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Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development : The Mediating Roles of Organizational Learning and Employee Maturity

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Abstrak

Perubahan lingkungan yang semakin dinamis menuntut organisasi untuk terus mengembangkan kapasitas internal agar mampu beradaptasi dan mempertahankan efektivitasnya secara berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menguji pengaruh transformational leadership terhadap organizational development dengan mediasi paralel organizational learning dan employee maturity. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain cross sectional. Sampel diperoleh dengan teknik purposive sampling dengan total 170 responden dari tenaga kependidikan yang bekerja pada perguruan tinggi swasta di Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Data yang terkumpul diolah dengan Smart PLS 4.0 dengan pendekatan Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) dan Bootstrapping untuk mengetahui hubungan antar variabel. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa transformational leadership berpengaruh positif terhadap organizational development, organizational learning, dan employee maturity. Selanjutnya, organizational learning dan employee maturity memiliki hubungan positif dan signifikan terhadap organizational development sekaligus menjadi mediasi yang menghubungkan pengaruh positif transformational leadership dan organizational development. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan mengintegrasikan burke-litwin model dan teori kepemimpinan transformasional untuk menjelaskan organizational development melalui dua mekanisme mediasi paralel yaitu organizational learning dan employee maturity. Penelitain ini memperluas pemahaman mengenai bagaimana perilaku kepemimpin berkaitan dengan pengembangan organisasi melalui proses pembelajaran dan penguatan kapasitas individu pada tenaga kependidikan di perguruan tinggi swasta Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *Transformational Leadership, Organizational Learning, Employee Maturity, Organizational Development*

Abstract

An increasingly dynamic environment requires organizations to continuously develop their internal capacity so they can adapt and maintain their effectiveness over the long term. This study examines the influence of transformational leadership on organizational development,

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mediated by organizational learning and employee maturity. The study employs a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, comprising a total of 170 respondents from the educational staff of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The collected data were analyzed using Smart PLS 4.0 with the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach and bootstrapping to determine the relationships among the variables. The results found that transformational leadership has a positive effect on organizational development, organizational learning, and employee maturity. Furthermore, organizational learning and employee maturity have a positive and significant relationship with organizational development and simultaneously serve as mediators linking the positive influence of transformational leadership to organizational development. This study contributes by integrating the burke-litwin model and transformational leadership theory to explain organizational development through two parallel mediating mechanisms: organizational learning and employee maturity. This study expands our understanding of how leadership behavior relates to organizational development through the processes of learning and the enhancement of individual capacities among educational staff at private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Organizational Learning, Employee Maturity, Organizational Development*

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancements, increasing instability, and intensifying competition have created pressure on organizations to continually adapt and respond to change (Liu et al., 2025). These conditions require organizations to be able to respond to external dynamics while simultaneously strengthening internal competencies, including adapting organizational values, culture, and practices (Schaft et al., 2024). However, environmental changes often occur faster than an organization's ability to adapt its structure, human resources, and operational practices. When organizations cling to their previous strategies and practices amid a changing environment, their effectiveness and ability to maintain competitiveness risk declining (Gong et al., 2021). Therefore, organizational development has become increasingly important as a systematic effort to enhance an organization's capacity to sustainably navigate change.

Organizational development is a comprehensive process of applying and transferring knowledge and behavioral science practices to systematically develop, improve, and strengthen organizational strategies, structures, and processes (Park et al., 2025). In practice, organizational development ideally involves all members of the organization so that changes can be accepted and implemented consistently. In reality, however, employee resistance remains a significant barrier to the adoption of change at both the individual and organizational levels (Valtonen & Holopainen, 2025). In fact, the success of organizational development depends on the ability of all individuals to work together in responding to change (Reineholm et al., 2024). Limited member participation and a lack of organizational support further exacerbate the challenges in building readiness and a positive response to change

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(Mumtaz et al., 2024). Thus, organizational development requires not only planning and change strategies but also the ability to guide, motivate, and engage members so they are willing to actively participate in the change process.

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that influences and motivates members to achieve organizational goals through exemplary behavior, the articulation of an inspiring vision, intellectual stimulation, and a focus on individual development (Poturak et al., 2020). Through this approach, leaders can drive substantial change and organizational development by inspiring organizational members to transcend personal interests for the collective good (Marhum & Firmansyah, 2026). Nevertheless, a leader's ability to guide and inspire change does not automatically guarantee organizational development. This is because the success of change also depends on members' ability to translate the leader's direction into positive behaviors, actions, and tangible support for change initiatives (Cao & Le, 2022). This situation indicates the need for internal mechanisms that can link transformational leadership and organizational development.

