

# Lecturer Performance in Higher Education: Transformational Leadership, Knowledge Sharing, Change Adaptability and Its Relationship

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## ABSTRACT

Lecturer performance is the real behaviour displayed by a lecturer and as a work achievement that can be produced according to his role as an academic staff. The quality of graduates in higher education is related to the performance of lecturers in the fields of education, research, and community service. Improving lecturer performance requires the commitment of university leaders to make changes to the environment. This study aims to analyse the effect of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing and lecturer performance with moderation of change adaptability. The research was conducted at Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL) with a sample of 201 lecturers. The data that has been collected is analysed with descriptive and inferential analysis of Smart PLS.3. The results showed that transformational leadership has a significant effect on knowledge sharing and lecturer performance. Knowledge sharing has a significant effect on lecturer performance. It was also found that knowledge sharing partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and lecturer performance. Other findings show that change adaptability does not moderate the effect of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing. The implications of the research show that the limitations in making changes are due to difficulties in communicating between lecturers. Cultural factors, especially language, are the main barrier in change adaptability when conveying new ideas that are useful for institutional development.

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, lecturer performance, change adaptability.

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions as canter of knowledge development and research institutions are in dire need of competent educators. Educators play a strategic role in improving science development, research quality, graduate quality, academic reputation, and academic program quality. Competition in the era of globalization increasingly requires universities to provide quality education. As a public university, UNTL is required to be able to adapt to changes and produce superior quality graduates in order to be able to complete tasks and work according to goals. Muharlisiani et al., (2020). One of the factors for the low performance of educators in higher education is the low quality of graduates. In addition, the quality of higher education largely depends on the quality of existing teachers, one of which is determined by the quality of their performance.

Improving the performance of teaching staff can be done by applying the right leadership style (Torlak & Kuzey 2019; Sani et al., 2016) and knowledge sharing culture (Masa'deh et al., 2016). Leadership style is a productive, efficient, and innovative determinant in order to achieve organizational goals efficiently, appropriately, and have an impact on subordinates. A number of studies reveal that transformational leadership has a significant impact in improving lecturer performance (Manurung, 2020; Camps & Rodrigues, 2013; Afsar & Badir, 2014; Raja & Palanichamy, 2011)). These studies

explain that strong transformational leadership can improve lecturer performance in carrying out their functions and duties. However, in several other empirical studies (Elgelal & Noermijati, 2014) said that, transformational leadership has no significant effect on employees' performance. Likewise, the findings of Naeem & Khanzada, (2018) that transformational leadership has no significant effect on employee performance. Thus, the results of research on the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance are still inconsistent. Similarly, research by Brown et al. (2006) and García et al. (2012) shows that there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance.

This study fills the research gap because there are still inconsistent findings regarding the impact of transformational

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leadership on lecturer performance. This study expands the relationship between variables by using the construct of knowledge sharing as a mediator. Knowledge sharing is an important activity that enhances individual abilities and self-improvement, including behavioural improvement (Din & Haron, 2012). A number of studies prove that knowledge sharing has a positive and significant impact on individual performance. Meanwhile, Kuzu & Özilhan, (2014) found that knowledge sharing has a significant impact on employee performance. The same research results were also found in a number of studies (Na-Nan et al., 2019; Nugroho et al., 2020; Swanson et al., 2020; Meher & Mishra, 2021; Kadarusman & Bunyamin, 2021).

Leaders have an important role in encouraging the implementation of knowledge sharing more effectively to improve work behaviour, especially to encourage improved performance (Al-Saffar & Obeidat, 2020). Better work abilities and behaviour can encourage more optimal performance. Therefore, leadership style is able to encourage the implementation of knowledge sharing tends to have implications for improving individual performance. This means that a good knowledge sharing culture in the organization can mediate efforts to improve individual performance through a transformational leadership style. The large role of leaders in higher education is related to the performance of human resources, especially lecturers. many factors determine the performance of higher education, but the most decisive is capable leadership, responsible, and acceptable to subordinates.

