Literature Review of Leadership for Youth: Identifying the Most Effective Styles for Change Agents

AANB Aristayudha¹, NM Widnyani², VFC Retobjaan³, KRP Richadinata⁴
¹,²,³,⁴Universitas Bali Internasional

ABSTRACT

According to the UU Kepemudaan, the youth are those aged 16 to 30 who have a vital role in driving change in social, economic, and political domains. The objective of this study is to determine the leadership styles that have a beneficial impact on young people, examine how these styles influence them, and uncover any common qualities among these styles. Although there has been considerable research on leadership, there is a lack of studies explicitly concentrating on youth. Young people display distinct attributes, including a significant reliance on technology and a drive to have a positive impact. Effective leadership styles should elicit inspiration, motivation, and empowerment in individuals. This study used a literature review methodology to investigate the following research questions: What are the most appropriate leadership styles for young people? What impact do these methods have on young people as agents of change? Do these styles share any similar characteristics? The results suggest that transformational, transactional, and supporting leadership have a major impact on young people by increasing their motivation, engagement, and productivity. Typical antecedents encompass well-defined objectives, unambiguous job expectations, assistance, acknowledgment, personal growth opportunities, and consistent evaluation. The study asserts that comprehending different leadership styles is crucial for optimizing the potential of young individuals and suggests additional empirical investigation and examination of the function of technology in leadership.

Keywords: Youth Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Generational Change Agents

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.

Corresponding Author:
Name: A A Ngurah Bagus Aristayudha
Institution Address: Denpasar, Bali
e-mail: bagusaristayudha@unbi.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Pasal 1 ayat 1 UU Kepemudaan, youth refer to those between the ages of 16 and 30. They play a vital role in driving change across different social, economic, and political domains [1]. They have a crucial role in shaping a nation’s destiny and driving continuing social and economic changes [2]. It is crucial to comprehend effective leadership styles for young people in order to fully harness their potential as catalysts for change. The objective of this study is to ascertain the leadership styles that have a beneficial impact on young people, examine how these styles influence them, and determine if there are any shared qualities across these leadership styles [3] [4]. Although there has been considerable study
conducted on leadership styles, there is a significant lack of studies that particularly investigate the impact of different leadership styles on young people [5]. The majority of research primarily concentrate on the general populace or employed adults, disregarding the distinctive attributes of the younger cohort [6]. Adolescents are in a stage of life characterized by numerous transformations and prospects for acquiring knowledge and personal growth [7]. This study gap highlights the pressing necessity to investigate the most efficient leadership styles for young people, which can assist them in maximizing their potential [8]. Young people display unique traits include a significant reliance on technology, extensive social involvement, and a strong aspiration to contribute and have an impact [9]. They are raised in a digital age characterized by easy access to information and fast communication. Technology is a fundamental component of their lives, exerting influence on their learning, job, and social interactions [10]. In addition, young people possess a strong awareness of social issues and frequently participate in several projects and movements with the goal of enhancing social and environmental circumstances [11]. Their aspiration to contribute and effect change signifies a notable capacity that may be utilized with an appropriate leadership strategy [1].

Leadership styles that are capable of inspiring, motivating, and empowering individuals to satisfy these needs. Transformational leadership is recognized for its capacity to inspire and motivate followers by providing a compelling vision and well-defined objectives [4]. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate young people to achieve their maximum capabilities and make the greatest possible impact in their roles as agents of change [5]. This strategy enhances excitement and dedication towards shared objectives, promotes innovation and creativity by questioning established assumptions, and motivates followers to think analytically and pursue novel solutions [2]. The impact of leadership styles on the youth’s ability to contribute to and catalyze societal change is substantial [3]. Effective leadership not only boosts employees’ motivation, engagement, and productivity but also facilitates the growth of their leadership abilities [8]. Leaders that possess the ability to motivate and enable young people to take charge of their own development foster an environment that is favorable for progress and originality [12]. Therefore, selecting suitable leadership styles can have a significant impact on crafting a more promising future by equipping young individuals to assume leadership positions in the years to come [13].