One such mechanism is organizational learning, defined as a dynamic process that enables an organization to acquire, develop, and share knowledge to enhance operational capabilities and adapt to environmental changes (Cui et al., 2022). Through learning and experimentation, organizations can evaluate existing practices, identify weaknesses, and adapt new procedures to internal needs, thereby supporting organizational development (Baird et al., 2024). In the context of transformational leadership, leaders empower members and involve them in creative processes that foster growth and learning (Mohamed & Otman, 2021). The knowledge gained and shared then serves as the foundation for improving organizational practices, so that organizational learning acts as a mechanism that translates the influence of transformational leadership into organizational development. However, the knowledge generated does not automatically lead to development, especially when individuals lack the capacity to receive guidance, make independent decisions, or carry out their responsibilities. Therefore, organizational development requires not only organizational learning but also the individual's own capacity to apply knowledge and implement change effectively.

One relevant individual capacity is employee maturity, which is the level of professional and emotional development shown by a person that affects their ability to meet organisational responsibilities (Wei, 2024). Through employee maturity, individuals are motivated to achieve challenging goals, take initiative, and fulfill their responsibilities independently (Afsouran et al., 2022). In the context of transformational leadership, empowerment, the delegation of responsibility, and individual attention from leaders are expected to foster employees' development and potential for autonomy (Raza & Yousufi, 2023). This process enables employees to translate the leader's vision and direction into concrete initiatives and actions during the change process. Therefore, employee maturity serves as a mediating mechanism linking transformational leadership and organizational development. Although previous research has examined the relationship between these variables, the role of the internal mechanisms linking them still needs to be expanded, particularly through the simultaneous examination of organizational learning and individual capacity (Pimonratanakan et al., 2017; Afsouran et al., 2022). These two

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mechanisms represent distinct aspects: organizational learning as the process of developing collective knowledge and employee maturity as the individual capacity to implement change. Therefore, this study integrates both as parallel mediators linking transformational leadership and organizational development. This approach is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms of organizational development while identifying the relative contributions of each mediation pathway.

Yogyakarta, Indonesia, is one of Indonesia's centers of higher education, with a higher education ecosystem dominated by private universities. Based on 2024 data from the Central Statistics Agency in Indonesia, there are 100 private universities compared to 5 public universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, with a total of 265.004 students. This enrollment is significantly larger than that of public universities, which only accommodate 145.785 students. This dominance makes private universities a relevant context for organizational development, particularly because their sustainability requires the ability to manage resources and maintain competitiveness. Ramaditya et al. (2023) explain that private universities in Indonesia face a series of challenges requiring adaptation through increased efficiency, quality assurance, human resource development, and improved governance. Furthermore, limited resources, lack of leadership support, and challenges in managing change also pose obstacles to building a learning organization within the private higher education sector (Hendrawati et al., 2023). These conditions make educational staff a relevant subject for study, as their involvement in carrying out administrative or academic service functions is a crucial component in the implementation of policies and operational changes at private universities. This study examines the effect of transformational leadership on organizational development, as parallelly mediated by organizational learning and employee maturity in the educational staff of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The burke–litwin model of organizational performance and change, developed by Burke and Litwin (1992), serves as the primary theoretical foundation for this study to explain how transformational leadership, organizational learning, and employee maturity can influence organizational development.

Burke and Litwin (1992) explain that organizational change involves the interplay between transformational factors including leadership, culture, mission, and strategy, and transactional factors including management practices, systems, motivation, and individual factors. Within this framework, transformational leadership is a transformational factor related to changes in the organization's internal processes through the development of new skills among members and the ability to identify opportunities for organizational improvement (Cao & Le, 2022). Organizational learning represents the process of developing an organization's knowledge and ability to respond to external changes (Zhu et al., 2025), while employee maturity reflects professional competence and individual development in fulfilling organizational responsibilities (Abdollahzadeh et al., 2024). Both mechanisms explain how changes at the organizational and individual levels relate

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to the achievement of organizational development. However, the burke-litwin model places greater emphasis on the interrelationships among the components of organizational change and does not specifically elaborate on leadership behaviors that foster learning, motivate members, and develop individual capacities. Therefore, a complementary theoretical perspective is needed to explain in detail how leadership behavior shapes these mechanisms.

