



---

# IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AT NAHDLATUL ULAMA (NU) HIGHER EDUCATION

By  
Saipul Wakit  
Jember Muhammadiyah University  
Email: [saipulwakitunmuh@gmail.com](mailto:saipulwakitunmuh@gmail.com)

---

## Article Info

### Article history:

Received Nov 04, 2022  
Revised Dec 16, 2022  
Accepted Jan 28, 2023

---

### Keywords:

Implementation,  
Leadership,  
Transformational and  
Nahdlatul Ulama  
Higher Education

---

## ABSTRACT

Universities in the 4.0 era are required to keep abreast of developments in several aspects including science and technology. Because of these factors, higher education is recommended to be adaptive and make changes quickly. Changes in tertiary institutions are certainly inseparable from the role of leaders who are in control of the sustainability of the institution both in terms of managerial, supervision, coordination, policy and to carry out stimulation, motivation, exemplary and consideration between elements within the organization. To implement a transformation, it takes the leadership's efforts to carry out the elements contained in transformational leadership. Answer some of the focus of the problem and the purpose of data collection is done through observation, interviews and documentation. This is done because this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The results of the study explain that the motivation carried out by the leaders uses two techniques, namely formal and non-formal motivation, while exemplary is implemented in several ways, namely performance, discipline, worship and organizational commitment and uswah hasanah. Intellectual stimulation is carried out through a system of work performance, assignments and expertise, while for consideration it is carried out through communication between leaders and employees which is carried out vertically or horizontally with a bottom up or top down system that emphasizes compassion, sharpening and caring.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.*



---

## Corresponding Author:

Saipul Wakit  
Jember Muhammadiyah University  
Email: [saipulwakitunmuh@gmail.com](mailto:saipulwakitunmuh@gmail.com)

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the ability possessed by a leader in influencing others to take action or work. According to (Robins, 2002) leadership is an important element in both profit and non-profit organizations. In the context of non-profit organizations, leadership functions as a driver and manager to achieve the vision and mission of the organization (Gibson, 1989). The implementation of leadership in the non-profit sector includes social organizations and higher education institutions. Higher education is an organization in which there are several elements whose orientation is to educate, guide and train students with the tri dharma principles of higher education.

In the context of higher education, the leader includes several elements, namely the chancellor, assistant chancellor, head of study program and dean. However, the one who has a strategic role and function is the chancellor who structurally oversees all the leaders in the institution. The function of leadership according to (Sukatin, 2017) in educational institutions is as a planner, determinant of progress direction policies, developers, decision makers and as a motivator. In addition, higher education leaders play an important role in organizing and managing the institution. so that in leadership according to (Ainun, 2017) a leader must have experience in organizing institutions and have the ability to communicate well with all elements in it.

Era 4.0 leaders have a central role in making rapid changes according to the current situation and conditions. In the context of leadership that leads to rapid change, it is synonymous with a transformational leadership style. This leadership style according to (Bass and Avolio, 1990) has the characteristics of playing an active role in the

organization by being a role model, a motivator, carrying out intellectual stimulation of subordinates and carrying out individual and group considerations. Furthermore (Saipul, 2021) explains that in the context of transformational leadership, *uswah hasanah* is needed in various aspects, namely morals, work ethic, worship and organizational commitment.

In the context of implementing transformational leadership, it is certainly an important element that must be cultivated and preserved. This is as explained by (Kurniawati, 2023) that transformational leadership has an influence on work discipline with a total influence of 48.5% of 100 respondents. Furthermore (Komariah, 2022) explains practically in his research that transformational leadership is an effective and efficient leadership model in organizations. Based on the arguments and research results that have been put forward by previous studies, transformational leadership is a model that is dynamic and contextual in accordance with the times. The reason that underlies researchers focus on examining the implementation of transformational leadership in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) universities is because based on observations it is found that there are phenomena in the field that show the implementation of transformational leadership. In addition, the leadership in carrying out its functions does things such as motivation, stimulation, consideration and example both in work, attitude, speaking and communication. The uniqueness of the Nahdlatul Ulama-based tertiary institution is that there are organizational ideological values that underlie and become the basis for planning and implementing the goals of the institution to be implemented by all elements of the institution. In addition, there is religious culture or *amaliyah* which is implemented in academic and non-academic activities based on *ahlusunnah waljamaah an-nahdhiyah*.

