

Impact of Transformational Leadership Style on Achieving Digital Transformation Strategy a Field Study on Employees of the General Electricity Company

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore the impact of transformational leadership style on achieving the digital transformation strategy, focusing on a sample of employees at the General Electricity Company. A questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, with 348 questionnaires distributed to participants. Out of these, 298 valid responses were retrieved for analysis. The findings reveal a significant positive impact of the transformational leadership style on achieving the digital transformation strategy, particularly in terms of idealized influence and inspirational motivation. The study also highlights the importance of having a clear vision, mission, and strategic digital goals as a foundation for initiating the digital transformation journey. This underscores the need for a digital leader, emphasizing leadership as a critical factor in determining the successful implementation of digital transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational changes are typically driven by senior management. Therefore, they need to be convinced of the necessity and positive aspects of change, both for themselves and their organization. Such a perspective demonstrates that only the leader's vision can drive organizational success and growth through the adoption of any form of transformation. In this context, leaders in organizations adopt digital transformation initiatives to break away from traditional practices and patterns and to address competition to achieve digital leadership. Digital transformation is unattainable without a leader who establishes a solid foundation for change and motivates stakeholders to take action. A transformational leader is one who strategically applies technology to foster sustainable business growth and success.

The rapid advancements in technology and the increasing complexity of the business environment have made digital transformation a critical strategy for organizations to remain competitive and sustainable. In this context, leadership plays a pivotal role in guiding organizations through the challenges of adopting and implementing digital transformation strategies. Transformational leadership, characterized by its ability to inspire, motivate, and foster innovation, has been widely recognized as a key factor in driving successful organizational change. This leadership style not only influences the adoption of new technologies but also shapes an organizational culture that supports agility, collaboration, and continuous learning.

The General Electricity Company, as a cornerstone of essential infrastructure, faces unique challenges in aligning its workforce and operations with the demands of digital transformation. Understanding the impact of transformational leadership on achieving digital transformation strategies within this organization is crucial to identify the pathways for overcoming resistance to change, enhancing employee engagement, and leveraging innovation. This study aims to explore the relationship between transformational leadership and digital transformation success by examining the experiences and perspectives of the employees within the General Electricity Company. By doing so, it seeks to provide actionable insights for fostering leadership practices that can drive sustainable digital transformation in the energy sector and beyond.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is recognized as a cornerstone of effective management (Wehrich et al., 2008). It is a primary driver that significantly contributes to the prosperity of organizations and nations. Companies like General Electric and Chrysler have transitioned from the brink of bankruptcy to becoming two of the most profitable organizations globally due to effective leadership (Robbins & Coulter, 2007). Moreover, powerful nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and France have risen to prominence on the foundation of effective leadership (Wehrich et al., 2008). Ultimately, leaders within organizations and nations are the driving force behind change. Transformational leadership theory has been a focal point of organizational

leadership research for the past three decades. Developed by Burns and further enhanced by Bass, the main hypothesis of transformational leadership theory is the leader's ability to motivate followers to achieve beyond what they initially planned (Krishnan, 2005). Four elements make up transformational leadership: Individualized Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation, Inspirational Motivation, and Idealized Influence (Bass, 1985). According to Burns' theory, transformational leaders motivate their people to do more by concentrating on their values and helping them to match them with the organization's. Since leadership combines the pursuit of competitive advantage with entrepreneurial endeavors, which enhance organizational welfare, it is essential for success. (Emran, Elhony ,2023). that both transactional and transformational leadership styles are useful for encouraging innovative activity and job succession, and that having transformational leadership boosts employees' self-esteem and inspires them.