To supplement this explanation, this study uses transformational leadership (TL) theory, developed by Bass (1985), as a supporting framework. Bass (1985) explains that transformational leaders shape behavior and influence members through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Through intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, leaders encourage the exchange of ideas, the creation of knowledge, and the development of new ways of working, thereby supporting organizational learning (Zhu et al., 2025). Meanwhile, individual consideration and the provision of opportunities to take on responsibility support the development of self-competence, self-confidence, and independence, which represent employee maturity (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Thus, the burke-litwin model explains the relationship between leadership and organizational change and development, while TL theory elaborates on the leadership behaviors that shape these mechanisms of change. By positioning organizational learning and employee maturity as parallel mediators, this study expands our understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development. This study integrates these two mechanisms to explain organizational development at private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, specifically through the role of educational staff.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development

The burke-litwin model positions leadership as a transformational factor related to organizational system change through its influence on culture, management practices, and member motivation (Burke & Litwin, 1992). In this context, transformational leadership plays a role in fostering employee readiness by inspiring them to align their expectations, perceptions, and behaviors with shared goals. For example, through intellectual stimulation, leaders encourage employees to break free from stereotypes and question existing work patterns to generate new ideas for solving problems (Kim et al., 2023). Meanwhile, individual consideration provides support for employees to make their own decisions, giving them the space to develop their capabilities, make decisions, and adapt to change (Nawaz et al., 2024). This process is linked to increased employee engagement in improving work processes and implementing change, thereby creating a more adaptive internal environment to achieve organizational development. Afsouran et al. (2022) explain that a positive climate of change and progress is the result of implementing transformational leadership that supports organizational development. According to Pimonratanakan et al. (2017), this type of leadership can foster organizational development by prioritizing employee values and organizational progress while emphasizing collaboration and employee participation.

H1: The positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational development

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Transformational leadership and organizational learning

The TL theory developed by Bass (1985) explains that leaders can develop their members' capabilities through intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individual attention. Such behaviors encourage employees to propose new ideas for completing tasks, share experiences, and exchange knowledge in carrying out their work (Becker et al., 2022; Zhang & Choi, 2024). Through these interactions, knowledge is not held solely by individuals but is exchanged and utilized to evaluate work practices, identify problems, and develop a shared understanding. This process enables individual experiences to be transformed into collective knowledge, which forms the foundation of organizational learning (Mehner et al., 2025). According to Gümüş et al. (2025), transformational leaders can encourage experimentation and a growth mindset, thereby motivating employees to question conventional practices and explore new ideas. This form of leadership actively embraces a philosophy of sharing, where knowledge, ideas, and experiences are discussed by everyone; as a result, the desire to learn grows naturally and supports organizational learning in addressing organizational challenges (Begum et al., 2020).

H2: The positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational learning

Organizational learning and organizational development

Burke and Litwin (1992) explain that organizational development relates to changes in internal factors, including management practices, work systems, and members' ability to respond to organizational change. In this context, organizational learning enables employees to grow, adapt, and innovate through insights gained from both internal and external sources, as well as to identify opportunities or weaknesses in existing procedures (Alsoukini et al., 2025). The knowledge gained is then utilized to solve problems on the job and adapted to the organization's needs (Kristensen et al., 2022). When learning is applied to work activities, the organization has a foundation for updating procedures, improving coordination, and developing more adaptive internal processes. Lau et al. (2019) explain that organizational learning effectively facilitates knowledge transfer through flexible and proactive learning models designed to address change and development within the organization. This knowledge-sharing process also enhances employees' skills, strengths, and self-confidence, thereby supporting organizational development (Ali et al., 2024).