Based on theory, previous research and phenomena in the field, in practice this article will explain the implementation of the rector's transformational leadership at Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) tertiary institutions with a focus on exploring how the rector does motivation, stimulation, exemplary and consideration with all the elements in it. The purpose of this research is to explore the chancellor's efforts to set an example, motivate, stimulate and consider the various elements of the institution he leads.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODE

The research was conducted using a qualitative method with a case study approach at the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) higher education institution (Djunaidi, 2017). The data collection technique was carried out using three methods, namely interviews which are activities to gather information from informants about the implementation of transformational leadership. Observations were made to see phenomena and activities in the field related to the implementation of transformational leadership from all elements in it. Documentation is used to explore data related to the focus of research by utilizing documents in the field, both in the form of files and hard copies of documents (Creswell, 2015). Data analysis techniques use interpretation techniques where findings in the field are then discussed with theory and with previous research. To check the validity of the data, triangulation was carried out and discussions with colleagues, informants and experts (Sugiono, 2017).

## 3. RUSULTS AND ANALISYS

Based on the results of research that explains the chancellor's transformational leadership style, it is certainly inseparable from the theory initiated by (Bass and Avolio, 1990), namely exemplary, motivation, stimulation and consideration. The practical implementation is explained below:

### a. Implementation of the Chancellor's exemplary values in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) College.

The Chancellor as a higher education leader acts as a driver and managerial controller in the organization. Apart from having a strategic role and function, the Chancellor is a public figure who is an example or manifestation of the human resources he leads. The Chancellor as a role model, of course, every speech, behavior and policy must be based on good values. In the Islamic context, a leader must become *uswah hasanah* in various aspects, namely morals, worship and social. This is very necessary because leaders are central figures in everyday life who reflect Islamic values based on the Qur'an and hadith.

The implementation of exemplary in Nahdlatul Ulama tertiary institutions as found in the field found several things, namely exemplary work, worship and organizational commitment. Practically, some of the exemplary elements can be explained below:

#### 1) Exemplary in Work

Exemplary work is an important element in developing and achieving institutional goals to be better. According to Gede, (2014) performance is the result of work that has been produced by someone in a certain time. Meanwhile, according to (Amstrong, 1998) has another view that performance is an achievement that is measurable and in accordance with the time and costs used in carrying out a job. So that the indicators used as benchmarks for the performance of a leader according to (House in Yani, 2022) are elements that determine the achievement of institutional goals which are based on several things, namely directive,



supportive, participatory and work performance oriented. However, in the context of higher education, the performance of leaders based on the Law on Higher Education Year 2012 is based on the performance of the Tridharama of Higher Education. However, in the context of private tertiary institutions which are managed by foundations or organizations based on the chess dharma of higher education, namely research, service, teaching and the values of Ahlusunnah Waljamaan An-Nahdiyah.

Practically the exemplary form of a leader in working at Nahdlatul Ulama college is as follows:

- a. Attend and go home according to the schedule set by the foundation.
- b. Carry out its duties and functions as it should.
- c. Not procrastinating work and oriented to complete work.
- d. Performance is based on quality both in terms of service, orientation, goals, processes and results.
- e. Performance is based on the vision and mission of the institution
- f. Disciplined in all things
- g. Time and budget efficiency
- h. Work based on science and technology.
- i. Good intentions at work
- j. Prioritizing the institution over personal interests
- k. Transparency in the budget for the benefit of the institution.

## 2) Exemplary Worship

Worship is an important element in the religion of Islam because it is a basic part that is hierarchical in the relationship between humans and their gods. According to (Mahjudin in Sudarsono, 2018) worship is a medium for interacting or communicating between servants and God. Meanwhile, according to (Sudarsono, 2018) worship is the consequence of a servant, namely humans and jinns to worship Allah SWT. Based on the arguments about the meaning of worship as put forward by experts, it is very contextual where the exemplary behavior of the leaders in terms of worship includes vertical and horizontal worship. Vertically, worship that is carried out by all elements in the institution is worship that is mahdhah and ghairu mahdhah. Worship that is fardhu such as praying in congregation at noon at the campus mosque, praying sunnah qobliyah and badi'ah, being a preacher for Friday prayers, attending khatmil Qur'an on campus once a month, participating in tahlil activities, istighasah on campus, organizing activities on Islamic holidays carried out by the ahlusunnah waljamaah development agency, visiting sick co-workers, conducting ta'ziah when a colleague has passed away and strengthening interpersonal friendships.

