



Transformational leadership style and organizational commitment in pandemic Covid-19

Estilo de liderazgo transformacional y compromiso organizacional en la pandemia Covid-19

Kusni Ingsih¹ *¹, Suhana Suhana², Shujahat Ali³

¹Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Indonesia

²Universitas Stikubank, Indonesia

³Mirpur University of Science and Technology, Pakistan

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Abstract

The current research aims to prove empirically about the contribution of transformational leadership toward organizational commitment. The population of the research is employees of rural banks in Semarang City, Central Java Province, Indonesia. Random sampling is employed in the research and 198 employees to be respondents. The analytical tool used in the research is multiple linear regression using SPSS. The result indicates that inspirational motivation and individualized consideration have positive and significant effect toward organizational commitment. However, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation have no effect toward organizational commitment. The limitation of the research is that R square value is low, which is 37.4%. The implication of the research is that it is important for an organization to increase organizational commitment during this COVID-19 outbreak through transformational leadership style.

JEL Code: G21, L20, L22

Keywords: Transformational leadership; organization commitment; rural bank

* Autor para correspondencia

Correo electrónico: kusni.ingsih@dsn.dinus.ac.id (K. Ingsih).

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Resumen

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo probar empíricamente la contribución del liderazgo transformacional al compromiso organizacional. La población de la investigación son empleados de bancos convencionales en la ciudad de Semarang, provincia de Java Central, Indonesia. En la investigación se emplea un muestreo aleatorio y 198 empleados como encuestados. La herramienta analítica utilizada en la investigación es el paquete estadístico para las ciencias sociales (SPSS). El resultado indica que la motivación inspiradora y la consideración individualizada tienen un efecto positivo y significativo hacia el compromiso organizacional. Sin embargo, la influencia idealizada y la estimulación intelectual no tienen ningún efecto sobre el compromiso organizacional. La limitación de la investigación es que el valor de R cuadrado es bajo, que es del 37,4%. La implicación de la investigación es que es importante para una organización aumentar el compromiso organizacional durante este brote de COVID-19 a través de un estilo de liderazgo transformacional

Código JEL: G21, L20, L22

Palabras clave: Liderazgo transformacional; compromiso organizacional; banca rural

Introduction

Nowadays more than 200 countries are affected by pandemic outbreak globally namely COVID-19. The impact of this COVID-19 pandemic outbreak is not only in the field of health, nevertheless the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak pandemic is caused in all sectors, both economic, social, political, and cultural fields. Mainly in the economic sector, several enterprises are significantly affected, and even several enterprises get bankruptcy. International bank and other monetary institution suffer the most spectacular deterioration because banks are the party of mediator between borrowers and lenders (Emmons & Neely, 2020). Banks are at the heart of the Euro area crisis (CEPR 2015). During this pandemic many enterprises suffer in financial difficulties, almost all companies borrowed to banks as part of the business (Yilmazkuday, 2020).

In lining with the pivotal role of bank industry in the pandemic condition, many efforts to increase the bank performance is urgent to conduct. There are many bank performance indicators, such as: employee performance, financial performance, employee job satisfaction and also employee commitment. All kinds of performance will have its own indicators. Employee commitment is one of performance indicators of organization needing more attention. Having higher organizational commitment will contribute to the better organizational performance (Irefin & Mechanic, 2014; Imamoglu et al., 2019).

Park and Rainey (2007) explain that organizational commitment is a bond between organization and employees. Furthermore Bogler and Somech (2004), stated that employees who attached with organization want to have active role in organization. Therefore, in order to increase the effectiveness of organization, the first step that by organization advisable take is to increase employee's commitment.

The role of organizational leadership is one of the most influential things to increase employee's commitment. An organization leader has his/her a different leadership style in leading the organization. One of the most popular leadership style is transformational leadership because it contributes significantly in increasing organizational commitment (Freeborough, 2020). This leadership has four components as follows: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Orabi, 2016).