This study aims to investigate the efficacy of different leadership styles in the setting of youth by addressing many key research topics. What leadership styles are appropriate for young individuals? The objective of this study is to ascertain the most efficacious forms of leadership in terms of motivating, inspiring, and empowering the younger cohort [5]. The second inquiry pertains to the impact of various leadership styles on the youth’s ability to effectively fulfill their roles as catalysts for change [5]. This study will examine the precise influence of each leadership style on the involvement, effectiveness, and capacity of young individuals to facilitate social, economic, and political transformation [10]. Is there a shared set of attributes among these leadership styles? The objective of this study is to identify patterns or shared characteristics among effective leadership styles, with the aim of offering practical recommendations to leaders on how to maximize the potential of young individuals [12]. This research aims to provide complete insights on successful and sustainable leadership of the younger generation [3].

2. METHODS
The search for research articles for this study utilized the keywords “Leadership” and “Young Generation”. This decision pertains to the literary sources employed in the literature search. Google Scholar served as the main source for the literature. A total of 85 papers were initially identified using the predefined keywords in Google Scholar. The
minimum publication year of 2018 was set to ensure a focus on recent research. The author used specified criteria to further screen these papers. The search was narrowed down using the following inclusion criteria:

**Inclusion Criteria:**

a) Articles that delve into the introduction and results of leadership in the young generation.
b) Articles published in or after 2018 to ensure focus on recent studies.

**Exclusion Criteria:**

a) Articles broadly discussing leadership styles across industries without specific relevance to the young generation.
b) Studies that only provide abstract or preliminary results without comprehensive findings.

Applying these inclusion and exclusion criteria resulted in 53 articles. Further selection involved eliminating duplicate articles, resulting in 28 unique articles. Subsequently, the elimination of articles was carried out based on the completeness of their composition, narrowing it down to 19 articles.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information extraction and organization process involved generating a table and describing the variables of interest, as indicated by the received documents. The variables encompassed the researcher's identity, the source of the journal, the style of leadership, the acquired insights, the distinctive traits, and the resulting repercussions. This approach entailed a comprehensive examination of the existing literature and methodically inputting the pertinent data into a pre-established table based on these characteristics. Table 1 presents a concise overview of the studies that were examined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Author's Name</th>
<th>Origin of Journal/Article</th>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>Insight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mariani et al.</td>
<td>GSD Journal</td>
<td>Supportive, Nurturing, Encouraging</td>
<td>Increases self-esteem and motivation in adolescent athletes [14]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Larik &amp; Lashari</td>
<td>Neutron</td>
<td>Democratic, Autocratic, Participative</td>
<td>Affects employee performance differently [8]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Manlapaz</td>
<td>American Journal of Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation</td>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>Enhances motivation of millennial teachers [5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cogburn et al.</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Positive-structured</td>
<td>Impacts coping skills and resiliency behaviors [6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Khan</td>
<td>Journal Of Social Sciences and Economics Review</td>
<td>Transformational, Transactional</td>
<td>Determines employee commitment [16]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Khaliq et al.</td>
<td>The Journal of Educational Paradigms</td>
<td>Rational-legal, Traditional, Charismatic</td>
<td>Affects working culture and motivation [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Shportun et al.</td>
<td>Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensional</td>
<td>Personal authority</td>
<td>Depends on self-esteem, creativity, emotional intelligence [17]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Processed primary data (2024)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership can be observed to encompass transformational, supportive, nurturing, and encouraging qualities, making it the most appropriate style of leadership. Transactional leadership also emerges as a viable option.

The younger generation possesses immense potential as catalysts for driving innovation and advancement across numerous domains. To maximize potency, it is necessary to employ a suitable leadership style that is capable of inspiring, motivating, and empowering individuals. According to available literature, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Supportive Coaching, and Leadership Encouragement are two leadership styles that are very suitable and favored by younger
generations. The third leadership style not only enhances motivation and performance, but also facilitates the personal and professional development of its followers.