## 3) Exemplary in Organization

Nahdlatul Ulama College is an institution under the auspices of a foundation or organization. So that anyone who works in the institution is required to be loyal and have a commitment to develop the institution and organization that oversees it. According to (Rahim, 2013) the Nahdlatul Ulama effort consists of three elements, namely da'wah, education and social. Meanwhile, socially, the existence of Nahdlatul Ulama has played an important role in the development of Islamic boarding schools in various parts of Indonesia since its inception. Historically, according to (Amin, 2016), Nahdlatul Ulama is an organization that is based on Islamic law and implements Islamic religious values and is based on Indonesianness and nationalism.

As for the practical implementation carried out by university leaders as a form of insanity in organizing, namely being active in the management of the Nahdlatul Ulama branch and being active in activities and events organized by the organization. This is as explained by (Taufik, 2016) that nahdlatul ulama is an Islamic organization in which there are philosophical values that must be developed from time to time, namely the values of tasawuf and ta'lim which are based on Islamic teachings and the culture of the local community. So that concrete efforts so that Nahdlatul Ulama continues to develop from time to time, namely according to (Taufik, 2016) the following steps are needed 1) innovating and developing educational models within NU, 2) building and cultivating Nusantara Islam, 3) implementing the values the value of diversity in diversity, 4) revive the cultural values of the Indonesian nation, 5) use of technology in da'wah activities and 6) reinforce the principles of independence which are characterized by an independent nation.

### **b. Implementation of the Chancellor in Motivating Subordinates at Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) College.**

Motivation is an encouragement in a person to do work or action (Purwanto, 1996). Meanwhile, according to (Rumhadi, 2017) motivation is an effort made by a leader in influencing others to do something with full awareness and high participation. Based on this understanding in the context of transformational leadership, to produce good performance, every element in the organization requires motivation. Based on research conducted by (Rahsel, 2016) explains that work motivation greatly influences the quality and results of work. Besides that, to improve employee performance in tertiary institutions, motivation can be applied in several

ways, namely 1) giving awards to employees, according to the work performance produced 2) there is good cooperation between leaders and employees as a form of optimization at work.

As for the implementation of motivation carried out by the leadership of the Nahdlatul Ulama tertiary institution to improve employee performance is carried out in a number of ways, namely providing motivation both orally and in writing. Verbal motivation is implemented through directions, advice to employees to take action or work. The mechanisms vary, namely during formal and non-formal activities within the institution. Oral motivation that is formal in nature is carried out during meetings, academic activities, outreach and incidental debriefing. The motivation in writing is done through circulars, policies, notifications and instructions to subordinates to carry out an action or work. The implementation of policy motivation is 1) there are rewards for employees who excel, 2) there are promotions for employees with achievements, 3) there are sanctions for employees who violate institutional rules, 4) discipline is enforced at work, 5) work in Nahdlatul institutions. Scholars must be accompanied by good and sincere intentions which are not only oriented towards work intentions but also intend to worship Allah SWT.

**c. Chancellor's Efforts in Stimulating Subordinate Intellectuals at Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) College.**

Stimulation is a stimulus to perform an action without any element of coercion from other elements. But in the context of transformational leadership according to (Bass, 1990) the stimulation needed is in the intellectual realm. This is necessary because every element in the organization is given full authority to use their minds, ideas and ideas in improving and developing the organization. In this context, subordinates have full authority and responsibility according to their position, duties and functions. The implementation of intellectual stimulation of subordinates in the context of the rector's transformational leadership at the Nahdlatul Ulama College is as follows:

1. Assign responsibilities to employees according to their position and function.

Giving responsibility is part of a leader's trust in subordinates to carry out tasks and performance.