Research on the effect of influence transformational leadership toward organizational commitment has various results. The effect of transformational leadership toward organizational commitment with the object research conducted by teachers by Hartati (2013), proved that transformative leadership affected organizational commitment. Likewise, with the research conducted by Ahmadi et al. (2012) who show the same result, namely transformational leadership and transactional leadership have an effect for organizational commitment.

Other researches with different discussion, objects and results were carried out by Jacobsen and Staniok (2020), Korek et al. (2010), Nguni et al. (2006), and Walumbwa and Lawler (2003). Various results among finding research indicates that theoretical framework has a connection with transformational leadership toward organizational commitment is not strong enough.

To support the existing theory, this research needs to be carried out with object of the research on rural banks in the city of Semarang, Central Java Province, Indonesia. There are many rural banks in Semarang City. They are owned by private sectors as well as regional government owned ones. Rural banks in Semarang have important role in helping economic growth. They serve people who need lending money for developing their business. In pandemic situation, they should always increase their performance.

Of the previous elaboration, the research question is whether idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration have positive effect on organizational commitment.

Review of literature

Transformational leadership style

A proactive leadership is a characteristic of transformational leadership. A leader rises an awareness of follower to get their common interests so that the goals have been set can be achieved (Imamoglu et al., 2019). In addition, transformational leadership also encourage their followers to do a job that exceed the expectations of their organization (Jung et al., 2003).

Transformational leadership has four dimensions such as: idealized influence (attribute and behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence describes the degree which leader is perceived as an inspirational role model (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). This leader sets high standard moral values, communicates the importance of having shared vision and making sacrifices for the benefit of the group (Azizaha et al., 2020). Leader has a quality to be respected, admired, and trusted by subordinates. The followers feel proud to set up communication with their leader (Muppudathi & Krishnan, 2020).

Inspirational motivation describes a leader that gives a motivation to his/her subordinates to perform above average (EKWEOGU et al., 2020). A leader strengthens his/her subordinates by looking into future with fully optimism Tims et al. (2011), and behaving in a way to give motivations for people around him/her by giving meaning and challenges to his/her followers (Schwarz et al., 2016). A leader has a quality to communicate shared vision so that his/her subordinates get inspired to achieve organizational strategic (Page & Wong, 2000).

Intellectual simulation explains the degree which leader stimulates his/her followers to be more innovative and creative Pradhan and Jena (2019), and accepting challenges as a part of job. This dimension is behavior that increases subordinates' awareness to look for a solution in existing problems creatively. A leader always things alternatives in seeing every problem (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011). Meanwhile, individual consideration means that a leader gives an attention individually for his subordinates (Muharam et al., 2020). A leader pays close attention to the needs of his subordinates and gives certain responsibilities to assistance them grow and develop through personal challenges (Afsar et al., 2019).

Transformational leadership research in pandemic era

Related with the pandemic era, many previous researches have examined the effect of transformational leadership to some organizational outputs. Novitasari et al (2020) studied transformational leadership to

employee's performance in pandemic era. The result indicated that transformational leadership practices do not significantly affect the employee's performance, but positively affect readiness of change. Other research was conducted by Suprapti et.al (2020). The respondents of object of research are banking employees. According to them, nearly all industries have been severely influenced by Covid-19, included banking industry(Novitasari et al., 2020). Companies should implement an integrated strategy to improve performance and then increase the sustainability of company. In the critical phase, companies need commitment, engagement, and support from their leaders and employee. Leaders should act and empower the employees(Suprapti et al., 2020). Company also should maintain employee' job satisfaction in order to obtain full employee' cooperation and ensure best service delivered(Yücel, 2021). The findings indicate that the transformational leadership climate undergone by workers during the acceleration of Digital Transformation due to Covid-19 Pandemic, has a positive significant effect on job satisfaction. The same result was also found by research of Azizah et al, 2020). The results of the study concluded that transformational leadership has a positive effect on Islamic university lecturers satisfaction.

Research by Yucel (2021) is about transformational leadership related with employee performance and turnover. According to them, transformational leaders encourage employee performance, which in turn decreases their turnover intentions(Bass & Avolio, 1994). This research has important implications for reducing turnover in workplaces and increasing employee performance by facilitating a setting for high performance and it can be achieved by the leaders.