3.1 Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader collaborates with the team to identify necessary changes and creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration. The leader and the committed team members execute the change together. Research shows that transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on individual motivation, commitment, and performance. The following are the primary qualities of transformative leadership:

a) An inspirational leader possesses the qualities of transformational leadership, capable of inspiring and motivating their followers with an appealing vision and goals. They employ clear and optimistic communication to drive their followers towards achieving higher goals [5].

b) Idealized influence refers to the leader’s ability to serve as a role model for their followers. They demonstrate ethical behavior, fostering respect and trust, as well as acting with integrity. Followers have a tendency to copy and idolize leaders that exhibit exemplary behavior [4].

c) Intellectual stimulation is a characteristic of transformational leaders who actively promote creativity and innovation by challenging assumptions and encouraging their followers to think critically and solve problems in new ways. These leaders value and encourage new ideas and creative approaches when faced with challenges [12].

d) Individualized Consideration is a feature of a leader that involves giving attention to the distinctive requirements of every individual. They serve as a helpful mentor and coach, fostering the personal and professional development of their followers. They attentively consider the requirements and ambitions of each individual, and provide suitable direction [14].

The fourth characteristic that makes leadership transformational is its high effectiveness in fostering strong relationships between leaders and followers, as well as creating a conducive climate for innovation and growth. In the context of youth development, transformational leadership helps individuals have a greater sense of worth, motivation, and preparedness to take initiative as agents of change.

3.2 Supportive, nurturing, and encouraging leadership

Supportive, caring, and encouraging leadership places emphasis on the significance of interpersonal relationships and the emotional well-being of followers. The following are key features of a leadership style that is well-suited for youthful generations who seek a happy and supportive work environment:

a) Emotional support refers to the supportive behavior exhibited by a leader who pays attention to the emotional needs of their followers. They assist followers in coping with stress and hardships by providing emotional support and counsel. This issue enhances the emotional and mental well-being of individuals [6].

b) Developmental Support is a leadership trait that focuses on the development of individual followers. They provide opportunities for learning and development through training, mentoring, and critical criticism. Assist in enabling this follower to achieve their maximum potential [3].

c) Encouragement is a positive attribute that a supportive leader provides to their followers. They recognize and value accomplishments, as well as provide encouraging commendation to followers for their continuous efforts to strive and attain even greater success. Encouragement is
enhancing motivation and passion among work followers [1].

d) A feature of a leader is the ability to create a pleasant environment that is inclusive and fosters a sense of appreciation and acceptance among everyone. Additionally, they promote teamwork and collaboration in the workplace. A positive environment fosters increased engagement and productivity among followers [8].

Effective leadership that fosters, cultivates, and offers support is crucial for the younger generation, who frequently encounter diverse pressures and problems. The leadership style helps individuals feel more valued, supported, and driven in order to achieve their personal and professional objectives.

3.3 Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes the interchange and concentration on transactions between a leader and their followers. In this scenario, leaders provide incentives or punishments to followers based on their performance. The leadership style in question emphasizes a structured and well-organized approach, with clearly defined tasks and objective performance evaluation. While not as widely discussed in the literature as transformational leadership, transactional leadership plays an important role in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in operations, especially in organizations that require obedience to procedures and standards. Below are many key elements of Transactional leadership:

a) Contingent reward is a transactional leadership approach where leaders provide prizes to followers who meet or surpass the predetermined targets. Rewards can be provided in the form of bonuses, promotions, or formal recognition. The system provides rewards as a means of inspiring followers to work more diligently and achieve the desired objective [4].

b) Management by Exception is a leadership approach where the leader monitors the performance of followers and takes remedial action when they fail to meet standards or make errors. Management might take on an active or passive form. When taking an active approach, a leader proactively searches for and handles errors. In a passive approach, the leader only intervenes if a serious problem arises [16].