H3: The positive influence of organizational learning on organizational development

Transformational leadership and organizational development: the mediating role of organizational learning

According to TL theory, leaders build a shared vision through inspirational motivation, encourage creative thinking through intellectual stimulation, and instill core organizational values through idealistic influence (Bass, 1985; Khan & Ismail, 2017). Such behavior encourages employees to generate ideas and alternative solutions to problems. However, individual ideas are insufficient to drive organizational development without a learning process that enables that knowledge to be shared and utilized collectively. In this context, organizational learning serves

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as a mediating mechanism linking transformational leadership to the formation of a shared understanding and the refinement of work practices. This process aligns with the burke-litwin model, which emphasizes the interconnection between management practices and work systems and organizational change (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Through collective learning, organizations have a foundation for identifying inefficiencies in existing procedures and integrating new knowledge into process improvements (De Mast et al., 2021). A study by Pimonratanakan et al. (2017) shows that organizational learning can mediate the positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development. These findings are reinforced by research identifying the role of organizational learning in linking transformational leadership to organizational outcomes such as organizational performance (Kılıç & Uludağ, 2021) or organizational innovation (Hsiao & Chang, 2011). These findings provide empirical support for the organizational learning mechanism underpinning the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development.

H4: The mediating role of organizational learning in the positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational development

Transformational Leadership and Employee Maturity

Bass (1985) explains that transformational leadership develops employees' capacities and potential through motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention. Through individual attention, leaders can address employees' immediate needs, which enhances their sense of being valued. The intellectual stimulation provided serves as psychological capital for employees, encouraging a rational approach and independent problem-solving. This support is accompanied by motivation and trust to take on responsibilities, thereby enhancing employees' self-confidence and independence (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Njaramba, 2024). Often, employees will demonstrate greater employee maturity, evidenced by their readiness to handle job demands and fulfill responsibilities without excessive dependence on their superiors. A study by Afsouran et al. (2022) also identified the role of transformational leadership in fostering employee maturity. Leaders can apply intellectual and rational approaches to managing change in accordance with the work culture, thereby supporting the development of employee maturity (Amirian et al., 2014).

H5: The positive influence of transformational leadership on employee maturity

Employee maturity and organizational development

Based on the burke-litwin model, individual characteristics are part of the internal factors related to organizational change and effectiveness (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Through employee maturity, employees are able to demonstrate emotional maturity, withstand stress, and adapt their actions to job demands even in difficult situations (Devda & Makvana, 2014). This maturity enables employees to identify problems and take the initiative to improve job performance (Boonyarit, 2023). When such initiatives are implemented through adjustments to work methods, the resolution of operational challenges, or improvements in coordination, changes at the individual level subsequently evolve into process improvements at the organizational unit level. Thus, employee maturity contributes to organizational

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development (Afsouran et al., 2022). This aligns with Abdollahzadeh et al. (2024), who explain that the development of employees' professional competencies and personal maturity can bring competitive advantages to the business and serve as the foundation for organizational growth. Afsouran et al. (2022) also emphasize the importance of employee maturity at the behavioral level so that employees can take on a more active role in achieving organizational goals, including participating in organizational development.

H6: The positive influence of employee maturity on organizational development

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development: The Mediating Role of Employee Maturity

A study by Afsouran et al. (2022) found that the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development can be mediated by employee maturity. Bass (1985), in his theory of transformational leadership, explains that transformational leadership provides individual attention, intellectual stimulation, and empowerment, which enhance employees' competencies, independence, and sense of responsibility. The development of these capabilities reflects employee maturity, which enables employees to self-regulate and develop an awareness of job demands and the complexity of change (April & Downes, 2026). From the perspective of the burke-litwin model, employee maturity is an aspect of individual characteristics related to internal change and organizational development (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Employees with higher levels of maturity tend to be more capable of accepting change and translating the leader's vision into improvement initiatives in their work (Kanitz et al., 2023). Previous research indicates that transformational leadership is associated with the development of psychological capacity, readiness, and individual autonomy in responding to change and engaging in innovative work behaviors (Mujib & Rosari, 2023; Vu et al., 2025). Thus, employee maturity serves as a mediating mechanism that translates the development of employee capacity through transformational leadership into readiness and initiative to support organizational development.

H7: The mediating role of employee maturity in the positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational development

Figure 1 illustrates the comprehensive hypothesis development model for this study. Specifically, it displays the mediating roles of both employee maturity and organizational learning in the positive influence of transformational leadership on organizational development.