Organization commitment

The bond between an organization and its employees is an understanding of organizational commitment according to Lambert et al. (2020), that the high of employee commitment toward its organization has an impact in several important aspects of the organization, such decreased turnover employees, increased employees' motivation, decreased absenteeism and improved employee performance(Irefin & Mechanic, 2014).

Continues, normative, and affective commitment are three dimensions of organizational commitment. Continues commitment is a form commitment where an employee still joins in the organization for economic reason. An employee has invested in the organization which s/he join, so that wants to get return for organization (Z. Khan et al., 2019). If moves out from the organization, s/he will start at the bottom and lose an opportunity to get investment. Meanwhile, normative commitment is a form of commitment which an employee still joins in the organization because s/he has a moral obligation to stay at the organization(Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Meanwhile, affective commitment is form of commitment which describes employees' attitudes. This commitment dimension is a good predictor of employee turnover, absenteeism, motivation and employees' performance. An employee who has an affective commitment, a good sense of belonging, has a high emotional bond with organization and identifies himself with organization because of those reasons. The indicators above are strengthened by Khaskheli et al. (2020) as cited Saha and Kumar (2018) stated that an employee with a strong affective commitment still takes a part in the organization because they want to do that. This component is generally regarded as first concept of organizational commitment due to the fact Porter in his researches focused on one dimensional approach which is now described as affective commitment.

Hypotheses development

Earlier Megerian and Sosik (1996), explained that the idealized influence dimension in transformational leadership perceives the leader as a role model who inspires for his/her followers. As an influence leader for his/her follower, the role of the leader becomes more important to increase organization commitment Chiu et al. (2020), Stinglhamber et al. (2015), and Ismail et al. (2011). This is supported by. So that, the first hypothesis in this research is:

H1 Idealized influence has a significant positive impact toward organizational commitment.

Intellectual stimulation is a way from a leader to stimulate his followers' effort to be more innovative and creative (Lao, 2020). Therefore, the more a leader stimulates followers that the followers will be more commitment toward the organization. This explanation is in line with the result of Zheng et al. (2020), Shaw and Liao (2020) and N. A. Khan et al. (2020). Regarding the findings and arguments thus the second hypothesis is:

H2 Intellectual stimulation has a significant positive impact toward organizational commitment.

Inspirational motivation is a way to get an inspiration from a leader to his/her subordinates in order to reach the goals of strategic organization by using communication vision (OGOLLA, 2020). Moreover, Moss et al. (2020), the role of a leader to stimulate followers plays an important factor to raise organizational commitment among followers. That argumentation is supported by the finding of Salas-Vallina et al. (2020), and Riyanto and Hapsari (2020) thus third hypothesis as follow:

H3 Inspirational motivation has a significant positive impact toward organizational commitment.

Hereby Federspiel and Sprotte (2020), stated that individual consideration happens when a leader takes notice on the need of his/her followers and gives certain responsibilities to help them grow and develop toward personal challenges. If the subordinates get a treatment like that, organizational

commitment of subordinates will increase automatically Na-Nan et al. (2020), Topaloglu et al. (2020) and Moon et al. (2020) . That findings are supported by some researches in the same scope. The fourth hypothesis in this research is:

H4 Individual consideration has a significant positive impact toward organizational commitment.

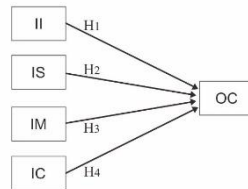


Figure 1. Research Model

Methodology of the study

The data employed in this research were primary ones. Primary data needed in this research are data related with the variables of transformational leadership style and organizational commitment. These data are obtained from questionnaire that are submitted by the respondents. The respondents are employees of rural bank.

