

LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT OF MILLENNIAL LEADERS AS A CHANGE AGENT IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The digital transformation era and Industry 4.0 provide ample opportunities for this generation to thrive with their rapid technological adaptation and openness to new ideas. This research examines millennial leadership behavioral development to enable them to effectively become change agents in digital organizations, using the case study of William Tanuwijaya at Tokopedia. Through a review of literature from international sources during 2020–2023, this study discusses millennial leadership theories and change management, highlighting the urgency and importance of adaptive leadership capable of managing change in the face of digital organizational challenges. The research findings indicate that millennial leadership styles vary according to organizational contexts. Millennials are confronted with change management, where organizational readiness to adapt is critical to success. Adaptive leadership, a key strategy in managing change, is crucial. Through William Tanuwijaya's leadership at Tokopedia, millennial leadership characteristics prioritizing social and environmental issues, sustainability, and the implementation of sustainable values are evident, alongside collaboration with the government to create an inclusive environment and focus on innovation and digital transformation in the economy. Leaders like William Tanuwijaya start by building teams consisting of celebrities or public figures in Indonesia to promote Tokopedia and strengthen the company's image while formulating the company's vision and initiatives, motivating employees, overcoming obstacles such as improving work efficiency, implementing successful minor changes, ensuring smooth change integration, and making change an integral part of the organizational culture and system.

Keywords: Leadership Behavioral Development; Transformational Leadership; Change Management

INTRODUCTION

Change is one of the features of a constantly changing corporate world. The rise of the digital and global periods has made managing organizations more difficult. As a result, leaders who can successfully implement management changes are required (Hanna et al., 2024; Zada, 2022). To stay in the company, executives must prioritize staff skill development and mental health maintenance and implement new transformative change strategies, particularly during the AI-digital transition. As a result, it is critical to emphasize the importance of leadership, notably senior management, in dealing with these changes (Zada, 2022). The ability of a corporation to effectively and efficiently manage and integrate resources influences organizational success (Komm et al., 2021). In order to manage a business, an organization must be agile and able to adjust to change. Agility refers to an organization's capacity to recognize and respond quickly to external changes, as well as to have numerous ideas and be efficient in order to gain a competitive advantage. On the other hand, Acuity refers to an organization's ability to broaden its understanding of flexibility by sensing and responding to opportunities and dangers in the business environment (Ceconi & Bilkovski, 2023).

Differences in generations and their impact on various disciplines, institutions, and business operations are currently a topic of interest for many people compared to before. Specifically, attitudes towards advancing technology, communication, and collaboration in management are significant. In this context, a leader must be able to face the challenges and opportunities that may arise in a business to ensure it continues to grow and develop. Therefore, the role of the millennial generation is expected to support the operation of a business. It is estimated that more than 75% of the demographic proportion will be occupied by millennials (Frey, 2018). The millennial generation, born between 1981 and 1996, has brought numerous changes in life and business. The following are some significant differences and impacts:

They were born in a rapidly developing digital era of millennials' technology use. Technology is an integral part of their lives, and they are very active in using the internet, social media, and e-commerce to start and run businesses. Using digital platforms allows them to reach a wider audience without geographical limitations, thus enabling their businesses to grow faster and more efficiently. They are highly collaborative and business flexibility. They seek ways to run businesses without being tied to physical offices or conventional working hours. Flexibility in work and personal life is a priority for them. Many of them aim to create businesses that allow them to work from anywhere, at any time. They are highly concerned about social and environmental issues. This approach is reflected in their businesses. They often establish companies with social or sustainable missions, aiming not only for financial gain but also to positively impact society and the environment. They prioritize personal financial stability and balance between work and personal life. Their concerns about ESG are significant but can wane under economic pressure. They shape the consumer landscape by forming technology-oriented consumer needs. Companies must focus on curating positive reviews and comments to meet consumer demands.

In summary, the millennial generation's role in supporting a business's operation is crucial. They bring unique skills and values that can help businesses grow and develop in the increasingly complex digital era.

The millennial generation was born between 1981 and 1996, with unique traits and experiences that can significantly change management practices (Basuki, 2021). Millennials grew up in the digital era, making them accustomed to technology and deeply understanding social media, online communication, and other digital tools. They can leverage technology to expedite information flow and teamwork within a business environment. Millennial leaders are perceived as capable of creating a more open and collaborative culture in management. Research conducted by Deloitte (2024) explained that the millennial generation requires stability and clear structure

in the workplace. They also emphasize centralized decision-making, clear responsibilities, and high maintenance levels.

