an organization rejects shortcuts. The value of collaboration is present when knowledge is shared without fear of losing one's position. It is this strength of social relationships and teamwork that actually supports overall work quality (Putra et al., 2021). The value of service is present when decisions consider the quality of the beneficiaries. These kinds of habits are formed through social evaluation, including praise, criticism, promotion, and the way the organization interprets failure. Transformational leaders are often expected to be able to shift these habits from within by reorganizing the standards used to evaluate actions. A shift in standards can occur when a leader models behavior consistent with new values and when they assert that the measure of success is no longer solely short-term results. However, shifting also demands symbolic work, as members need a shared language to understand why change is necessary. It is very important for us to pay attention to how daily rules are formed so that everyone feels treated fairly (Banks et al., 2022).

The main problem in this discussion arises when transformational leadership is understood too simply as the ability to motivate. Such an understanding can obscure the fact that social change in organizations demands more complex work, namely a change in the way members evaluate themselves, their peers, and the organization as a moral community. Negative views or stereotypes between groups often become barriers to creating equality in the workplace (Zahid & Darmawan, 2022). When a leader promotes a vision, that vision must be understood and translated into actionable practices. If the vision remains merely discourse, the organization risks a gap between official language and actual habits. This gap can lead to cynicism and passive resistance (Bergström et al., 2014). On the other hand, if leaders push for change without considering the existing recognition

structures for example, how rewards and sanctions work then new values are unlikely to persist. The organization may show surface-level changes, yet old patterns continue to govern decisions. This is closely related to how every individual, whether office or field workers, strives to balance workload with their personal lives (Eddine & Darmawan, 2021). This issue demands a normative discussion regarding the mechanisms of collective value change, including how leaders manage meaning, maintain consistency, and ensure that new norms have an accepted moral foundation (Dust et al., 2022).

The next problem relates to the ambiguity between expected social change and the social change experienced by members. On one level, an organization may desire cultural renewal, increased collaboration, and improved work ethics (Martinez et al., 2021). However, members may experience renewal as an increase in demands without a reorganization of resources, without clarity of direction, or without recognition of the psychological burden. Often, issues of identity and social pressure in society also influence the mental state of workers within the organization (Pakpahan et al., 2022). This ambiguity often produces a conflict of interpretation. Leaders judge refusal as resistance to progress, while members judge the push for change as coercion. This type of interpretive conflict indicates that social change is a field of meaning, not just a technical project. If a leader is unable to bridge this field of meaning, the change process can give birth to internal polarization. Polarization weakens trust and disrupts the organization's ability to learn. Therefore, the discussion of transformational leadership needs to pay attention to how leaders build trust, how they manage differences in interpretation, and how they reorganize relationships between groups in the organization so that new collective values can grow without fracturing the work community.

This study will conceptualize how transformational leaders can become agents of social change in organizations through shifting mindsets, collective values, and the social systems that bind action. Without an organized conceptual understanding, transformational leadership is easily treated as a list of ideal traits or communication techniques, whereas what is at stake is a change in the norms that determine the direction of organizational behavior. A normative description is needed to clarify the relationship between vision, moral legitimacy, trust, and the formation of collective habits. Additionally, this discussion is important to assess how social change can be pursued

without ignoring the dignity of members, without maintaining hollow compliance, and without fostering cynicism. With a clear framework, readers can understand that sustainable social change requires a reorganization of meaning and recognition, not just a change in formal structures. Essentially, we need to view leadership as a social relationship that can be studied scientifically for the common good (Eva et al., 2019).

The purpose of this writing is to formulate a conceptual framework that explains the mechanism of transformational leadership in driving organizational social change through shifts in mindsets, collective values, and relational structures. This writing organizes ideas about vision, legitimacy, trust, and norm formation so they can be used to interpret changes in work culture more systematically. This objective also emphasizes normative implications regarding the appropriate use of authority, the ethical obligations of leaders in building recognition, and the need for consistency between the language of change and organizational practices. The results of this writing are expected to provide a theoretical basis for leadership development and a practical foundation for internal policy designers so that value changes do not end as mere slogans.