c) Structured Task and Role Clarity is a leadership approach that focuses on creating a clear organizational structure and defining tasks. It stresses transactional leadership, which is characterized by a clear chain of command and well-defined responsibilities. Leaders should provide explicit and unambiguous directions to ensure that every member of the team comprehends their duties and responsibilities. Clarity aids in diminishing misunderstanding and enhancing operating efficiency [7].

d) Transactional leaders prefer to focus on short-term goals and objectives, emphasizing daily performance and achievement. They establish precise objectives and regularly assess the advancement. Adopting this approach facilitates the attainment of rapid and effective outcomes, while it may not provide sufficient time for extensive development or innovation [13].

e) Leadership in transactional settings lays significant emphasis on adhering to established procedures and standards. Leaders ensure that all team members adhere to relevant rules and regulations in order to maintain the quality and consistency of performance [22].

Leadership can be categorized into various styles, including transformational, transactional, supportive, nurturing, and encouraging. These leadership styles are aimed at guiding and motivating the younger generation.

Leadership transformational is recognized for its ability to inspire and
encourage followers with a strong vision and clear goals. Transformational leaders empower the younger generation to attain their full potential and make maximum contributions in their role as agents of change. This issue contributes to the enhancement of excitement and dedication towards a common goal. In addition, transformational leaders stimulate innovation and creativity by challenging old assumptions and encouraging followers to think critically and seek new solutions. This is highly significant for the younger generation, who are frequently more adaptable and receptive to technological and societal changes. Through the provision of personalized attention and guidance, transformational leaders assist the younger generation in cultivating the necessary skills and competences to become future leaders [5]. However, transformational leadership can lead to an over reliance on the leader for inspiration and motivation. In the absence of a leader, the motivation and performance of the team might significantly decline. Excessive and enduring demands from a transformational leader can lead to stress and tiredness among followers, particularly if they believe they cannot meet the established standards.

Transactional leadership provides clear guidance and certainty by defining specific duties and responsibilities, offering clear answers, and providing fair rewards for good performance. This approach helps the younger generation understand what is expected of them and enables them to work with greater focus. Implementing a system of efficient incentives can effectively motivate the younger generation to achieve objectives within a short amount of time and enhance their performance. Rewards can be utilized to acknowledge accomplishments and enhance motivation in the workplace [4]. However, transactional leadership tends to restrict creativity and innovation due to its emphasis on adhering to rules and norms. The younger generation may sometimes feel constrained when it comes to thinking outside the box and attempting fresh approaches. In addition, an excessive emphasis on tasks and rewards can lead to dissatisfaction in the workplace if the needs of individual employees are not acknowledged. Many young people may feel undervalued and simply seen as a means to achieve an organization's goals [13].

Supportive, caring, and encouraging leadership places emphasis on the significance of interpersonal relationships and the emotional well-being of followers. Leadership provides crucial emotional support for the younger generation. Leader who provides support can assist their followers in overcoming stress and problems, hence enhancing their mental and emotional well-being [6]. In addition, leaders who construct provide opportunities for individuals to acquire and enhance their skills through training and mentoring. This facilitates the development of skills and competencies in the younger generation, which are necessary for future success [3]. Establishing a positive and inclusive work atmosphere can enhance engagement and productivity among the younger generation. Leaders who provide encouragement and appreciation for their followers’ achievements contribute to fostering a high degree of motivation and dedication in the workplace [1]. However, the younger generation may grow overly reliant on the assistance and encouragement of leaders, which might impede their ability to make decisions and take action without supervision. In addition, such approach is excessively accommodating and constructive, thus diminishing the sense of urgency and individual accountability in achieving goals, which can lead to subpar performance if not counterbalanced with suitable expectations.

3.4 Characteristics of similarity in leadership can be observed in the transformational, transactional, and supportive styles.

