The effect of transformational leadership on organizational performance: The case of Injibara Town Administration

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of transformational leadership on organisational performance within the Injibara Town Administration's public sectors. Transformational leadership, known for motivating and inspiring followers to exceed performance expectations, comprises four key components: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. The research collected primary data via questionnaires and interviews from 314 employees, with secondary data sourced from books, articles, and previous research. Statistical analysis using SPSS and methods like correlation coefficients and multiple regression revealed that intellectual stimulation had the strongest positive effect on performance, followed by inspirational motivation. Individualised consideration showed a moderate positive relationship, while idealised influence had a weaker positive effect. All transformational leadership components were found to affect organisational performance significantly. The study concludes that when leaders apply these components, organisational performance improves, recommending that public sector leaders focus on these leadership practices to enhance overall performance.

Keywords: idealised influence, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation

Introduction

Leadership plays a pivotal role in guiding organizations toward success, with the relationship between leaders and followers being essential for achieving collective goals. The success of organizations, in turn, is deeply influenced by their structure (Beukman, 2006). Transformational leadership, a concept introduced by Burns (1978), serves as a catalyst for change within established organizations, revitalizing them with new energy. Burns argued that transformational leadership arises when both leaders and followers mutually inspire each other to achieve higher levels of motivation and morality. Building on this, Bass (1985) refined the concept, suggesting that transformational leaders motivate followers to exceed

their expectations by raising awareness about the importance of goals and encouraging selflessness for the benefit of the organization.

Transformational leaders are defined by their ability to inspire individuals to surpass their own limitations in pursuit of shared objectives, leveraging vision and charisma to foster profound changes in people. This leadership style is focused on emotions, values, and long-term goals, and it drives followers to exceed conventional performance standards (Bass & Avolio, 1994). According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leadership is measured through four key components: *Inspirational Motivation* (encouraging followers to achieve goals by making them compelling), *Idealized Influence* (being a role model and prioritizing group welfare), *Individualized Consideration* (offering attention and support to followers), and *Intellectual Stimulation* (encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and innovation).

The positive impact of transformational leadership on organizational performance and employee commitment is well-documented (Ghafoor et al., 2011). It has become widely adopted due to its ability to drive change and motivate teams, as well as its contributions to organizational success (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leadership is particularly significant in guiding organizations through complex challenges (Hayes, 2002), and in the case of Ethiopia, transformative leadership is crucial for closing the gap between strategy and performance (Darshan, 2011). Efforts to enhance public sector leadership, such as Ethiopia's Civil Service Reform Programme and the Growth and Transformation Plan, underscore the need for effective leadership.

In Ethiopia, transformational leadership is vital not only for organizational success but also for implementing national developmental strategies across various sectors, including urban development, governance, and industrialization (Duressa & Assfaw, 2014). Within this context, the role of transformational leadership is critical in achieving the country's developmental goals. The Injibara Town Administration, part of Ethiopia's Amhara Region, presents an important case for studying the influence of transformational leadership on public sector performance. This research aims to explore how transformational leadership impacts organizational performance within this specific setting, providing valuable insights for improving leadership practices and achieving institutional goals.

Leadership plays a critical role in achieving organisational objectives, with the effectiveness of leadership styles directly influencing organisational performance. Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership stands out due to its ability to inspire significant changes within an organisation. This style focuses on motivating and empowering subordinates, fostering personal growth, and encouraging strong relationships, all of which contribute to the organisation's success (Rukmani, 2010). Transformational leaders are particularly crucial in both private and public sectors, as they help drive change, improve employee commitment, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Abasilim, 2014).

Scholars like Northouse (1999) and Kaplan and Norton (2010) argue that transformational leadership is linked to higher performance levels, with leaders fostering a new mindset to navigate change. Nemanich and Keller (2007) support this, highlighting how transformational behaviours—such as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation—are essential for overcoming challenges and boosting organisational performance. Moreover, research by Birasnav et al. (2010) and Dvir et al. (2002) has shown that transformational leadership is positively correlated with workforce performance and organisational competitiveness.

However, the impact of transformational leadership on organisational performance is under-researched, particularly in the Ethiopian context. Studies in various global settings (e.g., Pakistan, Romania, Kenya, and Greece) have explored this topic, with a few focusing on Ethiopia. Notably, research by Duressa and Assfaw (2014) and Darshan (2011) indicates that transformational leadership remains an emerging concept in Ethiopian public services, with limited implementation. Ethiopian public organisations now seek leaders who are motivating, inspiring, and responsive to both employees and citizens (Duressa & Assfaw, 2014).