Method

This study utilizes a qualitative literature review approach to construct normative arguments regarding transformational leadership and social change within organizations. The process began by defining the primary conceptual space, namely transformational leadership, organizational social change, the formation of collective values, and the structuring of work norms and relations. Materials were selected from academic books and scientific articles that offer firm definitions, coherent conceptual frameworks, and relevant discussions on the mechanisms of change. Bryman (2016) asserts the importance of order in social research design so that the search for sources results in synthesis rather than a mere summary. Patten (2016) emphasizes the clarity of research steps, including how research questions guide the selection of materials and the formation of conclusions. In this study, the reading was conducted iteratively to identify key concepts, relationships between concepts, and normative propositions regarding how leaders build legitimacy and shift evaluative standards within organizations.

The processing of materials was carried out through thematic synthesis, organizing themes such as vision and shared meaning, role modeling and consistency, trust-building, managing interpretive conflicts, and changes in organizational norms. May and Perry (2022) position social research as a process that demands transparent interpretative decisions, allowing readers to evaluate the line of reasoning employed. Gupta and Gupta (2022) emphasize that research methodology directs precision in organizing information, building arguments, and maintaining connectivity between the problem, the conceptual framework, and the conclusions. The validity of the arguments is maintained through logical consistency, the accurate use of terminology, and cross-checking between ideas that appear aligned as well as those that seem contradictory. As this study does not present numerical data, its primary weight lies in conceptual clarity and the robustness of normative reasoning regarding social change guided by transformational leadership.

Result and Discussion

Transformational leadership can be understood as a practice that reshapes how an organization defines its shared goals and identity (Herman & Chiu, 2014). Social change within an organization often begins with a shift in the language used to describe work. When a leader shifts the language from mere targets toward values, members gain a new framework to evaluate their actions. Value-based language does not function as mere decoration; it becomes the foundation for moral judgment for instance, what is considered appropriate in serving users, managing resources, and treating colleagues. This is crucial because the way a leader manages their team will determine employee job satisfaction and the quality of the culture formed there (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2012). Within an organization, moral judgment influences habits because individuals tend to follow standards that provide a sense of security and recognition. Transformational leaders trigger social change when they are able to bind these new standards to the members' experiences, ensuring that values do not feel foreign (Morales, 2022). At this stage, change is not a command, but rather a shift in meaning that causes people to judge old habits as no longer aligned with collective goals. Thus, the leader works in both the symbolic and practical realms

simultaneously, through the organization of reasoning, narratives, and decisions that demonstrate the direction of organizational values.

A vital mechanism in transformational leadership is the creation of a credible vision. A credible vision is not just a beautiful sentence, but a picture of the future that has a clear connection to organizational needs and member dignity. Trust in a vision grows when the leader demonstrates consistency between what is said and what is done. When a leader is able to set a good example and maintain a supportive work atmosphere, members will generally feel happier and more comfortable in performing their duties (Irfan & Hariani, 2022). This consistency creates stability of meaning. Members can predict how the organization will judge an action, making them brave enough to align themselves with new values. If consistency is lacking, members tend to view the vision as a rhetorical tool and choose to stick to old habits. In this case, social change does not occur because old norms remain the point of reference. Transformational leadership demands genuine exemplary work, as role modeling reduces the gap between discourse and reality (Bush, 2018). This leadership by example is also key to ensuring the organization can still deliver quality results or products even when facing uncertain situations (Irfan & Putra, 2021). Exemplary behavior also forms a new climate of recognition, where recognition is given to behaviors aligned with the upheld values. When recognition shifts, the collective motivation structure shifts along with it.