By motivating followers to come up with creative ideas and improve the workplace, transformational leadership places an emphasis on meeting both basic requirements and higher-order aspirations. The influence of transformational leaders' actions on followers is a good indicator of their efficacy; followers of transformational leaders show respect, admiration, trust, and gratitude for them and are inspired to go above and beyond. Adopting essential human resources is the main goal of transformational leadership in order to execute organizational transformations successfully. As a result, this leadership theory clarifies the strategic role that follower attitudes and values play in achieving greater effectiveness and emphasizes the significance of employees in putting organizational reforms into action. Since there is a great deal of unpredictability in today's global business contexts, firms will require more transformational leaders that are more inventive and creative. (Ghasabeh, 2015). Employee confidence and motivation are increased when transformative leadership is present. (Emran , Elhony , 2023).

Four characteristics of transformative leadership have been discovered by a study by Bass (1985): intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration. While individualized consideration places more emphasis on recognizing the unique needs of each employee, empowering followers, creating a learning environment, and rallying support for organizational objectives, the idealized influence dimension seeks to create a shared vision and cultivate strong relationships with followers. Conversely, intellectual stimulation encourages the exchange of knowledge, which leads to the development of more creative concepts and solutions. Last but not least, inspirational motivation places a strong emphasis on motivating human resources, raising the bar for what is desirable of them. (Vithanage, 2020) argues that leaders need to exhibit traits of transformational leadership to be effective. However, (Bass, 1985) argues that empirical evidence tends to support the view that leaders will increase their effectiveness when they demonstrate both transformational and transactional behaviors.

Transformational leadership provides a clear vision that encourages employees to embrace the organization's overarching goals and values,

enabling them to recognize the importance of contributing to the achievement of this vision. It motivates and inspires employees to challenge the status quo by leveraging motivation and inspiration within the work environment, encouraging them to adopt new approaches to problem-solving (Purwanto et al., 2023). Furthermore, fostering digital innovation in big businesses requires an innovation culture. Employee development is highly valued by transformational leaders. They give them the instruction and materials required to develop the abilities necessary for digital innovation. The success of digital innovation projects depends on this investment in staff development. Creating a feeling of urgency around digital innovation is another skill that transformational leaders excel at. (Varghese & Kurup, 2020). The effect of transformational leadership on digital innovation in Kenyan firms has been studied by Njeru and Were (2020). The findings show that digital innovation benefits from transformational leadership and that organizational culture, communication, and employee involvement all play a role in mediating this link. Likewise, a research by (Ng'ang'a and Njiru, 2020) has emphasized the role of transformational leadership in driving digital innovation and performance in Kenyan banks. The study finds that transformational leadership has a positive impact on digital innovation and that the relationship is mediated by factors such as employee motivation, communication, and organizational culture. The study of (Klein, 2023) has indicated that transformational leadership has positive impacts on employees' organizational behaviors. The study of (Ismail et al., 2010) has found that the ability of leaders to implement transformational and transactional styles effectively can lead to increased positive individual outcomes, especially perceptions of justice and trust in leaders. A study by (Bryant, 2003) has confirmed that by using an appropriate mix of transformational and transactional leadership styles, managers can increase the levels of knowledge creation, sharing, and utilization in companies. A study by (Sultana, 2015) has concluded that both transformational and transactional leadership styles have their strengths and weaknesses, but the transformational leadership style is generally more accepted. Bass stated that the role of a transformational leader is to balance the interests of the organization with the needs of its members (Bass, 1999). The transformational leadership style emphasizes ethical principles, teamwork, community, and exceptional human values. The general concept of transformational leadership consists of several key points. First, the leader's ability to motivate followers by focusing on their needs, principles, ethics, and virtues. Second, transformational leaders generate and articulate a vision-related goal. They also empower others to move toward a shared goal and focus on the interests and needs of relevant groups. Some elements of transformational leadership that are promising but have not received much attention include:

- (a) Ability of transformational leaders to reassess and reverse decisions made by followers.
- (b) Ability of followers to cope with difficulty, uncertainty, and insecurity.
- (c) Inclination of transformational leaders toward action and proactive engagement.