Despite the growing interest, there remains a gap in understanding how transformational leadership specifically impacts organisational performance in Ethiopia, particularly within local administrations. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the effects of transformational leadership on organisational performance in Injibara Town Administration, contributing to the broader literature and validating findings from previous studies in different contexts.

Preliminary interviews and observations informed the choice of the case area for this research.

The general objective of this research is to investigate the effects of transformational leadership on organizational performance in the case of Injibara town administration.

The study is focused on the specific objectives: to examine the relationship between transformational leadership components and organisational performance, to investigate the effect of transformational leadership components on organisational performance, and to ascertain which component of transformational leadership has the dominant effect on organisational performance at Injibara town administration.

Consequently, from the above specific objectives, the following hypotheses were developed: idealised influence has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance, inspirational motivation has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance, intellectual stimulation has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance, and individualised consideration has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance.

Research Methodology

Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore the effect of transformational leadership on organizational performance. The qualitative approach was used to gather insights through interviews, while the quantitative approach helped measure the influence of transformational leadership components on organizational performance, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis.

Research Design

The study utilized a cross-sectional research design, which focused on data collected at a specific point in time. It combined descriptive and explanatory research methods. The descriptive design provided detailed descriptions of the data through tables and percentages, while the explanatory design helped establish

causal relationships between transformational leadership practices and organizational performance.

Target Population

The study was conducted within the Injibara Town Administration, which includes 24 public sectors employing 1,450 staff members. These sectors provide essential public services to the community, and the research focused on understanding how leadership practices within these sectors influence their performance.

Sampling Techniques

The study used purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Simple random sampling was applied to employees (subordinates) to distribute questionnaires, while purposive sampling was used for selecting managers and team leaders for interviews. This approach ensured that both groups contributed valuable perspectives on leadership's impact on performance.

Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula, which, at a 95% confidence level and a 0.05 significance level, resulted in a sample of 314 employees from the 1,450-total population. Proportional allocation was used to distribute the sample size across various strata within the organization.

$$\boldsymbol{n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}}$$

Source: Yamane (1967). Where:

n = the sample size N=the study population e = sampling error = (0.05)

$$\mathrm{n} = \frac{1450}{1 + 1450(0.05)^2} = 314$$

Therefore, 314 respondents were used as a sample for this study, and the distribution and proportional allocation were done according to Bowley (1926), which is: ni=n. Ni

$$ni = \frac{\mathrm{Ni}}{N}.n$$

Where: n = the sample size Ni =population size of the ith strata N = the total population size

Table 1: ***Proportionate sample size***

Category of public sectors	Ni	Proportions
Municipality	97	97/1450x314=21
Education office	888	888/1450x314=192
Health office	28	28/1450x314=6
Mayor office	26	26/1450x314=6
Work and Training Office	57	57/1450x314=12
Industry and Investment Office	19	19/1450x314=4
Revenue office	51	51/1450x314=11
Congregation office	8	8/1450x314=2
Public Complaints Office	5	5/1450x314=1
Civil Service Office	30	30/1450x314=7
Trade and market office	32	32/1450x314=7
Finance and Economic Development Office	40	40/1450x314=9
Youth and Sports Office	13	13/1450x314=3
Food Security Office	6	6/1450x314=1
Culture and Tourism Office	14	14/1450x314=3
Agriculture Office	5	5/1450x314=1
Associations work Office	14	14/1450x314=3
Women and Children's Social Affairs Office	14	14/1450x314=3
Land Administration Office	25	25/1450x314=6
Communication office	5	5/1450x314=1
Animal Resources Development Office	7	7/1450x314=2
Transport office	14	14/1450x314=3
Peace and Security Office	16	16/1450x314=2
Police Office	36	36/1450x314=8
Total	1450	314

Data Sources and Collection Methods

Both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and interviews with employees and leaders in the town administration. Secondary data, including relevant articles, books, and previous studies, were used to support the research.

Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) and inferential statistics (multiple regression analysis). The statistical software SPSS (version 26) was used to process and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data. Multiple regression analysis was applied to test the hypotheses and determine the relationship between transformational leadership components (independent variables) and organizational performance (dependent variable).