Upon analyzing diverse publications, it becomes evident that there are certain consistent traits that emerge in the effective leadership of transforming, transacting, and supporting the younger generation. The characteristics of this play a crucial part in shaping the behavior of leadership that has the ability to motivate, inspire, and enhance the performance of followers.
a) Having clear goals and roles is a crucial characteristic in the third type of leadership. The leader establishes explicit and definitive objectives, delineates specific roles, aids the younger generation in comprehending expectations and obligations, and addresses their inquiries. In leadership, transformational and inspirational goals provide followers with clear and motivating direction to achieve high standards [24]. Transactional leadership emphasizes the clear definition of tasks and provides appropriate rewards to ensure the fulfillment of short-term objectives [4]. Leadership support is crucial in providing clarity on duties and goals, which in turn helps establish a good and structured atmosphere [10].

b) Support and recognition, together with emotional and moral support for achievement, are significant characteristics found in the third style of leadership. Transformational leaders provide emotional support through individualized attention and mentoring, leading to enhanced mental and emotional well-being among their followers [25]. Transactional leadership primarily emphasizes cash rewards and acknowledges potential accomplishments to enhance motivation and passion in the workplace [26]. Leadership support, gift support, and encouragement contribute to the development of strong and improved connections, as well as increased productivity among followers [27].

c) Individual development is a fundamental feature of the third style of leadership, known as characteristics development individuals. Leaders drive transformation and foster innovation and creativity by stimulating intellectual and individual attention, so enabling followers to build the necessary abilities for future success [28]. The leadership style described is transactional, with a primary emphasis on achieving short-term objectives. Additionally, it includes providing training and incentives to improve individual performance [11]. Leadership support provides opportunities for learning and development through training and mentoring, which enhances the competency and preparedness of the younger generation to tackle future issues [29].

d) Monitoring and providing feedback on performance, as well as periodically expressing constructive criticism, are crucial characteristics of the third leadership style. Leaders should adopt a transformational approach to monitor the performance of their followers in order to guarantee that they remain inspired and motivated to achieve stated goals [2]. Transactional leadership is a style to management in which the leader intervenes only when a follower fails to meet performance requirements [30]. In the context of leadership support, leaders provide valuable and constructive feedback to assist their followers in continuously developing and enhancing their performance [31].

The similarity qualities indicate that despite variations in strategy and emphasis, the third style of leadership shares fundamental characteristics that serve as a significant foundation for effectively influencing and inspiring the younger generation. Clear goals and defined roles, along with support and recognition, individual growth, and effective monitoring and feedback, are essential elements that underlie the primary efficacy of leadership in motivating, inspiring, and improving the performance of followers. These characteristics assist establish an environment that is suitable to work for the younger generation, allowing them to develop and
participate as agents of change.

![Figure 2. Leadership Characteristics](image)

### 3.5 Theoretical Contributions

Studying leadership involves examining transformational, transactional, supportive, and nurturing leadership styles, which all play an important role in the theory of leadership and organizational behavior. The leadership style known as transformational has been discovered as highly effective in inspiring and motivating the younger generation to become agents of change. This idea highlights the significance of a compelling vision, motivational inspiration, intellectually stimulating experiences, and individual attention as vital elements in enhancing the performance and commitment of followers [5].

Transactional leadership emphasizes the significance of a clear organizational structure, defined tasks, and a system of rewards and punishments. This theory highlights that a transaction-based relationship between a leader and follower can enhance operational efficiency and ensure the timely achievement of objectives [4]. Leadership that fosters, cultivates, and offers encouragement introduces novel aspects to leadership theory by emphasizing the significance of providing emotional and social support in order to establish robust relationships between leaders and followers. This idea demonstrates that a leader who provides support can enhance the mental and emotional well-being of their followers. Consequently, this can lead to increased motivation and performance among the followers [6].

### 3.6 Practical Implications

Studying this has several significant practical implications for organizations, executives, and policy makers. Firstly, leaders who aspire to inspire and motivate the younger generation in order to become catalysts for change must contemplate embracing the style of transformational leadership. They must prioritize the establishment of an intriguing vision, providing motivation that is inspiring and beneficial for the personal growth of each follower. This can enhance the performance of a team and foster a work atmosphere that is more imaginative and creative [12].