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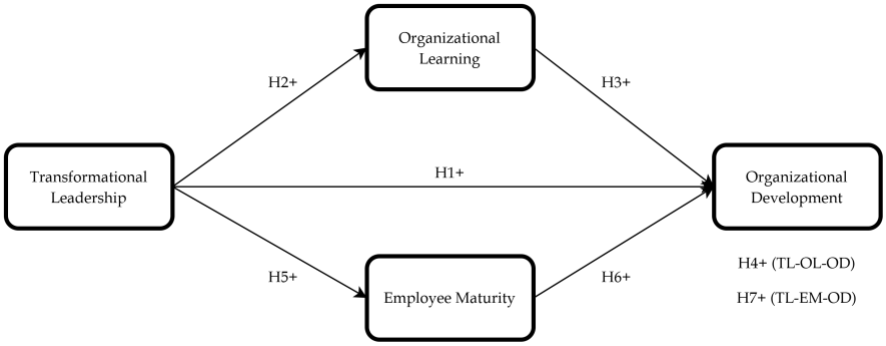


Figure 1. Research Model

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional design. The unit of analysis was the individual, with respondents consisting of educational staff working at private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Since the population size and sampling frame were not precisely known, this study used purposive sampling to select the sample. Respondents had to meet the following criteria: (1) educational staff were working at private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia; (2) educational staff had been employed for at least one year; and (3) educational staff had a direct supervisor. These criteria were established to ensure that respondents had sufficient experience in understanding leadership practices, workplace dynamics, and organizational processes within the higher education environment. These criteria were operationalized through an initial screening process using screening questions to identify employment status, length of service, and the presence of a direct supervisor. The information provided was then used to assess the respondents' suitability for the research objectives.

The final sample size was 170 respondents. The sample size was analyzed using a power analysis via G*Power 3.1, assuming a moderate effect size of 0.15, a significance level of 0.05, three predictors, and a statistical power of 0.95. Based on these parameters, the minimum sample size for this study was 119 respondents (Faul et al., 2009). This calculation was performed to determine the threshold for an adequate sample size; however, the final sample exceeded this estimate. Data were collected via a questionnaire distributed electronically to respondents. The questionnaire consisted of 27 statements measured on a 1–5 Likert scale. The questionnaire was organized sequentially, beginning with the variables of transformational leadership, organizational learning, employee maturity, and organizational development. Each section included instructions for completion and a brief explanation of the variables to help respondents understand the questionnaire. Participation in the questionnaire was voluntary. Respondents were informed that the questionnaire data would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Each data point represents an individual's perception. A single private university may be represented by several respondents, but the identity of the private university remains confidential. The research instrument was adapted from previous studies that had been tested for validity and reliability. The transformational leadership (TL) variable consists of 7 indicators from Carless et al. (2000); organizational learning (OL) consists of 6 items from Swift and Hwang (2013); and

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employee maturity (EM) consists of 9 indicators from Afsouran et al. (2022), and the organizational development (OD) variable has 5 indicators from Rastgoo (2016) and Zadeh and Ghahremani (2019).

The collected data were then analyzed using the PLS-SEM approach in Smart PLS 4.0. First, the model was evaluated for convergent validity, with criteria of outer loading values > 0.70 and average variance extracted (AVE) > 0.50 to be considered valid (Hair et al., 2022). Next, the constructs were tested for reliability, with the criteria that Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability must exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022). This study also examined the coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the amount of variance explained by the predictor variables. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was also evaluated to ensure there were no multicollinearity issues. The threshold set was 5, in accordance with established standards (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, the structural model was evaluated using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples, a two-tailed test, and a 5% significance level. According to Hair et al. (2022), a hypothesis is accepted if it has a p-value < 0.05 and a t-statistic > 1.96. Finally, effect sizes were assessed using the criteria of 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), and 0.35 (large) (Cohen, 1988).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Count	Percentage
Gender		
Man	83	48.82
Woman	87	51.18
Age		
20–30 years old	54	31.76
31–40 years old	67	39.41
41–50 years old	33	19.41
>50 years old	16	9.42
Education		
High School	13	7.65
Diploma	31	18.24
Bachelor's Degree	119	70.00
Master's/Doctorate	7	4.11
Years of service		
1–5 years	43	25.29
6–10 years	92	54.12
>10 years	35	20.59

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents in this study were women, with a total of 87 respondents. Participants were in the 31–40 age range, with a total of 67 participants. Most respondents held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education (119 people). Meanwhile, the majority of respondents had been working for 6–10 years, with a total of 92 respondents.