Social change in organizations requires moral legitimacy, not just structural legitimacy. A leader may hold a formal position, but their influence on collective values depends on whether members perceive the leader as fair (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Fairness here includes how the leader listens, how they distribute opportunities, and how they interpret mistakes. A leader's ability to communicate and establish good relationships with subordinates will greatly influence how effectively work can be completed (Hariani & Sigita, 2022). If mistakes are treated as a disgrace, members choose to hide problems, and the organization loses the opportunity to learn. If mistakes are treated as material for improvement, members are more courageous in reporting them, and the organization gains room for learning. Transformational leadership encourages social change when the leader rearranges how the organization views mistakes and conflict. Conflict is no longer understood as a threat to authority, but as information regarding the misalignment between values and

practice. Such an open attitude helps improve cooperation and team spirit, which ultimately makes group performance much better (Rojak & Khayru, 2022). Consequently, the leader shifts the "norm of silence" into a "norm of dialogue." The norm of dialogue allows for the formation of new understandings, which ultimately transforms social relations in the workplace from narrow hierarchical patterns toward patterns that provide space for collective accountability.

Collective values in an organization often persist because they are embedded in small rituals and habits (Arnold & Prescher, 2017). Meetings that always begin with numerical reports form the belief that numbers are the center of truth. Evaluations that emphasize speed alone form the belief that thoroughness is a burden. Transformational leaders shift collective values by changing these rituals so that the focus of assessment also shifts. Changes in these small things in the work environment are actually very helpful for workers to feel more satisfied and at home at work (Radjawane & Darmawan, 2022). When meetings provide space for reflecting on service quality, the organization learns that quality is also valuable. When evaluations provide space for learning, the organization learns that process improvement is part of performance. This shift in ritual is a social change because it changes how people judge and speak. People begin to use a different vocabulary, such as responsibility, caution, and respect. This vocabulary influences action because it provides new categories for evaluating decisions. Thus, value change does not occur through lectures, but through the arrangement of interaction spaces that change collective habits. Transformational leadership works through the structuring of meeting frameworks, evaluation flows, and symbols of recognition.

Transformational leadership is often associated with inspiration, yet the inspiration relevant to social change is that which builds collective capacity (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Collective capacity is formed when members feel capable of acting, feel entitled to propose improvements, and feel protected when expressing opinions. Leaders nurture this capacity through structured empowerment, such as delegating meaningful decisions, providing space for experimentation, and affirming clear responsibilities. Ultimately, the combination of a healthy office culture, the right leadership style, and strong commitment is the most accurate way to achieve organizational success (Darmawan, 2022). Within an organization, unstructured empowerment can

lead to confusion and conflict because responsibilities are unclear. Therefore, transformational leadership requires clarity of boundaries alongside warmth in relationships. Clear boundaries provide operational security, while warm relationships provide psychological safety. Both types of security help members abandon old defensive habits. The resulting social change is then reflected in increased initiative, decreased dependence on commands, and the strengthening of a norm of mutual assistance. This norm of mutual assistance is a sign that collective values have shifted.

Mindset change is the core of transformational leadership, yet a mindset is not an object that can be transferred like information (McKnight, 2013). Mindsets are formed from experience, social judgment, and the way an organization provides rewards. Leaders change mindsets by changing the way people experience their work. For example, when a leader links tasks to meaningful social impact, members perceive tasks as service rather than mere obligation. When a leader links learning to recognition, members perceive improvement as an achievement rather than an admission of weakness. This mechanism demonstrates that mindsets change when meaning changes. Meaning changes when symbols and practices change consistently. Transformational leadership demands long-term consistency because collective mindsets do not shift due to a single event. The organization requires repeated evidence that new values have truly become the standard. This repeated evidence manifests through fair decisions, clear communication, and the leader's willingness to bear the consequences of the values they state. When repeated evidence is present, members begin to internalize the new perspective as part of the organizational identity.