Therefore, their managers must consider the required time (Butler et al., 2020). The millennial generation also tends to make decisions prioritizing lifestyle over career. Another study conducted by Deloitte (2024) in the United States found that the millennial generation is valued for valuing free time and less prioritizing work in their lives. They rarely work overtime and are more likely to stop working once they have enough money. Regarding work compensation, the millennial generation values intrinsic rewards such as fascinating work, learning new skills, and using their skills more than extrinsic rewards like status, salary, development, and promotions compared to Generation X but more than the Baby Boomer generation. They also place less value on social interactions at work than other generations. This might be due to the intensity of online social hierarchies, which reduces the need for socializing at work (Butler et al., 2020). Additionally, millennials are known for being very concerned about social and environmental issues (Rifda, 2022). They often have and apply values related to desires, social justice, and corporate social responsibility. Millennial leaders can introduce more sustainable and ethical management practices, positively impacting society and the environment. Furthermore, they tend to pursue a balance between work and personal life by understanding the importance of work-life balance and introducing management practices that allow employees to achieve this balance. This can include remote work, flexible working hours, and employee well-being. Millennials tend to be more open to diverse perspectives and values, valuing inclusive workplace cultures and diversity in the workplace to enhance collaboration, innovation, and productivity. Millennials have experienced rapid technological and economic changes throughout their lives, which has enabled them to adapt quickly to changes. Millennial leaders can lead management changes more effectively, facing the challenges of the constantly evolving business world.

The rapid and unprecedented changes in the workforce have led to changes in management and social structures that govern social norms, attitudes, interactions, and relationships among employees from different generations.

Research Problem: Change programs often fail due to poor planning, inadequate monitoring and control, limited resources and knowledge, and policies and practices that are not aligned.

Research Objective: Millennial leaders are expected to be potent agents of change that will shape future management in modern organizations.

Research Question: How is millennial leaders' role in leading change management perceived in the digital transformation organization?

Research Implication: Millennial leaders have the potential to bring positive changes in management practices, creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and value-oriented work environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership theory continues to evolve through separate paths tailored to meet the needs. These paths in leadership include cognitive intelligence (studies on cognitive or rational processes), spiritual intelligence (the need for meaning and values in work and life), emotional intelligence (emotions or feelings), and deliberate action skills or behaviors (Hanna et al., 2024). Each path, of course, provides different dimensions and a series of requirements for effective leadership. Leadership can be interpreted as the ability of an individual to influence, decide, and carry out what they desire and to make others do the same (Forestlink, 2023). Subsequently, Follett's definition of leadership in 1949 is that she does not refer to a position but states that leadership has two primary principles. First, leaders do not lead based on personal characteristics but instead based on a deep understanding of the specific situation. Second, leadership is not just an innate quality but a skill that can be learned. With this, it can be seen that leadership is more

than just those at the top of the organization; it encompasses behavior and relationships at all levels and roles. Understanding these behaviors is crucial to seeing the relationship between organizational leadership and organizational culture (Schell, 2019).

The book 'Leadership: Theories and Practices' by Northouse (2019) summarizes the evolving definition of leadership from 1900 to the present. Leadership is about how an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals, and currently, several approaches have developed in defining leadership. These approaches include authentic leadership, which emphasizes genuineness and the quality of leadership; spiritual leadership, which focuses on values and a sense of calling; servant leadership, which places the leader as a servant and focuses on the needs of followers; adaptive leadership, which encourages followers to adapt and solve problems; followership, which highlights the role and skills of followers; and discursive leadership, which emphasizes negotiated communication between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2019). Mekonnen & Bayissa (2023) conceptualized two types of leadership, transactional and transformational, which discuss seven leadership factors: charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, giving rewards based on the situation, policy with exceptions, and laissez-faire. Transformational leadership encourages subordinates to go beyond their interests to achieve organizational goals beyond expectations (Abasilim et al., 2019). Transformational leadership requires followers' involvement in the process or activities, increasing motivation and morale for both leaders and followers (Khan et al., 2020). It is also mentioned that transformational leaders focus on their followers' needs and inputs to make each person a leader by empowering and motivating them. Furthermore, transformational leaders are visionaries who strive to attract followers to become better and use them to achieve higher needs and goals (Steinmann et al., 2018). While transactional leadership is described as the contractual relationship between leaders and subordinates and relies on the strengths of each, it is dependent on the advantages of each (Abasilim et al., 2019). In transactional leadership, followers are rewarded if they achieve the agreed-upon goals. Thus, it can be described as an active, positive exchange (Ahmed & Simha, 2023).

Millennial Leaders

The emergence of the gadget generation is one of the significant phenomena in the era of globalization, where this term is used to denote the rise of the millennial generation. 'Gadget' refers to a device, so the gadget generation is the generation that lives alongside technology that cannot be separated from their lives. Indeed, high-tech gadgets have become integral to the millennial generation. The millennial generation has various opinions regarding the suitable birth range. Some define millennials as those born between 1982 and 2002, while others state that millennials were born between 1981 and 2009 or between 1977 and 1988 (Grotkamp et al., 2020; Hyangsewu et al., 2021). After conducting research over several years, the Pew Research Center Dimock (2019) concluded that those included in the millennial generation are those born between 1981 and 1996. Characteristics of the millennial generation include their dependence on the internet, high self-confidence, high self-esteem, and greater openness and tolerance for change (Akimas & Claudia, 2024). With high self-confidence, millennials do not hesitate to perform their best (Wolor et al., 2020). Millennials highly require flexible work schedules or hours, salary, individual recognition, and career advancement. Their job satisfaction is determined by intrinsic factors such as opportunities for ownership of the organization, training provided, perceptions of support from superiors, varied and meaningful work, and work-life balance (Lisa & Yulianti, 2021). Other characteristics of millennials are multitasking and enjoyment of collaborative work, ambition, flexibility, still requiring monitoring from superiors, valuing teamwork and collective actions, adaptability to changes, confidence, and being performance-oriented (Dixon, 2022).