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Figure 2. Structural Model

Table 2. Results of the Validity, Reliability, and VIF Tests

Indicator variable	Outer loading	VIF	AVE	Cronbach alpha	Composite reliability
Transformational Leadership			**0.624**	**0.900**	**0.921**
TL1	0.785	2.142			
TL2	0.769	1.980			
TL3	0.821	2.397			
TL4	0.786	2.007			
TL5	0.800	2.364			
TL6	0.795	2.317			
TL7	0.775	1.904D			
Organizational Learning			0.618	0.876	0.906
OL1	0.769	1.866			
OL2	0.765	1.855			
OL3	0.779	1.893			
OL4	0.806	2.015			
OL5	0.786	1.851			
OL6	0.807	2.022			
Employee Maturity			0.606	0.919	0.933
EM1	0.785	2.245			
EM2	0.729	2.191			
EM3	0.759	2.093			
EM4	0.735	1.798			
EM5	0.796	2.290			
EM6	0.784	2.169			
EM7	0.823	2.786			
EM8	0.798	2.217			
EM9	0.794	2.355			
Organizational Development			0.654	0.868	0.904
OD1	0.822	1.938			
OD2	0.824	2.314			
OD3	0.836	2.383			
OD4	0.768	1.815			
OD5	0.792	1.819			

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Based on Figure 1 and Table 2, all indicator items met the criteria for convergent validity, as evidenced by outer loadings > 0.70 and AVEs > 0.50. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values above 0.70 indicate that the variables in this study possess adequate reliability. Furthermore, the multicollinearity test also showed that all indicator items had VIF values below the threshold of 5, indicating that there are no multicollinearity issues in the measurement model (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 3. R square

Variable	R square	R square adjusted
Organizational development	0.742	0.738
Organizational learning	0.595	0.593
Employee maturity	0.795	0.794

Based on Table 3, employee maturity has the highest explanatory power with an R^2 value of 0.795, followed by organizational development at 0.742 and organizational learning at 0.595. These results indicate that the model explains 79.5% of the variation in employee maturity, 74.2% of the variation in organizational development, and 59.5% of the variation in organizational learning.

Based on the hypothesis test results in Table 4, all research hypotheses were accepted because they had p-values < 0.05 and T-statistics > 1.96. The strongest direct effect was found in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee maturity ($\beta = 0.892$; $p < 0.001$). In the relationship with organizational development, both mediating variables showed significant indirect effects. This indicates that both mechanisms play a partial role in linking transformational leadership and organizational development. Furthermore, the effect size (F^2) results show that the effects of transformational leadership on employee maturity ($F^2 = 3.874$) and organizational learning ($F^2 = 1.471$) are large, while other effects are small.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results and Effect Sizes

Hypothesis	F^2	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
TL->OD	0.144	0.435	0.434	0.099	4.376	0.000
TL->OL	1.471	0.772	0.770	0.052	14.954	0.000
OL-> OD	0.081	0.246	0.245	0.087	2.816	0.005
TL->OL->OD		0.189	0.189	0.070	2.703	0.007
TL->EM	3.874	0.892	0.891	0.022	39.681	0.000
EM->OD	0.037	0.234	0.236	0.098	2.397	0.017
TL->EM->OD		0.209	0.210	0.088	2.368	0.018

Discussion

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development

The results of this study found that transformational leadership has a positive impact on organizational development. These findings indicate that leaders can foster a climate that supports the exploration of new work approaches and values creative ideas (Mekonnen & Bayissa, 2023). A shared vision provides clear direction for implementing change; intellectual stimulation creates space for evaluation; and individual support empowers employees to take on new responsibilities. Employees are encouraged to identify areas for improvement and explore potential improvements within the organization (Galeazzo et al., 2021), which in turn serve as input for updating the organization's procedures and work systems. From the

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perspective of the burke-litwin model, this mechanism reflects the role of leadership as a transformational factor that influences internal organizational conditions and supports organizational development (Burke & Litwin, 1992). These findings are consistent with the research by Nanje and Fotoh (2025), which explains that transformational leadership creates a positive environment for change and progress that helps organizations grow. This type of leadership also develops employees' potential by positively addressing their needs, empowering them, and establishing both individual and broader organizational goals—including developmental goals (Ajoud & Alsalman, 2018). Thus, leaders of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia need to involve educational staff in periodic evaluations of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for academic and administrative services and grant them the authority to propose and test improvements to work procedures.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Learning