The social system of an organization encompasses networks of relationships, information flows, and the distribution of informal influence. A transformational leader becomes an agent of social change when they are able to read this network and reorganize it ethically (Gonfa, 2019). For instance, within an organization, there are often groups that become information centers and others that are marginalized. If a leader allows information inequality to persist, new values are difficult to spread because understanding stops at certain groups. If the leader opens communication channels and values voices that were previously ignored, the organization gains richer knowledge. Social change is then visible in the shift of influence centers, from a few actors toward a broader network. However, reorganizing

the network must be done with caution to avoid causing feelings of humiliation. Transformational leadership prioritizes recognition and dignity, so the restructuring of influence is carried out through the creation of new forums, cross-unit tasks, and clear rules for dialogue. In this way, the leader shifts exclusive norms into inclusive norms. Inclusive norms strengthen the sense of belonging and reduce hidden conflicts, making it easier for collective values to become work habits.

In organizations, social change is often hindered by defensive habits, such as blaming other units or covering up problems to appear neat (Bojović & Jovanović, 2020). Defensive habits emerge when an organization harshly punishes imperfection. Transformational leadership shifts defensive habits through the creation of a learning climate. A learning climate does not mean ignoring standards; rather, it affirms that standards are achieved through improvement, not through denial. The leader reinforces a learning climate through the right questions for example, asking what can be learned from a failure rather than who should be punished. Such questions change the organizational conversation. The conversation shifts from one of self-defense to one of learning. A change in conversation is a social change because it alters the structure of security and the structure of fear. When fear is reduced, members are more willing to convey uncomfortable information. Uncomfortable information is often exactly what is vital for improvement. Thus, transformational leadership changes the organization's social system by reorganizing collective emotions, particularly fear and trust. Trust becomes the capital for value change.

The shift in collective values also depends on how an organization manages rewards and recognition. Many organizations unconsciously reward behaviors that contradict their stated values (Yusuf & Kurniady, 2020). For example, an organization may claim that collaboration is vital, yet promotions are granted to individuals who stand out on their own. This inconsistency teaches members that values are merely a formality. Transformational leaders drive social change by aligning the recognition structure with values. This alignment is not just about changing indicators; it is about changing how the organization narrates success. Success is framed as the result of collective effort, as the result of thoroughness, or as the result of the courage to improve processes. Narratives of success shape the collective imagination regarding what is worth pursuing. When the narrative

changes, the orientation of action changes. Members begin to organize their priorities according to new values because they see that the organization truly appreciates them. The resulting social change is comprehensive at the level of habit, as people pursue recognition through the pathways provided by the organization. Transformational leadership ensures those pathways are aligned with the dignity of work and shared goals.

Transformational leadership often requires leaders to manage the tension between stability and renewal. Organizations need certainty for work to function, but they also need change to remain relevant (Putri et al., 2020). This tension cannot be resolved by choosing one over the other. The leader must organize priorities for change, determining what must be maintained as a core identity and what must be updated in response to needs. This prioritization is a normative act because it involves value judgments. A transformational leader demonstrates their role as an agent of social change when they can clearly articulate the reasons for these priorities. Clear reasoning reduces speculation and minimizes conflicts of interpretation. Furthermore, the leader needs to ensure that change does not sever the sense of justice. If change demands sacrifice, the leader must demonstrate a fair distribution of the burden and equal recognition. A fair distribution of the burden builds moral legitimacy. With moral legitimacy, members are more willing to abandon old habits. Thus, social change in an organization depends on the leader's ability to manage value tensions openly rather than hiding them. Openness becomes the foundation for collective trust.

The shifting of mindsets often occurs through the establishment of new standards for what is considered a problem. In old-fashioned organizations, problems are often understood as disruptions that must be hidden. In learning organizations, problems are understood as material for improvement (Usman, 2020). Transformational leaders change this standard by inviting members to view problems as learning opportunities and as indicators of system quality. This invitation must be accompanied by moral protection the guarantee that reporting a problem does not automatically result in a stigma. When moral protection is available, members do not have to choose between honesty and social security. Social change occurs because the norm of honesty becomes possible to practice. This norm changes inter-unit relations; units no longer compete to cover up mistakes but instead collaborate to trace root causes. In the long run, the

collective mindset shifts from an image-oriented focus to a quality-oriented focus. A quality orientation makes the organization more sensitive to the impact of decisions on service recipients. Thus, transformational leaders become agents of social change because they transform how the organization defines problems, how it discusses them, and how it rewards the courage to improve. This change touches the heart of the social system: the norms that govern what is allowed to be spoken.