In this context, employees are given the responsibility to carry out their functions and duties properly and correctly. This effort is an effort to stimulate one's intellectual nature naturally, because in carrying out a job of course one uses the mind to think in completing tasks. This is in accordance with what was revealed by (Tania, 2017) that stimulation has a function in giving one's awareness to participate in achieving institutional goals.

2. Providing work according to competence and expertise

Competence is the ability possessed by a person in carrying out work based on knowledge and skills in accordance with predetermined standards. Meanwhile (Kartika, 2014) explains that competence is part of a person's personality which includes several aspects, namely knowledge, skills and work ability. Based on these arguments and theories, it is an important element in assigning tasks to employees based on their competencies. This is confirmed by (Setia, 2020) that competency has a significant influence on employee performance.

3. Give encouragement to express ideas and ideas in completing work.

Humans are endowed with reason as a means to think and express ideas or ideas in life in the world. According to (Yunus, 2020) reason is a gift from Allah SWT which is not possessed by other creatures besides humans which is a manifestation in elevating human levels and dignity. In the view of the Qur'an reason means binding or restraining. In the context of philosophers, experts from Greece interpret reason as the ability to think, but according to Al-Kindi reason is a potential soul. Thus it can be understood that reason is a central element contained in humans which functions as a guide in thinking. In the context of neuroscience according to (Huda, 2020) the place of thinking is in the brain. Because anatomically the brain is a nervous system in the human head that functions to remember, analyze, and distinguish between good and bad things. Thus, a comprehensive thinking ability is needed in completing work or solving a problem. In everyday life, every action or deed must be based on consideration or analysis beforehand. This is as explained by (Huda, 2020) in the Qur'an explaining that reason is the ability to think to gain new knowledge by analyzing the surrounding environment.

4. Provide flexibility in developing self-potential

Self-development activities in the higher education environment are carried out through several activities, namely training in the form of training, workshops and seminars. As for self-development academically, employees are given the freedom to continue their higher education. The policy that supports employee self-development is to provide subsidies for lecturers to continue their doctoral education. As for employees, they are given the opportunity to continue their education or participate in academic and non-academic activities that lead to improvement and development of self-potential. This is in accordance with what was explained by (Mardatillah, 2020) that self-development activities have a significant influence on



the performance of lecturers and employees. This happens because self-development is a primary need for someone in supporting the completion of tasks or performance. The efforts to support self-development activities are motivation, encouragement from leaders within the organization.

#### **d. Chancellor's Consideration with Subordinates at Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) College.**

Consideration is a relationship between leaders and employees that is implemented in direct or indirect communication. In the context of an organization or educational institution, the communication that exists between the leadership and the elements within is carried out humanely. Humanist communication is symbolized by vertical and horizontal communication without any rigid and binding protocols. Vertical leadership relationships are carried out between employees and leaders on the basis of a hierarchical coordination principle. while horizontal communication is reflected in humanist communication between leaders based on persuasive closeness.

The implementation of consideration in Nahdlatul Ulama tertiary institutions is reflected in the attitude of the leadership as a top leader who is more humane with all elements within the Institutional environment (Homsiyah: 2016). Communication between leaders and employees is natural based on certain situations and conditions. so that in terms of communication there is no distance between the leadership and employees which is reflected in compassion, fostering care. The Chancellor as the highest leader with a humanist attitude of consideration indirectly serves as a medium for accommodating aspirations, suggestions, criticisms or suggestions that are constructive for the progress of the Institute. So that with an attitude of consideration between individuals the values of kinship, teamwork and togetherness are well maintained. so that the positive impact obtained is that conflicts between individuals and between groups within the organization can be controlled or prevented as small as possible. Psychologically all elements of the institution will feel protected, cared for and treated equally by the leadership without discriminating against certain units, individuals or groups.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion from the results of the discussion in this research explains that the implementation of transformational leadership carried out by the leadership of the Nahdlatul Ulama tertiary institution is through exemplary which leads to several aspects, namely aspects of performance, commitment and aspects of morality and worship. Motivation is carried out to move subordinates to work according to their respective fields and to generate enthusiasm for doing good deeds through knowledge, institutions and people. Intellectual stimulation is carried out to provide equality and opportunities for anyone in the institution to be able to develop their potential through the institution. Consideration is carried out humanely and communicatively with the aim of forming a solid performance team without any distance between leaders and subordinates so as to minimize conflicts of interest within the organization.