All employees of rural banks in the Semarang city, Central Java Province, Indonesia are employed as population in this research. Non random sampling is employed as sampling technique in this research, so that the respondents are not given the same opportunity to be sample. The choice the sampling is related with the homogeneous character of population. So by taking samples around 200 respondents, it has been representative. The distribution of questionnaires is conducted in May 2020. Since it is in the early phase of pandemic era, the employee of rural banks still work from office. The questionnaire items for organizational commitment is adopted from. Allen & Meyer (1990) while for transformational leadership questionnaire items, they are adopted from Bass dan Avolio (1994) The measurement of variable employs Likert scale which each question is given a score or points: (1) disagree strongly, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) agree strongly.

The measurement of the organizational commitment employs some indicators such as feeling pride in spending carrier in the company, feeling like as company's problem personally, being bound with the company, feeling like as the part of a family, being bound in the company emotionally, the importance of the company, sensing of belonging. The measurement of idealized influence variable (II) perceives that

a leader as a role model plays an inspirational figure for his/her followers. Idealized influence is measured with some indicators: (1) leader feels comfortable and proud of his relationship with his subordinates, (2) leader avoids with personal interest for the good sake, (3) leader get all respect from the subordinates, (4) leader has a good confident, (5) leader talks about important value and belief in the organization, (6) leader has the importance of having strong vision and mission, (7) leader considers moral consequences and ethics for all the policies that s/he make, (8) leader emphasizes in having the same mission among the members of organization.

Stimulation intellectual is that a leader stimulates the effort of his/her followers to be more innovative and creative. Statements to measure stimulation intellectual employs several statements as follows: (1) leader reviews the important assumptions whether those are still relevant, (2) leader gives other perspectives to solve the problems, (3) leader gives advices to his/her subordinates to identify problems from various perspectives, (4) leader suggests a new way to be employed to accomplish existing task.

Inspirational motivation is that the subordinates get inspired from a leader to achieve the goals of organizational strategic by communicating visions. Inspirational motivation is measured by using indicators as follows: (1) leader talks about the future of the organization optimistically, (2) leader talks what must be resolved with enthusiasm, (3) leader explains a vision for the future of the organization properly, (4) leader confident that the goals of the organization will be achieved.

Individual consideration occurs when a leader takes notice to the individual needs of subordinates and gives certain responsibilities to assist him grow and develop through personal challenges. Individual consideration is measured by using indicator, as follows: (1) leader provides time for subordinates to learn something, (2) leader treats subordinates personally, (3) leader recognize that each subordinates have their own needs, abilities, and aspirations differently, (4) leader assists the subordinates to develop their talents.

Technique analysis employed in this research is multiple linier regression using SPSS. Thus, the multiple regression test equation has the following equation:

$$OC = a_1 + b_1II + b_2IS + b_3IM + b_4IC + e \quad (1)$$

Information:

- a : constant
- b : independent variable regression coefficient
- II : idealized influence variable

IS	: intellectual stimulation variable
IM	: inspirational motivation variable
IC	: individualized consideration variable
OC	: organizational commitment variable
e	: error

Results and discussion

The respondents of this result are the employees of rural banks in Semarang city, Central Java Province, Indonesia. These are the information of the respondents' gender which can be identified that the male respondents are 100 people or 51% and the female respondents are 98 people or 49%. Thus, it can be concluded that the job characteristics of the object of the research aren't commonly referred to certain gender.

The identification respondents based on age, it explains that the number of respondents aged 20-30 years are 71 respondents or 36%, respondents aged 31-40 years are 79 respondents or 40%, respondents aged 41-50 years are 40 respondents or 20%, and respondents aged more than 50 years are 8 respondents or 4%. The conclusion is that the majority of these respondents are in productive age.

Regarding working period, respondents are able to be identified as follow: respondents who having working period less than 5 years are 96 people or 48%, respondents who having working period 6 to 10 years are 56 people or 28%, respondents who having working period 11 to 15 years are 12 people or 6%, and respondents who having working period more than 15 years are 34 people or 17%. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of respondents has had long tenure, 52% working more than 5 years. It is one of indicators that they have good commitment. They keep staying in organization, not leaving it.

The identification of respondents based on the level of education shows that the number of respondents who have a level education as high school are 21 respondents or 11%; respondents who have a diploma level are 12 respondents or 6%; 157 respondents are undergraduate education level or 79%; and respondents who have master degree are 8 respondents or 4%. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of respondents has good education. It is one of valuable resources for organization to advance forward.