Currently, organizations are required to build internal and external synergies in order to live sustainably (Wainaina, 2014). This requires adaptability to an ever-changing environment. The capacity to respond to change and various important demands in the workplace can further enhance the organization's ability to compete (Collie et al., 2018). This capacity is referred to as change adaptability or the organization's ability to anticipate any changes as a result of environmental changes. The capacity to adapt to changing environmental conditions is very important in organizations (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018) and is considered a primary need in every organization. The dynamic nature of the environment requires organizations to innovate to create competitive advantage (Stern & Deimler, 2006; Teece, 2012). Wiltbank et al. (2006) highlighted the support of adaptive organizations have a higher chance of succeeding in the face of any challenges. Adaptive organizations tend to be able to beat competitors by responding to every new opportunity. This condition can lead to improvements in the organization's competitive position thereby improving individual performance (Brown & Eisenhardt, 2003; Schulze & Pinkow, 2020). Basadur et al., (2014) describe change adaptability as the ability to change routines in the organization so that changes that occur can be

better addressed. change adaptability can be conceptualized as a four-stage process consisting of generating, conceptualizing, and solving problems followed by implementing solutions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

### Social Learning and Organizational learning Theory

Social learning theory (SLT) emphasizes the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. In addition, SLT focuses on learning that occurs in a social context. The basic concept of SLT concerns observational learning that leads individuals to learn through observation. SLT explains that individuals learn in organizations by observing the behaviour of others and learning from themselves (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Asad et al., 2021). Intrinsic reinforcement and mental states are very important in the learning process as well as the modeling process to lead to behaviour change. The principles of SLT emphasize how individuals can learn by observing the behaviour of others and the results of this behaviour so that learning can be done without any changes in behaviour, awareness, and understanding in learning (Bandura, 1969). According to Newman & P.R. (2007) and Newman & Newman, (2010), the principles of social learning are assumed to operate in the same way throughout life.

Organizational learning has become an important field of study because learning is part of the process of individuals and groups interacting in organizations (Argyris, 1978; Schon & Senge, 1999). Organizational Learning (Huber, 1991). is concerned with how learning occurs in an organization. The concept of organizational learning emphasizes on how learning occurs which can be influenced by organizational learning and learning culture. Organizational learning focuses on collective learning (Dachler, 1992; Argyris, 1992), emphasizing that organizations take actions that produce new ways of learning so as to change individual behaviour (Ellström, 2010). In addition, organizational learning can be seen as an individual collaborative learning process and a learning process without regard to outcomes. The concept of organizational learning is a simultaneous part of the knowledge management process so that individual knowledge in the organization can always be updated (William, 2012).

### Transformational leadership and lecturer performance

Transformational leadership can stimulate and direct followers to achieve improved individual performance because followers become competent to carry out tasks. Trmal, (2017) suggests that transformational leadership can help improve employee work ability and involvement in organizational activities. According to Pongpearchan, (2016) transformational leadership is necessary in improving the efficiency and

effectiveness of university teaching staff. Bass, (1999); and Siajaya, (2014) stated that transformational leadership is able to make team members care about each other and inspire each other to produce high performance.

Transformational leadership can present an atmosphere and means to increase knowledge about employee performance (Dionne et al., (2004). Transformational leadership also has an indirect effect on organizational commitment and organizational member behaviour through job satisfaction (Alghazo & Al-anazi, 2016). The results of the study found a significant influence between transformational leadership on individual performance (Eliyana & Muzakki, 2019). Furthermore, Sihombing, (2020), outlines the significant effect of transformational leadership on lecturer performance. Similarly, Fauza, (2020) and Manurung, (2020), state that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and lecturer performance. Based on this description, the proposed research hypothesis is as follows.

H1. Transformational leadership affects lecturer performance.

### **Transformational leadership, Knowledge sharing and change adaptability**

Transformational leadership is one of the most widely discussed leadership styles by researchers. This is because transformational leadership is able to arouse the emotions of subordinates so that leaders become role models for all followers and team members to share knowledge and creative ideas in order to work efficiently (Kang et al., 2016; Dappa et al., 2019). In addition, transformational leadership is able to make individuals more creative and work hard to achieve organizational goals. Research results (Neil et al., 2008; Kim, 2012) state that transformational leadership plays an important role in creating a culture of knowledge sharing to build the ability of individuals to inspire through vision towards achieving goals.

A number of research results (Le & Lei, 2017) found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing. Le & Lei, (2018) in their study outlined the significant effect of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing. In addition, (Le et al., 2018) also revealed that transformational leadership is able to arouse followers to improve the implementation of knowledge sharing. Meanwhile, Yin et al. (2020) describe the value of transformational leadership can strongly predict the implementation of knowledge sharing better. Research conducted by Phong & Son, (2020) and Gui et al., (2021), said that there is a significant impact of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing.