Transactional leadership is relevant in organizations, particularly in situations where adherence to procedures and standards is crucial. The leader must guarantee that the system of rewards and punishments is implemented in a fair and transparent manner in order to motivate employees to achieve the organization’s objectives. This can enhance operational efficiency and ensure that tasks are resolved effectively [7]. In order to foster a pleasant and inclusive work environment, leaders must prioritize supporting, nurturing, and encouraging their employees. This entails providing emotional and social support, as well as offering opportunities for personal and professional development. Enhancing employee engagement and well-being can ultimately improve overall organizational performance [1].

### 3.7 Limitations

There are some significant constraints that need to be understood when studying this. This study is focused on research literature, specifically on drawing findings from analysis studies that entail direct collecting of empirical data. There are limitations in generalizing the conclusions of the study due to the inclusion of different cultures, geographies, and organizations, which may have their own unique contexts. While studying literature can provide a detailed explanation of a given topic, it is unable to capture the nuanced and dynamic contextual factors that may influence research outcomes in the field.
3.8 Future Research

In order to further advance study in the field, it is imperative to thoroughly investigate certain areas that contribute to a deeper knowledge of the impact of transformational, transactional, and supportive leadership on the younger generations as agents of change. Further empirical studies are required to thoroughly examine the effectiveness of different leadership styles across diverse cultural and organizational contexts. Cross-cultural research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership is embraced and implemented across distinct cultural settings. For instance, the effectiveness of transformational leadership in collectivist cultures compared to individualist cultures, or the acceptance of transactional leadership in countries with strong organizational hierarchies.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the most effective leadership styles for the youth, focusing on their role as agents of change. The analysis revealed that transformational, transactional, and supportive leadership styles significantly impact the younger generation. Transformational leadership was found to inspire and motivate youth through a strong vision and clear goals, enhancing their commitment and innovation. Transactional leadership provided clarity and rewards, improving focus and performance. Supportive leadership emphasized emotional and social support, fostering a positive work environment and increasing engagement and productivity.

The findings underscore the importance of tailored leadership approaches for the youth, emphasizing the need for leaders to adopt styles that align with the unique characteristics and needs of the younger generation. Scientifically, this research contributes to the body of knowledge by highlighting the specific impact of different leadership styles on youth, providing a basis for further empirical studies. Practically, it offers valuable insights for leaders and organizations aiming to harness the potential of the youth effectively. Implementing these leadership styles can lead to more motivated, innovative, and engaged young individuals, ultimately driving social, economic, and political change. The study advocates for continued exploration of technology’s role in leadership and cross-cultural studies to deepen the understanding and application of these leadership styles in diverse contexts.

REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

A A Ngurah Bagus Aristayudha

Born on April 17, 1992, in Denpasar, is an academic and consultant focusing on digital business development and human resource management. Aristayudha completed his Master’s degree at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Udayana, in 2018 and currently teaches as a digital business lecturer at Universitas Bali Internasional. Besides his academic role at the Digital Business Study Program at Bali International University, he is also an active speaker in various digital literacy initiatives across Indonesia, including programs organized by KOMINFO. Aristayudha has initiated several workshops aimed at enhancing digital and business skills for MSMEs and local communities in Bali. Through his activities, he believes in the power of education and innovation to improve community welfare and business practices. He is dedicated to inspiring and advancing an environment that supports personal and professional growth. The author can be contacted bagusaristayudha@unbi.ac.id.

Vitalia Fina Carla Rettobjaan

Lecturer at the Digital Business Study Program at Universitas Bali Internasional. The author completed his Bachelor’s degree at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Trisakti University in 2016; and Master of Management education at Trisakti University Postgraduate in 2018; His research interests and studies are marketing management, financial management and digital business. The author has a lot of research which can be viewed on Google Scholar, the author can be contacted via carlarettobjaan@unbi.ac.id.