This study found that transformational leadership can positively influence organizational learning. This finding aligns with TL theory, which explains that transformational leaders develop members' capacities through intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individual attention (Bass, 1985). This behavior helps individuals reach their highest potential, encourages employees to think critically, solve problems, and align their knowledge with shared goals (Sudibjo & Prameswari, 2021). This interaction creates space for the exchange of experiences and knowledge among employees, resulting in a collective understanding of something previously unknown (Eslahchi, 2023). This knowledge is utilized to evaluate organizational work practices, identify problems, and develop better work approaches as the foundation for organizational learning. Research has also found that transformational leadership plays a positive role in organizational learning (Khan et al., 2020; Rianto et al., 2021). Through inspirational motivation, leaders foster a culture of learning among employees, encouraging them to continuously learn and share ideas with one another in the workplace (Udin et al., 2023). These findings indicate the importance of conducting cross-unit evaluations in private universities that involve all educational staff to share experiences, identify obstacles, and formulate solutions together. The results of the evaluation need to be documented in the form of updated SOPs or formal policies so that the knowledge gained can be consistently applied by all units.

Organizational Learning and Organizational Development

This study found that organizational learning plays a role in enhancing organizational development capabilities. These findings can be explained by the burke-litwin model, which states that organizational development is related to an organization's ability to adapt its internal processes to the demands of change (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Organizational learning enables employees and management to interpret evidence-based knowledge, including codified and research-based knowledge, as a basis for evaluating work practices (Martin et al., 2025). Through this evaluation, the organization can identify discrepancies between existing procedures and operational needs. These findings are used to adjust work routines, standardize improvement practices, and develop procedures better suited to the

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organization's challenges (Kristensen et al., 2022). Thus, organizational learning contributes to organizational development through the application of learning outcomes in updating the organization's systems, routines, and internal processes.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research; for example, Finnestrand et al. (2023) explain that learning, at both the individual and organizational levels, is necessary to cope with change, including the requirements for organizational development. Soontornwiwattana (2025) asserts that organizational e-learning is often linked to learning and organizational development to strengthen the organization. For private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, periodic evaluations of academic services require data on complaints, records of service errors, and feedback from educational staff to resolve issues. The results are followed up through revisions to standard operating procedures (SOPs), streamlining of service workflows, or standardization of improvement procedures across units.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development: The Mediating Role of Organizational Learning

This study found that organizational learning plays a mediating role in the positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development. These findings align with previous research confirming the mediating role of organizational learning (Pimonratanakan et al., 2017). Based on TL theory, transformational leaders develop employees' capabilities and foster a shared orientation by encouraging critical thinking, the sharing of ideas, and the exploration of new approaches (Bass, 1985; Sudibjo & Prameswari, 2021). In line with this, Panoy and Villanueva (2024) explain that the communication of an inspiring vision and the application of high standards by leaders can foster an environment that supports learning and the exchange of knowledge, thereby strengthening organizational learning. Furthermore, from the perspective of the burke-litwin model, organizational learning is part of the organization's internal change process because its knowledge is utilized to evaluate management practices and support the organizational development process (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Therefore, organizational learning serves as a mediating mechanism that translates employees' collective capacity and knowledge into improvements to the organization's systems and work practices. Based on these findings, leaders of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, need to establish cross-unit learning and evaluation forums that involve educational staff to share experiences, identify obstacles to academic services, and translate the results of these discussions into continuous system updates and improvements.

Transformational Leadership and Employee Maturity

Hypothesis testing revealed that transformational leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee maturity. In the context of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, these findings indicate that granting trust and authority to educational staff to make operational decisions, resolve problems, or propose improvement ideas in line with their responsibilities can foster initiative, self-confidence, and employee maturity. A leader's support and trust can strengthen

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employees' motivation, identity, and belief in their own ability to achieve goals (Du & Yan, 2022). As these capabilities develop, employees no longer rely on leaders but become self-reliant in their work, thereby fostering employee maturity (Dias et al., 2022). This mechanism aligns with TL theory, which positions the development of employees' potential and capabilities as an integral part of the transformational leadership process (Bass, 1985). Michaud et al. (2025) also explain the role of transformational leadership in facilitating the empowerment of followers. Meanwhile, providing meaningful goals and opportunities for active participation encourages self-development and fosters employee maturity (Bektaş et al., 2025). Therefore, the application of transformational leadership contributes to the development of employee maturity through capacity building, empowerment, and employee autonomy.