The pressure created by changes in the organizational environment is largely due to uncertainty in the organizational environment (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Transformational leaders can anticipate these changes by inspiring so that

it allows for positive changes in adapting by managing the knowledge that the organization has. Existing explicit knowledge can directly increase the speed of innovation while implicit knowledge can affect the quality of innovation (Akram et al., 2018). Transformational leaders are able to encourage great interest in followers with intellectual stimulation, provide development opportunities, communicate high expectations and recognize the work achieved by subordinates (Wang & Howell, 2010). Thus transformational leaders can develop change through increasing individual adaptability to increase knowledge sharing. Change adaptability is illustrated as an important factor that influences the speed of organizational innovation and dealing with change (Nelson et al., 2007; Cullen et al., 2014). Based on the findings of previous research, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

H2. Transformational Leadership affects Knowledge Sharing.

H3. Change adaptability moderates the effect of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing

### **Transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, and lecture performance**

Knowledge sharing is an activity that describes the process of knowledge including experience, information, skills, expertise exchanged, shared, and transferred between individuals as members of the organization. While transformational can encourage increasing individual creativity in the organization (Chaubey et al., 2019; Asad et al., 2021). Knowledge sharing is not a simple knowledge sharing process but rather, organizational members adjust beliefs and actions through intense social interaction. Knowledge sharing activities are supported by knowledge management systems, not only completed at the individual level, because knowledge is recognized as a valuable organizational resource for creating and maintaining competitive advantage (Terry et al., 2013). Knowledge sharing refers to the process of capturing knowledge or transferring knowledge from the source unit to the receiving unit so that the organization achieves a competitive advantage through facilitating knowledge dissemination (Al-Kurdi et al., 2018). Therefore, knowledge sharing has a strong impact on performance because existing knowledge is intensively disseminated such as in university institutions (Madugu & Manaf, 2018). Knowledge sharing is an important dimension of knowledge management which is seen as effective in influencing the process of knowledge exchange between individuals in an organization. Transformational leaders are able to motivate employees to continue to increase knowledge sharing with fellow employees to increase innovation and teamwork so that it has an impact on individual performance (Carvalho & Gomes, 2017).

Knowledge can be embedded in action, contextualized in practice, and subject to actor interpretation (Lepak & Snell,

1999). Furthermore, Argyris, (2017) reinforces this view by suggesting that organizations can learn through individuals to strengthen organizational learning systems. Cheng et al. (2009) consider the exchange of knowledge within a group of individuals as knowledge sharing. A number of researchers (Bircham et al., 2005; Yeşil & Hırlak, 2013; Hussain et al., 2015), state that knowledge sharing refers to the process of capturing knowledge or moving knowledge from a source unit to a receiver unit. A number of research results found that knowledge sharing shows a positive and significant impact on individual performance, (Na-Nan et al., 2019; Nugroho et al., 2020). Based on this description, the following research hypothesis can be proposed.

- H4. Transformational leadership affects lecture performance  
H5. Knowledge sharing mediates the effect of transformational leadership on lecture performance

## METHODS

This research uses a quantitative design based on the philosophy of positivism, namely research aimed at testing general theories to produce specific findings through hypothesis testing related to the relationship between research variables. The population in this study were lecturers at Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e as many as 403 permanent lecturers and contract lecturers spread across eight (8) faculties by distributing questionnaires as many as 235 lecturers. The sample was determined using proportional random sampling (Sekaran, 2003). Data collection methods by means of surveys and interviews to respondents. The survey was assisted by using a questionnaire tool distributed via google form. A totally of 201 questionnaires were distributed to lecturers who returned and declared valid for analysis. Before the questionnaire was distributed, the validity and reliability of the instrument were tested. The test results show that the instrument on the questionnaire has been declared valid and reliable. The questionnaire contains statements about the research variables, namely transformational variables adopted from research conducted by (Bass, 1999; Cho et al., 2019), using 4 dimensions. The knowledge sharing variable was developed from a research instrument conducted by (Masri et al., 2018), using 2 dimensions. The lecturer performance variable was developed from the research Tripla Missão da UNTL (UNTL's Three Pillars of Higher Education) as outlined in Statuto da UNTL-Série I, No. 41 (2010). Furthermore, change adaptability was developed from research conducted by Rzepka et al. (2018), using 2 dimensions. Data that has been collected and has been declared valid is analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis of Smart PLS.

The majority of research respondents were male, as many as 161 (80.1%), while 40 (19.9%) respondents were female. Respondents with the most age  $\geq 50$  years, as many as 99 (49.3%).

In terms of education, the most respondents with S2 (Master) education level, as many as 158 (78.6%). In terms of position and work unit, most respondents were permanent lecturers, 170 (84.6%), followed by contract lecturers, 15 (7.5%). Respondents with a length of service of 10-20 years were 127 (63.2%).