The characteristics of a transformational leader are evident in their ability to develop a vision and mission for the organization and communicate that vision effectively, inspiring and motivating followers to embrace it (A-Raqb, 2010). Transformational leader possesses the ability to focus on effective communication, empathy, endurance, and the capacity to perform as a strategic leader (Yi La et al., 2020). They are adept at building trust and respect, which, in turn, inspires and motivates their followers (Najm, 2014). Additionally, transformational leaders exhibit creative behaviors, characterized by innovation (Waer, 2015). They are also highly skilled in driving change and managing crises effectively (Waer, 2015). A study by (Yukl, 1999) has suggested several guidelines for enhancing transformational leadership theory including building a challenging and inspiring vision, in cooperation with followers, and linking the vision to a policy for achieving its success. Working on developing and defining the vision and explaining its procedures, expressing determination and hope regarding the vision and implementing it before the full implementation of the plan, try to understand the vision through small planned steps and small achievements.

Digital Transformation

Although modern tech companies were the pioneers of digital transformation, industries rooted in the industrial era such as healthcare, electronics, machinery, energy, and automotive are now following the path of digital transformation. This transformation can create new opportunities, such as collecting and leveraging data by connecting products, customers, companies, and systems capable of making decisions autonomously (Remane, 2017). Digital Transformation refers to the process by which organizations adopt and integrate digital technologies into their operations, strategies, and business models. It involves the systematic management of digital technologies to drive organizational change, revolutionizing operational processes, customer interactions, and value creation within the organization. Digital transformation can be defined as the integration of digital technology into all aspects and processes of an organization, leading to changes in the infrastructure, how the organization operates, and how it delivers value to its customers (Kraus, 2022). Digital transformation has also been defined as changes driven by digital technologies, leading to unique shifts in business processes, operations, and value creation (Nwankpa & Roumani, 2016). Successful digital transformation can have numerous benefits, such as enhanced customer insights and reach higher productivity, and the creation of new business models. Being a digital organization is crucial for staying competitive in the business world. The goal is to seize opportunities for continuous digital transformation to assess the current state of organizational digitization and provide guidance for future investments (Hess & Chanias, 2016). Moreover, digital transformation significantly reduces costs and effort, enabling the rapid and flexible implementation of new services (Applications & Omar, 2020). (Hess et al., 2016) also emphasize that digitization offers productivity improvements, cost reductions, and innovations that also "impact" digital technology itself. (Onetiu, 2020) emphasize that digital

technologies contribute to problem-solving, creativity, and gaining digital expertise. Therefore, implementing digital transformation in public organizations requires adopting new approaches to engage with stakeholders, innovative methods for service delivery, and the establishment of new relationships (Mergel et al., 2019). Successful digital transformation requires more than just technological upgrades; it necessitates a strategic vision for efficiently managing employees equipped with the appropriate digital skills and mindset to perform all operational processes. In organizational management, technological advancements provide companies with opportunities to go beyond merely implementing digital tools to enhance existing processes. Instead, they enable innovation through the creation of new digital products, the development of value chains, and the fundamental transformation of existing projects to achieve full digital transformation (Chernova, 2023). A study by (Brunetti et al., 2020) proposes that a major regional policy for digital transformation should operate in three key directions: developing a digital culture and enhancing digital skills, establishing infrastructures and advanced technologies, and investing in digital ecosystems. The application of digitization in organizations requires attention to refining the skills of human resources and increasing their knowledge to achieve organizational goals efficiently(Emran , Elhony , 2023). THE study (EMRAN , ELHONY , 2024) concludes with recommendations for enhancing digital infrastructure and training human resources to overcome these challenges.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and strategies for achieving digital transformation in public sector organizations. The data used in this study are primary data collected to enrich the literature in the field of business administration; therefore, we conducted a survey using questionnaires. The study population consists of employees at the General Electricity Company, with confidentiality assured for all participants. A total of 348 e-questionnaires are distributed to the company's employees. The items have been measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The process of collecting responses from the target sample took approximately one and a half months, yielding 298 completed and validated responses. Thus, the total sample size for the current study is 298.