#### **Acknowledgements**

The completion of this research certainly involves many elements, namely all leaders, deans, heads of study programs, employees at NU-based tertiary institutions in the Jember district who have become informants and provided data to researchers. I would like to thank the promoters and co-promoters in writing the dissertation so that it reached the open examination stage at the State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and finally gave birth to published articles.

#### **7. REFERENCES**

- [1] Abnisa. (2016). Leadership in Leadership. Asy-Syukriyyah Journal. Vols 17.
- [2] Armstrong, Michael and Angela Baron. Perfect Management, Institute Of Personal And Development, London, 1998.
- [3] Bass B.M. Bass and Stogdil, (1990). Handbook Leadership, New York. Free Press.
- [4] Djunaidi Ghoni, M. and Fauzan Almansur, (2017). Qualitative Research Methodology, Jogjakarta: Ar-Ruz Media, p.14
- [5] Farih, Amin. Nahdlatul Ulama (Nu) and Its Contribution in Fighting for Independence and Defending the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), Walisongo: Journal of Religious Social Research, Vol. 24 No. 2, Nov. 2016, 251-284.
- [6] Firdaus M. Yunus, et al. The Concept of Reason According to the Perspective of the Koran and Philosophers, Ar-Raniry, International Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol. 7, No. 2, December 2020.
- [7] Gede, et al. Indicator Design and Implementation of Lecturer Performance Assessment in Information Systems, Results of the Indonesian Information Systems National Seminar, 22 September 2014.
- [8] Gibson, Evanevich and Donnelly, (1989). Organization, Behavior, Structure And Process. Jakarta: Erlangga, Volume 1.



- 
- [9] Kartika, Lucia Nurbani. The Effect of Competency Level on the Performance of Office Administration Employees, *Journal of Economics and Business*, Volume XVII No. 1, April 2014.
- [10] Komsiah, Indah. Development and Implementation of Transformative Leadership in Educational Institutions, *TA'ALLUM Journal*, Vol. 04, No. 02, November 2016.
- [11] Kurniawati, Nur Rohma, The Influence of the Madrasah Principal's Transformational Leadership Style, Work Motivation and Work Discipline on the Performance of Madrasah Aliyah Teachers, *JIP (Journal of Educational Sciences)*, Vol. 6, No.1 January 2023.
- [12] Mardatillah. Lecturer Personal Development, *Psychostudy Journal of Psychology* Volume 9 No.3 November 2020.
- [13] Qomariyah, Siti, Contribution of Transformational Leadership and Years of Leader Experience on the Effectiveness of Organizational Efficacy, *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, Vol. 13, No. 4 Year 2022.
- [14] Rahim, Ali. NAHDATUL ULAMA (The Role and System of Education), *Journal of Al Hikmah* Vol. XIV Number 2 of 2013.
- [15] Robins, P Stephen (2002). *Principles of Organizational Behavior* Fifth Edition. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- [16] Rumhadi, Tri. The Urgency of Motivation in the Learning Process The Urgent Of Motivation in Learning Process, *Journal of Religious Education and Training*, Vol. 11, no. 1, 2017.
- [17] Sudarsono, 2018. Worship Education from the Perspective of the Koran and Hadith, *CENDEKIA: Journal of Islamic Studies* Volume 4, Number 1, June 2018.
- [18] Sugiono, (2017) *Educational Research Methods, Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Approaches*, Bandung: CV Alfaberta.
- [19] Taufik Bilfagi, Islam Nusantara; NU's Cultural Strategy in the Midst of Global Challenges, *JURNAL AQLAM: Journal of Islam and Plurality*, Volume 2, Number 1, December 2016.
- [20] W Creswell, John, (2015) *Qualitative Research and Research Design*, Yogyakarta: Student Library, p. 63.
- [21] Wakit, Saipul. Chancellor's Transformational Leadership Style in Improving Lecturer Performance at Private Higher Education (Multi Case Studies at Islamic University of Jember and Muhammadiyah University of Jember) Dissertation, State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2021.
- [22] Yani Restiani Widjaja, The Influence of Leadership and Work Motivation on Employee Performance, *Journal of Management Science*, Vol. 4 No. February 1, 2022.