Social change is also related to the formation of a collective identity. Collective identity is the implicit answer to the question of "who are we as an organization" (Shvindina, 2017). This answer influences decisions because it provides a moral boundary. Transformational leaders build collective identity through narratives that encapsulate history, values, and goals. A good narrative does not erase the past but places it as a source of learning. A good narrative also provides space for members to see themselves as part of something valuable. When members internalize a collective identity, they are more willing to take actions that go beyond personal interest. However, a collective identity imposed without room for dialogue can lead to resistance. Therefore, transformational leaders need to build identity through meaningful participation listening to work experiences, acknowledging struggles, and co-creating shared values. Meaningful participation strengthens the sense of belonging. A sense of belonging is a social element that changes behavior, as people tend to care for something they feel is shared. Thus, collective identity becomes a mechanism for social change that shifts the mindset from working for tasks to working for a shared mission.

In the process of change, transformational leaders often encounter a plurality of values within the organization (Harb & Sidani, 2019). This plurality can stem from different professions, generations, or the history of specific work units. A plurality of values is not a problem to be erased, but a reality to be managed. The leader becomes an agent of social change when they are able to build "value bridges" common ground that makes various groups see the new values as necessary. These value bridges are built through language that respects differences and through decisions that are not arbitrarily biased. When a leader respects differences, groups do not feel their identity is under attack, making them more willing to negotiate. The negotiation of values produces a new understanding of priorities and behaviors. This new understanding then becomes the foundation for

organizational norms. Norms born from negotiation tend to be stronger than those born from commands because they possess social legitimacy. Thus, social change in an organization does not take the form of uniformity, but rather the formation of shared commitment through the negotiation of meaning. Transformational leadership facilitates this negotiation through orderly dialogue and through exemplary respect for differences.

Transformational leaders also influence an organization's social system through the management of collective emotions (Usman, 2020). An organization is not a purely rational machine; it is filled with hope, fear, pride, and disappointment. Change often triggers anxiety as uncertainty increases. Leaders who ignore anxiety will spark rumors and passive resistance. Transformational leaders manage anxiety through honest communication and by acknowledging the burden of change. This acknowledgment is vital because it conveys the sense that the organization sees people, not just functions. When people are recognized, trust increases. Trust enables individuals to take the risks associated with learning. Furthermore, leaders must manage collective pride so that it does not turn into arrogance that rejects renewal. Healthy collective pride is pride accompanied by the humility to learn (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Leaders direct this pride through narratives that emphasize learning as a point of honor. Thus, social change within an organization is linked to the emotional order. Transformational leadership works on this emotional order through language, the rhythm of communication, and consistency of action that reduces fear and strengthens security.

Sustainable social change also requires a reorganization of responsibility structures. Many organizations are trapped in blurred accountability, causing problems to circulate without an owner (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Transformational leaders reorganize responsibility by establishing clear roles and providing commensurate authority. This clarity transforms social relations because people know with whom to coordinate and what is expected of them. However, clarity without support can turn into a burden. Therefore, transformational leaders ensure that responsibility is accompanied by coaching, access to information, and space for feedback. Feedback spaces reduce the tendency to blame. When people can provide feedback, they feel valued as subjects rather than objects. Feeling valued increases commitment. Commitment is the social element that helps

changes in norms persist. Thus, social change in an organization is not merely a change in the organizational chart, but a change in how people hold each other accountable, help one another, and evaluate each other. Transformational leadership strengthens this change through fair responsibility design and by arranging relationships that reduce dominance while increasing accountability.