Model Specification

The study employed a multiple linear regression model to assess how the independent variables—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—influence organizational performance. The model used the following equation:

$Y=\beta0+\beta1X1+\beta2X2+\beta3X3+\beta4X4+\varepsilon$

Where:

Y = Organizational performance (dependent variable)

β0 = Constant

β1, β2, β3, β4 = Coefficients of the independent variables

X1, X2, X3, X4 = Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration (independent variables)

ε = Error term

Results

This part provides an overview of the collected data. It includes pie charts illustrating respondents' demographics and utilizes descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation tables, and inferential statistics. The results from multiple linear regression and bivariate correlation analyses are presented clearly, alongside a comprehensive analysis of the assumption and hypothesis tests.

Descriptive analysis

Table 2: ***Descriptive Analysis of Idealized Influence***

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Idealised Influence	4.25	0.872
Inspirational Motivation	3.75	0.713
Intellectual Stimulation	3.94	0.631
Individualised Consideration	4.14	0.550
Organizational Performance	3.98	0.749

As indicated in Table 2, the mean and standard deviation for idealized influence showed a total mean score of 4.25 (SD = 0.872), suggesting strong agreement among respondents regarding this aspect of leadership in the Injibara town administration. Leaders consider the moral implications of their decisions, emphasize a shared mission, serve as role models, and earn their team's trust, highlighting the importance of idealized influence.

The grand mean score for inspirational motivation was 3.75 (SD = 0.713), indicating general agreement that leaders effectively motivate their employees. Feedback revealed that leaders inspire and encourage appropriate behaviors, continuously engaging their teams.

For intellectual stimulation, the grand mean score was 3.94 (SD = 0.631), reflecting agreement on its role in performance. Leaders promote creativity by encouraging original ideas and innovative problem-solving.

The score for individualized consideration was 4.14 (SD = 0.550), indicating strong agreement that leaders focus on followers' aspirations and provide training to support their growth.

Overall, the mean score for organizational performance was 3.98 (SD = 0.749), suggesting agreement on performance levels. Interviews confirmed that all components of transformational leadership are actively practised in the Injibara town administration, demonstrating their interrelation with organizational performance.

Correlation Analysis

In this study, the idealised influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration on the performance of the Injibara town administration were examined for any significant relationship using Pearson's correlation coefficient.

The Pearson coefficient of correlation has a significant function, direction, strength, and substantial bivariate correlations between variables, according to (Akoglu, 2018). The letter r stands for the connection (or correlation) between the two variables, which is defined by a value that ranges from -1 to +1. Zero denotes a lack of connection, whereas 1 denotes a full or ideal correlation. The strength of the correlation is indicated by the sign of the r.

When r is negative, the variables are inversely related. From 0 to 1, the connection gets stronger, while from 0 to -1, it gets weaker. Additionally, Akoglu (2018) noted that an r value of +1 implies a significant positive link between two variables, whereas an r value larger than 0.7 but less than +1 denotes an absolute positive correlation between two variables. A fairly significant link between the two variables is shown by an r-value of 0.4 to 0.6, while a weak association is indicated

by an r-value of 0.0 to 0.4. The table below indicates the correlation coefficients for the relationships between transformational leadership and organisational performance.

Table 3: ***Pearson Correlation Coefficients of the dependent and independent variables***

Variables	Idealized influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual stimulation	Individualized consideration	Organizational performance
Idealized influence	**1**				
Inspirational motivation	0.076 0.178	**1**			
Intellectual stimulation	0.207** 0.000	.644** .000	**1**		
Individualized consideration	0.453** 0.000	.355** .000	.506** .000	**1**	
Organizational performance	**0.281**** **0.000**	**.752**** **.000**	**.830**** **.000**	**.582**** **.000**	**1**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As can be seen from Table 3 above, Pearson correlation was performed to study the size and magnitude of the relationship between the variables.

The relationships between organisational performance and the components were positive and significant.

The relationships were stated as follows: a relationship was found between intellectual stimulation and organisational performance (r =.830, p = 0.000). The p-value is less than 0.01); therefore, a strong positive relationship was found between intellectual stimulation and organisational performance.

A relationship was found between inspirational motivation and organisational performance (r = 0.752, p = 0.000, also p-value less than 0.01); therefore, a strong positive relationship was found between inspirational motivation and organisational performance.