Table 1

Reliability test result

Number	Variable	Cronbach's alpha result	Cut-Off	Criteria
1	II	0.746	0.70	Reliable
2	IS	0.745	0.70	Reliable
3	IM	0.783	0.70	Reliable
4	IC	0.835	0.70	Reliable
5	OC	0.825	0.70	Reliable

Source: SPSS output, 2020

Based on Table 1 it is indicated that all items of questionnaires are reliable. It is known from the Cronbach's alpha result that are all higher than cut-off 0.70. The questionnaire items can be used to measure the indicator of variables.

Table 2
F Test Result

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	22.330	4	5.582	28.856	.000 ^b
Residual	37.337	193	0.193		
Total	59.667	197			

Source: SPSS output, 2020

Based F test, it is indicated that model proposed is fit. It is known from significant value 0.000 under 0.05. Thus, the model can be used for the next analysis.

Table 3
t Test Result

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std.Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.520	0.340		1.528	0.128		
II	0.177	0.110	0.139	1.612	0.109	0.438	2.284
IS	-0.154	0.088	-0.144	-1.753	0.081	0.479	2.089
IM	0.535	0.089	0.484	6.011	0.000	0.499	2.003
IC	0.264	0.083	0.219	3.185	0.002	0.684	1.461

a. Dependent Variable : OC

Source: SPSS output, 2020

$$Y = 0.520 + 0.177II - 0.154IS + 0.535IM + 0.264IC$$

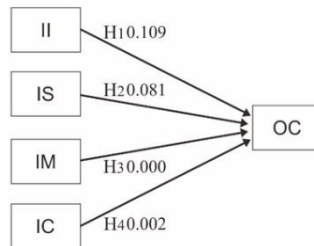


Figure 2. Research Result.
Source: SPSS output, 2020.

Based Table 3 and Figure 2 it is known that idealized influence and intellectual stimulation variables have no significant effect on organizational commitment. It is indicated by the significant levels that are higher than 0.05, namely: 0.109 and 0.080 successively. Meanwhile for inspirational motivation and individual consideration variables, they positively affect to organizational commitment. It is seen from the levels of significance that are under 0.05, namely: 0.000 and 0.002 successively.

The effect of idealized influence toward organizational commitment

The finding of this research proves that a significance level 5% idealized influence does not affect toward organizational commitment. The t test score from this study is 0.109 and that is an evidence from this research, this score shows that it is more than 0.05. It means that the first hypothesis in this research is rejected. This mean that idealized influence does not have any effects to organizational commitment.

The argument that can support the findings are; idealized influence has not been able to run effectively and efficiently; meaning that a leader cannot be a role model as an inspiration for the followers so that it cannot have an impact to organizational commitment. The findings in this research are appropriate with the findings of Salas-Vallina et al. (2020) and Rich (1997) but this is not in accordance with the findings by Thao and Kang (2020) and Pradhan and Pradhan (2015).

The effect of intellectual stimulation toward organizational commitment

The finding of this research prove that a significance level 5% intellectual commitment does not affect toward organizational commitment. The t score from this study is 0.081, this score shows that it is greater

than 0.05. It means that the second hypothesis in this research is rejected. This means that intellectual stimulation does not affect organizational commitment.

The argument that can support the findings of this study is that intellectual stimulation has not been well responded by the followers/subordinates so that it does not increase the affective commitment of subordinates/followers, therefore these findings cannot influence toward organizational commitment. The findings of this research are appropriate with the findings of Huo et al. (2020), and Kirabira (2020), but this is not in accordance with the findings by Tang et al. (2020) and Yang (2015).

The effect of motivation inspirational toward organizational commitment

The finding of this research prove that a significance level 5% inspirational motivation has a significant positive effect on the organizational commitment. This is evident from t test of 0.000 with the beta score showing positive side. It means that the third hypothesis in this research is accepted. This means that the higher inspirational motivation has an impact for the higher organizational commitment.