## RESULT

The results of testing the validity and reliability of constructs using PLS analysis tools can be described in Table 4.1 below.

Based on the results of convergent validity testing, it is known that the loading factor value in (Table 1) shows all loading values  $> 0.7$ , which means that the model has met the requirements of convergent validity based on the loading value. Likewise, the average variance extracted (AVE) value has met the model criteria based on convergent validity (AVE  $> 0.50$ ) (Table. 2).

The recommended AVE value is above 0.5 (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013). The analysis results show that all AVE values are  $> 0.5$ , which means that they have met the requirements for convergent validity based on AVE. Furthermore, composite reliability (CR) testing is carried out, where it is recommended to be above 0.7 (Wong, 2013; Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013), Table 2 shows all CR values  $> 0.7$ , meaning that the model has met the requirements of composite reliability. Furthermore, discriminant validity testing with the Fornell-Larcker approach (Table 3) is presented as follows.

Discriminant validity testing (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). can be described from the magnitude of the AVE root value on the latent variable compared to the correlation value between these latent variables and other latent variables. It was found

Table 1 convergent validity

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Outer Loading</i>
Change Adaptability (M)	
M1	0,961
M2	0,886
Knowledge Sharing (M)	
Z1	0,965
Z2	0,844
Lecturer Performance (Y)	
Y1	0,936
Y2	0,937
Transformational Leadership (X)	
X1	0,931
X2	0,903
X3	0,904
X4	0,893

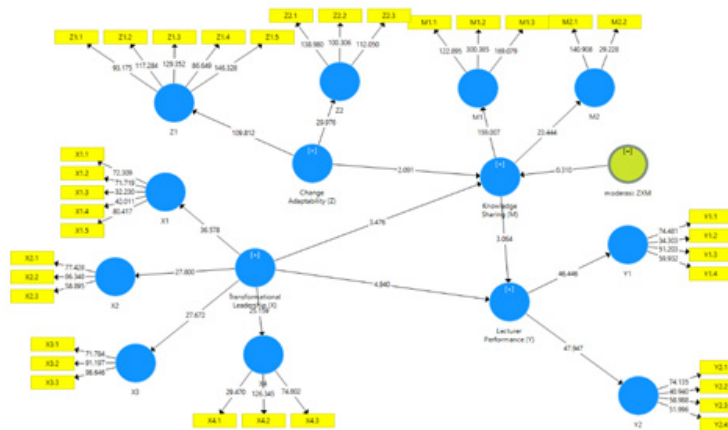


**Table 2:** Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR)

Variabel	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Change Adaptability (M)	0,969	0,797
Knowledge Sharing (Z)	0,940	0,763
Lecturer Performance (Y)	0,955	0,725
Transformational Leadership (X)	0,969	0,694

**Table 3:** Discriminant validity

Variabel	Change Adapt. (M)	Knowledge Sharing (Z)	Lecturer Performance (Y)	Transf. Leadership (X)
Change Adaptability (M)	0,893			
Knowledge Sharing (Z)	0,283	0,874		
Lecturer Performance (Y)	0,324	0,535	0,851	
Transformational Leadership (X)	0,241	0,444	0,636	0,833

**Fig. 1:** Full models of PLS**Table 4:** Hypothesis testing

Variabel	Path coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Description
Knowledge Sharing (Z) → Lecturer Performance (Y)	0,315	3,064	0,002	Supported
Transformational Leadership (X) → Knowledge Sharing (Z)	0,386	3,476	0,001	Supported
Transformational Leadership (X) → Lecturer Performance (Y)	0,497	4,940	0,000	Supported
Transformational Leadership (X) → knowledge sharing (Z) → lecturer performance (Y)	0,121	2,362	0,019	Supported
Change Adaptability (M) → Knowledge Sharing (Z)	0,181	2,091	0,037	Supported
Moderation role : M*X Z	-0,023	0,310	0,757	Not Supported

that the AVE root value of each latent variable was greater than the correlation value between the latent variables and other latent variables. So it can be concluded that the model meets the requirements of discriminant validity (Table 2).