Transformational leaders shift the collective mindset through institutionalized shared learning. Shared learning differs from momentary training. Shared learning becomes part of the culture when the organization provides time, space, and rewards for reflection (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Leaders encourage this by asking for the reasoning behind decisions, inviting process evaluations, and affirming that knowledge can come from various levels of the organization. When knowledge from below is recognized, social relations change because the hierarchy of knowledge becomes more open. Knowledge openness reduces apathy, as members see that their voices can have an influence. In organizations, apathy often arises when people feel that nothing ever changes. Transformational leadership breaks apathy by demonstrating that change is actually occurring in practice for example, changes in procedures, communication flows, or service standards. However, the core of the social change is the shift in the collective belief that the organization is capable of learning. This belief generates social energy. Social energy makes the organization resilient in the face of uncertainty because members believe that difficulties can be processed into learning. Thus, transformational leadership acts as an agent of social change through the institutionalization of learning as a valued norm.

In the process of value change, transformational leaders must manage the tension between speed and participation. Speed is often considered essential, yet participation provides legitimacy (McKnight, 2013). If change is too rapid without participation, the organization may experience formal compliance without commitment. If change is too slow, the organization loses direction and the renewal loses momentum. Transformational leaders balance both by setting clear stages and explaining the reasons for those stages. This is done because the right leadership style and a comfortable work atmosphere greatly help improve the performance of every team member (Arifin & Mardikaningsih, 2021). Explaining the reasoning is part of moral work, as it demonstrates respect for the members' rationality. When members

understand the reasons, they more easily perceive the change as reasonable. Additionally, leaders must distinguish between areas requiring quick decisions and those requiring broad dialogue. This distinction reduces confusion and conflict. Within this framework, social change is viewed as a process with a rhythm. The rhythm is managed through consistent communication. Consistent communication suppresses rumors. Rumors often undermine change because they distort perceptions of the leader's intentions. Transformational leadership suppresses rumors through adequate transparency and a willingness to answer difficult questions. This willingness strengthens legitimacy and accelerates the formation of commitment.

Transformational leadership is also related to the ethics of using power. Power can be used to accelerate change, but the use of power that ignores dignity will trigger resistance (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Transformational leaders demonstrate their role as agents of social change when they use power as a means to protect values, rather than as a means to assert the ego. Beyond leadership, the existence of fair rules and a supportive work environment are also primary reasons why employees feel enthusiastic about their work (Chasanah et al., 2021). The protection of values is evident when a leader dares to take action against behavior that undermines justice, even if the perpetrator holds a strong position. This action sends a signal that organizational values are not a formality. Such a signal builds trust. Trust is social capital that enables the changing of norms. Conversely, if a leader compromises on injustice, members learn that values are negotiable. On a broader scale, such structural injustice can actually create greater problems for vulnerable groups (Gani, 2022). Negotiable values find it difficult to become norms. Within an organization, norms require moral certainty. Moral certainty means members believe that standards apply to everyone. Transformational leadership fosters moral certainty through the consistent enforcement of standards and through communication that does not humiliate specific parties. Thus, organizational social change is directly linked to ethics, because ethics determine whether collective values can take root as habits.

Shifting an organization's social system often demands changes in coordination patterns. Good coordination is not just a division of tasks, but a mutual understanding of shared goals and how to manage interdependencies between units (Armstrong & Muenjohn, 2014).

Transformational leaders encourage coordination changes by building a unity of direction. Unity of direction helps units see the interconnectedness of their work. When interconnectedness is understood, collaboration becomes easier because people understand why they need to share information. If a leader is able to provide clear direction, employees will usually feel more devoted and loyal to their organization (Hariani & Irfan, 2022). However, unity of direction requires a language that can be understood by various professions. The leader uses bridging language rather than language that favors one group. Bridging language influences social relations because it reduces the impression that change is the agenda of a particular group. Additionally, the leader needs to create orderly coordination forums. An orderly forum has rules for dialogue, clear objectives, and tangible follow-up. Without follow-up, a forum turns into an empty ritual. With follow-up, a forum becomes a mechanism for forming collaborative habits. Thus, transformational leadership becomes an agent of social change through the improvement of coordination that changes how units depend on, trust, and respect each other's expertise.