RESULTS

Table No. (1) Shows the Following Results:

Dependent Variable		Digital Transformation Strategy						
Analysis Data Independent Variable		R ²	F		B0	B1	T	
			Calculated	Tabulated			Calculated	Tabulated
Transformational Leadership Dimensions	Overall Indicator	0.71	163.358	6.96	0.298	0.93	12.781	2.37
	Idealized Influence	0.57	89.594	6.96	1.938	0.76	9.465	2.37
	Inspirational Motivation	0.49	64.682	6.96	1.624	0.56	8.043	2.37
	Intellectual Stimulation	0.40	45.079	6.96	1.727	0.58	6.714	2.37

	Individualized Consideration	0.37	40.157	6.96	1.821	0.51	6.337	2.37
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There is a statistically significant effect of the Inspirational Motivation dimension on the Digital Transformation Strategy in the surveyed organization, accounting for 49% (0.49) of the total variance in the strategy, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.49$). This effect is supported by the calculated F-value of (64.682), which exceeds the tabular value of 6.96 for degrees of freedom (1.68) at a significance level of (0.01). The remaining 51% (0.51) of the variance is attributed to other variables, which may be outside the scope of control or not included in the research. Furthermore, the Regression Coefficient (Beta) confirms that a one-unit change in Inspirational Motivation leads to a 56% (0.56) change in the Digital Transformation Strategy, which is statistically significant, as indicated by the calculated t-value of (9.465), compared to the tabular value of (2.37) at a significance level of (0.01). This suggests that the surveyed organization can drive the adoption of a digital transformation strategy by having leaders who possess the Inspirational Motivation indicator.

There is a statistically significant effect of the Idealized Influence dimension on the Digital Transformation Strategy in the surveyed organization, accounting for 57% (0.57) of the total variance in the strategy, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.57$). This effect is supported by the calculated F-value of (89.594), which exceeds the tabular value of (6.96) for degrees of freedom (1.68) at a significance level of (0.01). The remaining 43% (0.43) of the variance is attributed to other variables, which may be outside the scope of control or not included in the research. Furthermore, the Regression Coefficient (Beta) confirms that a one-unit change in Idealized Influence leads to a 56% (0.56) change in the Digital Transformation Strategy, which is statistically significant, as indicated by the calculated t-value of (8.043), compared to the tabular value of (2.37) at a significance level of (0.01). This suggests that the leaders of the surveyed organization can drive the adoption of a digital transformation strategy by having leaders who possess the Idealized Influence indicator.

There is a statistically significant effect of the Individualized Consideration dimension on the Digital Transformation Strategy in the surveyed organization, accounting for 37% (0.37) of the total variance in the strategy, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.37$). This effect is supported by the calculated F-value of (40.157), which exceeds the tabular value of (6.96) for degrees of freedom (1.68) at a significance level of (0.01). The remaining 63% (0.63) of the variance is attributed to other variables, which may be outside the scope of control or not included in the research. Furthermore, the Regression Coefficient (Beta) confirms that a one-unit change in Individualized Consideration leads to a 51% (0.51) change in the Digital Transformation Strategy, which is statistically significant, as indicated by the calculated t-value of (6.337), compared to the tabular value of (2.37) at a significance level of (0.01). This suggests that the surveyed organization can drive the adoption of a digital

transformation strategy by having leaders who possess the Individualized Consideration indicator.

There is a statistically significant effect of the Intellectual Stimulation dimension on the Digital Transformation Strategy in the surveyed organization, accounting for 49% (0.49) of the total variance in the strategy, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.49$). This effect is supported by the calculated F-value of (45.079), which exceeds the tabular value of (6.96) for degrees of freedom (1.68) at a significance level of (0.01). The remaining 60% (0.60) of the variance is attributed to other variables, which may be outside the scope of control or not included in the research design. Furthermore, the Regression Coefficient (Beta) confirms that a one-unit change in Intellectual Stimulation leads to a 58% (0.58) change in the Digital Transformation Strategy, which is statistically significant, as indicated by the calculated t-value of (6.714), compared to the tabular value of (2.37) at a significance level of (0.01). This suggests that the surveyed organization can drive the adoption of a digital transformation strategy by having leaders who possess the Intellectual Stimulation indicator.