Next, the test results are shown using SmartPLS analysis in Figure 1 and Table 4.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis using Smart PLS (Figure 1 and Table 4), show that Knowledge sharing (Z) has a positive and significant effect on lecturer performance (Y) with a path coefficient value of 0.315 with a P-value = 0.002 < 0.05. Transformational leadership (X) has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing (Z) with a path coefficient of 0.386

and P-Values = 0.001 < 0.05. Transformational leadership (X) has a positive and significant effect on lecturer performance (Y) with a path coefficient of 0.497 and P-Values = 0.000 < 0.05. Change adaptability (M) has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing (M) with a path coefficient of 0.181 and P-Values = 0.037 < 0.05. Change adaptability (M) does not moderate the effect of transformational leadership (X) on knowledge sharing (Z), with P-Values = 0.757 > 0.05. Meanwhile, the mediating role of knowledge sharing on the effect of transformational leadership on lecture performance is partial mediation.

This research is in line with the research of Kim & Koo, (2017) that transformational leadership has a strong influence in supporting the improvement of lecturer performance. Research conducted by Yang et al., (2020) also revealed that inspirational motivation is a dimension of transformational leadership that has a positive influence on lecturer performance. In general, it can be said that this study confirms the results of previous studies, such as Vincent-Höper et al., (2012) that the transformational leader style has a significant impact on improving lecturer performance. Research findings by Kane & Tremble, (2000), Ahmad et al., (2014) confirm that transformational leadership has an important role in driving employee performance, this shows that the stronger the application of the transformational style of a leader, the better impact it will create better performance.

A number of studies (Srivastava & Pinto, 2022; Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2018) state that transformational leadership has a positive effect on knowledge sharing. Likewise, Chaubey et al., (2019), and Żywiołek et al., (2022), argued that transformational leadership can positively influence higher levels of knowledge sharing. Other research supports the result that transformational leadership facilitates effective knowledge sharing due to increased trust in leaders (Son et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2020). A challenging vision can encourage the intellectual development of subordinates to become superior and individuals are motivated to carry out knowledge sharing (Bergmann et al., 2017). Transformational leadership is known to facilitate knowledge sharing more effectively within teams (Campbell, 2018). Furthermore, Na-Nan et al., (2019), Nugroho et al., (2020) in their research stated that there was a significant impact between knowledge sharing and lecturer performance. The implementation of knowledge sharing is seen as being able to improve lecturer performance. argues that knowledge sharing enables the process of creating new knowledge, identifying sources of knowledge, as well as elicitation and distribution of knowledge. Tacit and explicit knowledge that is shared is very important because it is new knowledge that can help in carrying out operations (Zhang et al., 2023).

Ramayah et al., (2014) stated that knowledge sharing is very common in academic institutions, although dilemmas often occur. The findings of this study indicate that

transformational leadership has a direct impact on lecturer performance and an indirect impact through knowledge sharing (Phong & Thanh, 2023). Meanwhile, change adaptability does not moderate the effect of transformational leadership on knowledge sharing. However, change adaptability has a significant impact on increasing knowledge sharing because it is an important factor in making changes (Smit, 2015). Change adaptability plays an important role in increasing knowledge sharing to support a culture of change within the organization so that members of the organization are more open considering that knowledge sharing is needed to build new knowledge (Nordin, 2012).

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

This research provides important contribution for UNTL, that transformational leadership and knowledge sharing can improve lecturer performance. Polnaya et al. (2018) stated that lecturer performance has an impact on the competitive advantage of universities. In the era of intense competition for human resources, universities must develop new knowledge by developing human capital within the institution to develop intellectual capital to produce something unique as the hallmark of the institution. UNTL leaders must try to improve the culture of knowledge sharing by maximizing knowledge exchange efforts. Transformational leadership is an important factor as a driver of how knowledge is acquired and exchanged among lecturers so that knowledge application can running well. On the other hand, change adaptability is the essential factor in improving knowledge sharing for improving lecturer performance.

## CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership reflects the attitude of a participatory leader who is not only able to motivate and move the organization vertically and horizontally, but also realizes an organizational capacity to always be more agile in every situation. Organizations always face threats both internally and externally so they really need a transformational type of leader. This research proves that the transformational leader style can encourage increased individual performance in the organization. Transformational leaders have also proven capable of developing a culture of knowledge sharing so as to increase the intensity of knowledge sharing within the organization. The intensity of knowledge sharing can also increase along with the increase in change adaptability. Furthermore, when the intensity of knowledge sharing increases, the performance of individuals within the organization gets better. This research also provides findings on the indirect effect of transformational leadership on the performance of lecturers through knowledge sharing. However, change adaptability has not been able to moderate the transformational influence on knowledge sharing. This

research enriches social learning theory and organizational learning theory that learning is very important so that the capacity to share knowledge can be further increased to encourage performance.

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