Employee maturity and organizational development

This study identified the role of employee maturity in enhancing organizational development. These findings align with previous research confirming the positive influence of employee maturity on organizational development (Afsouran et al., 2022). Abdollahzadeh et al. (2024) also explain that employee maturity serves as a guide for identifying, designing, and implementing employee-related processes so that their capabilities continue to improve, thereby contributing to organizational development readiness and planning. This mechanism is further explained in the burke-litwin model, which positions individual characteristics as internal factors related to organizational performance and change (Burke & Litwin, 1992). Employees with a high level of employee maturity tend to be able to adjust their responses and behaviors when facing changing job demands and to reflect on their actions in relation to task execution (Ouellette et al., 2024). This capability supports employee engagement in identifying areas for improvement and providing feedback on current work practices. When this feedback is followed up through evaluation and incorporated into work procedures and routines, individual contributions can evolve into changes in the organization's systems and work processes (Knol et al., 2022), thereby fostering organizational development. For leaders of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, the space for participation and the trust granted to educational staff will guide them to take optimal responsibility, identify existing problems, and propose improvements that can serve as the foundation for the development of the organization's systems and work processes.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Development: The Mediating Role of Employee Maturity

Finally, this study found that employee maturity mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development. These findings indicate that the influence of transformational leadership on organizational development can occur through employee maturity, as found by Afsouran et al. (2022). TL theory explains that leaders who provide individual attention, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation support the development of employees' capabilities and autonomy (Bass, 1985). This maturity enables employees to take

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initiative and assume responsibility when facing work-related problems (Coun et al., 2022). Furthermore, the burke-litwin model identifies individual characteristics as one of the internal factors related to organizational change (Burke & Litwin, 1992). When these capabilities are applied to resolving operational challenges and improving work practices, employees actively support organizational development. Thus, employee maturity serves as the mechanism that translates the influence of transformational leadership into employee contributions to organizational change. These findings indicate that leaders of private universities need to provide individual mentoring, competency training, and decision-making authority commensurate with employees' responsibilities so that employees' personal development manifests in initiatives to resolve problems and improve work practices that support organizational development.

CONCLUSION

This study found that transformational leadership has a positive relationship with organizational development, either directly or through the mediating mechanism of organizational learning, which bridges this relationship through the development and exchange of collective knowledge that forms the basis for evaluating improvements in organizational practices. Meanwhile, employee maturity operates by strengthening individual capacity, autonomy, and responsibility in translating leadership directives into initiatives and concrete actions to support organizational change. Empirically, the indirect effect via employee maturity ($\beta = 0.209$) is greater than that via organizational learning ($\beta = 0.189$). These findings indicate that organizational development is relatively more strongly associated with individual capacity in implementing leadership directives than with collective learning mechanisms.

Theoretically, this study integrates the burke-litwin model and TL theory to explain organizational development by testing two parallel mediators: organizational learning and employee maturity. This integration expands the explanation of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational development through the mechanisms of collective knowledge development at the organizational level and the strengthening of individual capacity to implement change. The findings on partial mediation also reinforce the explanation that organizational development is not only related to leadership but also depends on internal processes that translate leadership behavior into knowledge and concrete actions by organizational members.

Practically, leaders of private universities need to maintain a transformational leadership style by instilling trust. This includes delegating responsibility, involving staff in decision-making, and developing competencies through training. Given that employee maturity has the least impact on organizational development, leaders must ensure that individual autonomy and capacity are translated into tangible contributions through responsibility-based assignments, periodic performance evaluations, and staff involvement in resolving organizational issues. In addition, higher education institutions need to strengthen organizational learning through knowledge-sharing forums, documentation of work experiences, and routine evaluations to improve both academic and administrative standard operating

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procedures (SOPs). Thus, individual capacity and collective learning can be utilized more effectively to improve coordination and the quality of organizational services.

This study was conducted to the best of our ability; however, there are several limitations that should be noted. First, the cross-sectional design limits the study's ability to explain the dynamics of the relationships between variables over time. Second, the number of respondents and the geographic scope of the study mean that the results cannot be generalized to the entire population and require careful interpretation. Third, data collection was based on respondents' perceptions and conducted at a single point in time, which has the potential to introduce self-reporting bias. Future research could use a longitudinal design to observe the development of relationships between variables, expand the scope of respondents and the study area, and collect data from multiple sources, such as evaluations by supervisors and employees, to reduce potential bias. Additionally, future research could consider institutional characteristics as contextual factors in explaining organizational development.

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