The results show that transformational leadership positively impacts the Digital Transformation Strategy. These results confirm that transformational leaders can enhance the digital vision. Thus, organizations need to seek leaders with transformational leadership abilities to digitally transform their operations to stay competitive, grow, and evolve. Similarly, transformational leadership positively impacts the achievement of the organization's digital mission, as transformational leadership tends to make the organization change rapidly to meet the requirements of digital transformation. Consequently, organizations aiming for success in digital transformation shall seek leaders with transformational leadership indicators who can view problems from different perspectives and strive to achieve the organization's mission. Similarly, transformational leadership positively impacts the achievement of the organization's goals, as it encourages the organization to change swiftly to meet the requirements of digital transformation.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study were consistent with the results of the study of each of: (Remane, 2017) , (Hess & Chanias, 2016) , (Chernova, 2023) , (Applications & Omar, 2020). (Hess et al., 2016) . The only vision that may lead to organizational success and growth through the acceptance of any type of change is that of transformational leaders. In order to run a digital company, transformational leaders in organizations adopt digital transformation concepts only to break old patterns and paradigms and to deal with competition. Without a leader who builds the framework and motivates stakeholders to take action, digital transformation is impossible. A leader is the one who applies technology with consideration in order to promote long-term success. Transformational leaders discover methods to inspire workers, build productive teams, set goals, persuade others, and start long-lasting change in a way that capitalizes on the organization's and workers' strengths while minimizing the shortcomings and risks.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of transformational leadership in promoting digital innovation and performance in big businesses. In order to remain at the forefront of advancement, firms must adjust and embrace new technology as the business environment grows more competitive and complex. By encouraging and motivating staff members, cultivating an innovative culture, and encouraging cooperation at all organizational levels, transformational leadership sparks change. Large firms can successfully handle the difficulties of digital transformation, including reluctance to change, restricted access to qualified personnel, and insufficient infrastructure, by adopting transformational leadership. Transformational leaders can draw in and keep great talent—a crucial component of digital transformation—by emphasizing employee development and motivation. Additionally, data-driven decision-making and the use of successful change management techniques are made easier by transformational leadership, guaranteeing that leaders can maintain their organizations' flexibility and adaptability in the face of change.

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the enhancement of digital transformation is affected by transformational leadership. The study results indicate the necessity for transformational leaders to possess a set of traits such as integrity, the ability to inspire and motivate, openness to new thinking and vision, as well as a readiness to take responsibility, spread knowledge, and make fact-based decisions, all of which contribute to the higher success rate of digital transformation strategy implementation. In general, there are similarities between the results of this study and those of previous studies. This study shows that both the company and its employees share a common responsibility in promoting the digital transformation strategy, and thus, the company and employees need to work together to achieve this goal. Also, it can be concluded from this study that the company needs to create and develop a supportive organizational culture, strong work ethics, and improved motivation, which will enhance its success in digital transformation. The application of digitization in organizations requires attention to refining the skills of human resources and increasing their knowledge to achieve organizational goals efficiently.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research could focus on the specific role of transformational leadership characteristics, such as integrity, vision and data-driven decision-making, in different stages of digital transformation. In addition, it is important to explore the influence of employee engagement, organisational culture and skills development on transformation success. Comparative studies between large and small companies, as well as across cultures, can also provide insights into leadership effectiveness in different contexts. Research on barriers to digital transformation, frameworks for measuring success, and the role of leadership in the adoption of new technologies such as AI and IoT, is also relevant. Longitudinal studies can track the long-term impact of transformational

leadership on the sustainability of digital transformation. These studies will enrich practical insights for organisations to adapt in the digital age.

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