A relationship was found between individualised consideration and organisational performance (r = 0.582, p = 0.000, less than 0.01). Therefore, a moderately positive relationship was found between individualised consideration and organisational performance.

A Relationship was found between idealised influence and organisational performance (r = 0.281, p = 0.000, less than 0.01). Therefore, the relationship between idealised influence and organisational performance was weakly positive because the r value was less than 0.4 and greater than 0.

Even though there were relationships between Idealised influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, and individualised influence and organisational performance, this does not necessarily mean that all components were equally related. The above table 8 clearly compares the overall relationship of all key elements of transformational leadership discussed in detail above.

The results show that, compared to other independent factors, intellectual stimulation was the most significant factor that was positively and significantly associated with an organisation's performance followed by inspiring motivation. Thirdly, individualised consideration has a moderate relationship with organisational performance. Lastly, idealised influence has a weak relationship with performance compared to other components of transformational leadership, but it has a significant relationship with the dependent variable.

Test of Analysis of Variance

In order to make sure that the analysis is as accurate, truthful, and therefore valid as feasible, according to Osborne & Waters (2002), the majority of statistical tests rely on certain assumptions regarding the variables used within the analysis.

Assumptions are important in statistics, according to Stevens and Schroeder (2009), since if they are false, the process will be unexpected, unreliable, and out of the researcher's control. This could cause the researcher `to make inexplicable, false, or scientifically unsound findings. Therefore, before the hypotheses were tested, regression model assumptions like normality, autocorrelation, multi-colinearity, and linearity were considered and checked. 4.6.5. The overall test of multiple Regression model (ANOVA)

The analysis of Variance table shows the overall significance and acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective. The F test is a part of the ANOVA table that shows the significance of the whole model. The model is considered significant if the F calculated value is greater than the F tabulated value, i.e., Fcal > Ftab or the P value is less than 0.01.

Table 4: ***Testing the overall multiple regression models***

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	141.342	4	35.336	318.602	.000
	Residual	34.271	309	.111		
	Total	175.613	313			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Individualized consideration, Inspirational motivation, Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation

From the above ANOVA table 4, the researcher simply concludes that the overall test of the model is significant because, as we can see from this table, the P-value is 0.000, which is less than the alpha value of 0.01 (a 1% level of significance). This is an indication of the goodness of the overall model. Simply put, it can be said that the model fits the data well. The p-value was 0.000, which was less than 0.01; thus, the model was statistically significant in predicting idealised influence, Inspirational Motivation, Individualised stimulation, and the organisational performance of the Injibara town administration.

The F critical at 1% level of significance was 318.602. Therefore, it has enough evidence to accept the alternative hypothesis. From the above decision rule, it can be concluded that the model of above estimated (ANOVA) model are significance. This also indicates that there is a linear relationship between dependent and independents variables.

Regression Analysis

Table 5: ***Regress organizational performance (as dependent variable) and the components of transformational leadership (as independent variables)***

a. **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig.
1	.897[a]	.805	.802	.333	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Individualized consideration, Inspirational motivation, Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance

The model summary in Table 5 above reveals that the adjusted R-square was 0.802, which means that the independent variables used for this study can account for 80.2% of the variation in the organisational performance. Other elements outside of the model can account for the remaining 19.8%. Additionally, it was shown that the link between each of the independent variables chosen for this study and the performance of the Injibara town administration is significant. The Model Summary of the above table reveals that all independent variables with values less than 0.01 were considered significant.

Table 6: Coefficient of regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	-.999	.159		-6.296	0.000
Idealized influence	.064	.024	.075	2.641	0.009
Inspirational motivation	.388	.035	.370	11.183	0.000
Intellectual stimulation	.584	.042	.491	13.779	0.000
Individualized consideration	.239	.044	.168	4.238	0.000

a. Dependent variable: Organisational performance

The unstandardized coefficient column displayed the model's contribution from each individual variable. The beta weight demonstrates the variance that occurs

when the independent variable rises by one unit and the dependent variable rises by one unit. The dependent variable does not consistently change as much as the independent variables do if the regression coefficient is 0.

In that instance, it may be said that the variables do not have a line relationship
The coefficients of the independent variables in the regression equation, which includes all the predictor variables, are provided to us in the unstandardized coefficients B column, as seen below:
OP= -0.999 + 0.064X1 + 0.388X2 + 0.584X3 + 0.239X4
Where: OP= organizational performance, X1 = idealized influence, X2= inspirational motivation X3 = intellectual stimulation X4 = individualized consideration.