This finding is appropriate with other researches proposed by Lian and Tui (2012) who state that inspirational motivation influence organizational commitment. Inspirational motivation means that the leader can increase subordinates' awareness regarding vision and mission organization and encourage the subordinates to understand and commit to the vision and mission (Shiva & Suar, 2012). Another behavior in this dimension is that a leader often talks for the future of his organization optimistically, a leader talks passionately about solving problem in the organization. In addition, a leader is optimistic that the goals of organization will be achieved. Moreover, this dimension has an influence in affective commitment (Al-Ghazali, 2020). Thus, the subordinates who participate as respondents in this research respond sufficiently in increasing affective commitment when the leader talks about vision mission and the goals of organization in future (Kim & Beehr, 2020).

The effect of individualized consideration toward organizational commitment

This finding of the research proves that a significance level 5% individualized consideration has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment. This is evident from t test of 0.002 with beta score showing positive side. It means that the last hypothesis in this research is accepted. This means that the higher individualized consideration has an impact for the higher organizational commitment.

This finding is appropriate with other researches proposed by Ding and Lin (2020), Malik et al. (2017), Pierro et al. (2013) and Franke and Felfe (2011) who state that individualized consideration influence organizational commitment. This dimension is related to basic transformational in treating the

subordinates as the important parties. Leader's behavior in this dimension includes: a leader always provides time to guide the junior subordinates, a leader pays a good attention to subordinates, and a leader knows that his subordinates have needs and aspiration differently. Regarding the regression test, it is known that this dimension has contribution to affective commitment Dhaouadi and Sliti (2020). This indicates that the subordinates feel indicators above done by the leader so that subordinates respond.

Conclusions

The conclusion of this research is that the inspirational motivation and individualized consideration variables proved to have significant positive effect toward organizational commitment. Meanwhile, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation have no effect on organizational commitment. The limitation of this research is that R square value is low, which is 37.4%. Therefore, regarding that limitation, the suggestion for the next research is to modify the model of this research by adding variables that are more dominant in influencing organizational commitment such as employees' performance, job satisfaction, organizational knowledge, and many more. Thus, the new model will be better.

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Annex

Research questionnaires

Table A1
 The following statements numbers 1-6 are about idealized influence

Num	Statement	DS	D	N	A	AS
1	Leaders feel comfortable and proud of their relationships with subordinates					
2	Leaders take aside self-interest for the group interest					
3	Leaders are respected by their subordinates					
4	Leaders have good self-confidence					
5	Leaders talk about values and beliefs that are important in the organization					
6	Leaders view the importance of the organization having a strong vision and goals					

Table A2
 The following statements number 7-10 are about intellectual stimulation

Num	Statement	DS	D	N	A	AS
7	Leaders review important assumptions whether they are still relevant					
8	Leaders provide another point of view when solving problems					
9	The leader gives advice to his subordinates to approach the problem from various points of view					
10	Leader suggests new ways to be used to complete existing tasks					

Table A3
 The following statements numbers 11-14 are about inspirational motivation

Num	Statement	DS	D	N	A	AS
11	Leaders talk about the future of the organization with optimism					
12	Leaders talk about what needs to be done with passion					
13	Leaders articulate their organization's future vision well					
14	Leaders believe that organizational goals will be achieved					

Table A4

The following Statements Number 15-18 are regarding Individualized Consideration

Num	Statement	DS	D	N	A	AS
15	Leaders make time for their subordinates' learning					
16	The leader treats his subordinates personally					
17	Leaders understand that subordinates have different needs, abilities and aspirations					
18	Leaders help subordinates to develop their talents					

Table A5

The following statements Number 19-25 are about Organizational Commitment

Num	Statement	DS	D	N	A	AS
19	I am very proud to spend my career in this company					
20	I really feel that this company's problem is also my own problem					
21	I think that I am not as easily attached to other companies as I am to this company					
22	I feel like I'm part of the company's big family					
23	I feel emotionally attached to this company					
24	This company means a lot to me					
25	I have a strong sense of belonging to this company					

DS: Disagree Strongly

D : Disagree

N : Neutral

A : Agree

AS: Agree Strongly