Transformational leadership influences organizational social change through the formation of ethical communication standards (Usman, 2020). Organizational communication often produces hierarchies, such as who is allowed to speak and who must remain silent. Transformational leaders shift this hierarchy by inviting questions and by valuing criticism delivered responsibly. The way a leader evaluates performance and involves members in various activities will make members feel they have more of a role in the organization (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). Appreciating criticism changes the norm. Criticism is no longer understood as defiance, but as a concern for quality. However, this appreciation must be accompanied by discipline. The leader needs to emphasize the manner of delivering criticism so that it does not turn into personal attacks. Communication discipline protects dignity. The protection of dignity strengthens psychological safety. Psychological safety is a prerequisite for learning and renewal. Thus, the leader changes the social system through the regulation of interactions. Orderly and respectful interactions enable the organization to process differences without breaking apart. This condition shows that a good organizational culture and employee self-confidence greatly determine work success (Hariani, 2021). An organization capable of processing differences

can change values without forcing uniformity. Its social change is visible in the increased quality of dialogue, increased information transparency, and the organization's increased ability to assess itself honestly. All of these are products of leadership that views communication as a moral space.

Transformational leadership becomes an agent of social change when it succeeds in changing the structure of meaning that guides collective behavior (Chitiga, 2018). The structure of meaning consists of narratives of purpose, assessment standards, and symbols of recognition. When the structure of meaning changes, people change their habits because they see the world of work in a different way. They evaluate success with new measures and they judge work relationships with new norms. This success is achieved when the leader is able to provide full support and create a sense of belonging among their members (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2021). This change does not occur through a single policy, but through the consistency of actions that bind vision to practice, and that bind values to social rewards. The answer to the problem formulation shows that social change in an organization occurs through mechanisms of moral legitimacy, trust building, institutionalization of learning, reorganization of influence networks, and the alignment of recognition structures. All these mechanisms depend on the leader's ability to manage differing interpretations without fracturing the work community. Thus, transformational leadership is a social endeavor that requires exemplary behavior, clarity of reasoning, and ethical discipline. When these requirements are met, the organization can experience a shift in mindset, collective values, and a relationship system that is more aligned with shared goals and human dignity in work.

Conclusion

Transformational leadership can drive organizational social change through the work of shifting meaning, strengthening moral legitimacy, and forming new norms that regulate collective action. Transformational leaders initiate change from a credible vision, then translate it into consistent practices, so that members gain certainty regarding the standards used by the organization. Social change becomes visible when the language of purpose alters how members evaluate work, when recognition structures align with announced values, and when a learning climate replaces defensive habits.

Furthermore, social system changes occur through the structuring of information networks, the opening of orderly spaces for dialogue, and the management of collective emotions that reduce fear and strengthen trust. Through these mechanisms, mindsets shift from image-orientation toward quality-orientation, collective values grow through recognition and role-modeling, and work relations become more capable of processing differences without damaging the unity of purpose.

Implications and suggestions emphasize that organizational social change guided by transformational leadership requires alignment between discourse and day-to-day governance. Organizations need to reorganize performance evaluation indicators so they do not merely glorify symbols of availability, but instead assess quality, learning, and procedural integrity. Leaders need to establish communication disciplines that respect dignity, ensuring that criticism can become a source of improvement without turning into personal attacks. The structuring of cross-unit coordination forums needs to be made orderly, have follow-ups, and provide space for voices that were previously unheard. Additionally, organizations need to treat problem reporting as an act of responsibility, with clear moral protection so that openness does not result in stigma. Suggestions for theoretical development include clarifying the relationship between moral legitimacy, recognition structures, and norm changes, so that transformational leadership can be evaluated through social mechanisms observed in organizational practice rather than through leadership image alone.

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