Influence of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration on organisational performance: in this research findings are regression coefficients of 0.064, 0.388, 0.584 and 0.239 respectively. From all independent variables, intellectual stimulation has the greatest effect on organisational performance because it has the highest regression coefficient among the remaining components of transformational leadership included in this study.

Discussion and Hypothesis Testing

The study tested four hypotheses regarding the impact of transformational leadership components on organizational performance. The results of hypothesis testing based on regression coefficients and p-values are discussed below:

Hypothesis 1: *Idealized influence has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance.* The regression coefficient for idealized influence was 0.064 with a p-value of 0.009, indicating a significant positive effect on organizational performance. This suggests that as idealized influence increases by one unit, organizational performance increases by 0.064 units, assuming other variables are constant. This result supports the hypothesis and is consistent with previous studies (Anyango, 2015; Maeza, 2018). Leaders in this study displayed ethical behavior and served as role models, which positively impacted organizational performance. However, the findings are inconsistent with studies by Orabi (2016) and Abreham (2021), which reported no significant effect. The

discrepancy may be due to differences in leader behavior or lack of idealized influence in those contexts.

Hypothesis 2: *Inspirational motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance.* Inspirational motivation had a beta value of 0.388 and a p-value of 0.000, showing a strong positive relationship with organizational performance. A 1-unit increase in inspirational motivation leads to a 0.388-unit increase in organizational performance. This finding is supported by studies (Abrham, 2021; Anyango, 2015; Ogolla & Senaji, 2018). Leaders in the study motivated and inspired followers to exceed their potential, which contributed significantly to performance outcomes. Thus, this hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: *Intellectual stimulation has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance.* Intellectual stimulation had a beta value of 0.584 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a strong and significant effect on organizational performance. A 1-unit increase in intellectual stimulation results in a 0.584-unit increase in organizational performance. This is consistent with findings from Abrham (2021), Ogolla & Senaji (2018), and Orabi (2016), which emphasized the role of innovation and creativity in improving organizational performance. However, the findings contrast with Anyango (2015), who found intellectual stimulation to have a weak effect, likely due to differences in leadership styles and context.

Hypothesis 4: *Individualized consideration has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance.* Individualized consideration showed a regression coefficient of 0.239 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant effect on organizational performance. Leaders who provide personalized attention and support to individuals, focusing on their strengths and weaknesses, can positively influence performance. This result aligns with findings from Abrham (2021), Ogolla & Senaji (2018), and Anyango (2015). Therefore, this hypothesis is also accepted.

Table 7: ***Hypothesis testing summary***

The hypothesis	Beta	P-value (95% confidence)	Significance of the hypothesis	The decision of the hypothesis
H1: Idealized influence has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Injibara town administration.	0.064	0.009	Significant	Accepted
H1: Inspirational motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance in the case of Injibara town administration.	0.388	0.000	Significant	Accepted
H1: Intellectual stimulation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Injibara town administration town.	0.584	0.000	Significant	Accepted
H1: Individualized consideration has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance of Injibara town administration.	0.239	0.000	Significant	Accepted

Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the effects of transformational leadership on organizational performance. The research explored the statistical relationships between four independent variables—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—and organizational performance.

Key conclusions drawn from the study include: Intellectual stimulation has a strong positive relationship with organizational performance. By fostering an environment that encourages creativity and innovative thinking, leaders can enhance engagement and drive organizational success. Inspirational motivation is also crucial, as leaders who inspire their followers by setting clear goals and motivating them to achieve these goals significantly boost organizational performance.

Individualized consideration shows a moderate positive relationship with organizational performance. Leaders who pay attention to individual needs, provide personalized support, and mentor employees contribute to improved performance and employee commitment. Idealized influence, although important,

has a weaker impact on performance compared to the other components, though it still plays a role in shaping organizational outcomes.

Conflict of interest

The authors would like to disclose that there are no competing interests regarding this work.

Authors' contribution statement

Weleteselassie Yehualaw was involved in the conception, design, data collection, and analysis. Yilkal Andualem contributed to the drafting of the paper, revising it critically for intellectual content and in the final approval of the paper to be published.

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