Millennial Leaders view meaningful relationships as an essential part of leadership. They also use a two-way communication approach and value reciprocal relationships with their subordinates. Additionally, they have a developing and open leadership style and adhere to

professional ethics in the workplace. Millennial leaders prefer to feel trusted and empowered to lead and want to contribute to the organization using their skills (Easton & Steyn, 2023; Kohl, 2021).

In the research conducted by Kohl (2021), several characteristic traits of millennial leaders were found:

1. Millennial leaders want to lead by example, believe in empowering their followers, demonstrate the ability to listen well, and use positive reinforcement as the primary motivation. They also believe it is essential to provide regular recognition.
2. Millennial leaders may request clear deadlines and commitments but give their employees the freedom to work whenever they want.
3. Millennial leaders may be less accountable to individuals and have a team-centered approach.

Additionally, other research mentions indicators of millennial leadership styles, including encouraging the adoption of technology, promoting curiosity, providing space for collaboration, requiring feedback, creating comfort, offering opportunities for promotion, conveying knowledge, caring about groups, promoting teamwork, valuing performance, understanding organizational needs, being practical and flexible, providing constructive criticism, and having good work ethics (Kusumawati et al., 2023). By 2030, the millennial generation will represent 75% of the workforce (UPCEA, 2019). Based on the belief that every successful organization is founded on good leadership and that millennials will continue to lead in the future with their innovative and flexible approach to new ideas, organizations must recognize and develop millennials into leadership positions (Harrison, 2017). Citing Bennett (2020), management within an organization can help millennials develop their leadership by:

1. Helping them understand what their job entails and why it is essential to the organization.
2. Providing regular feedback to millennial leaders so they understand their progress and what needs to be improved.
3. Helping them demonstrate to the team how technology can impact productivity in their work.
4. Give millennials the freedom to develop their leadership style and help them understand the credibility of their team members.

Change Management Theory

Change management is a process conducted by an organization to achieve future goals, which are the organization's vision. Unlike traditional planning processes that describe the steps in the journey, change management aims to facilitate this journey (Landau, 2024). Change management in an organization refers to the steps taken to guide organizational changes to achieve success. These steps typically consist of three essential phases: preparation, implementation, and follow-up (Stobierski, 2020). It can be concluded that change management is a systematic series of processes consisting of several components such as change planning, effectively communicating changes, involvement in changes, supporting and involvement in changes, managing changes, and handling changes (Gallemard, 2024). Communication is one of the essential components of change management. Effective communication can create a conducive environment for individuals within the organization to change (McHarris, 2024). Kotter in research conducted by Bedard (2023), famous for his theory known as Kotter's Eight

Steps Change Management, identifies and finds the success factors and records them as eight steps to lead change. These steps are:

1. Creating a sense of urgency for change. Leaders must inspire their subordinates to act passionately and be determined to achieve bold and motivating opportunities. They are building enthusiasm among individuals to pursue a clear and attractive vision for the future.
2. Forming a change team.
3. Creating a vision and plan for change.
4. Communicating the vision and plan for change to stakeholders.

5. Removing barriers to the company. Leaders allow employees to overcome obstacles and provide real impact by removing barriers such as inefficient processes and outdated norms.
6. Achieving short-term wins. Success is the result of effort. It must be collected, classified, and communicated regularly to monitor progress and motivate volunteers to drive change.
7. Sustaining change. After initial success, efforts must be intensified. Increased credibility can improve systems, structures, and policies. Never stop striving for change until the vision is achieved.
8. Anchoring change in the culture. Defining and communicating the relationship between these behaviors and organizational success is essential to ensure new behaviors are repeated over the long term.

RESEARCH METHOD

This literature review gathers data from relevant theoretical references on millennial leadership and change management from reputable international journals and other sources between 2020 and 2023. The literature review identifies critical millennial leadership and change management aspects to address the research question. This case study focuses on William Tanuwijaya from Tokopedia, examining how millennial leaders approach team leadership and adapt to changes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Many organizations or companies worldwide are experiencing changes in their management due to the emergence of millennial leaders. One such organization that has changed its management due to millennial leaders is Tokopedia. Tokopedia is a technology and e-commerce company based in Indonesia. It was founded in 2009 by William Tanuwijaya and Leontinus Alpha Edison. William Tanuwijaya was born on November 11, 1981. Tokopedia has grown into one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. Tokopedia has also contributed to the digital transformation in Indonesia and supported the country's economic growth.

In 2021, Tokopedia merged its business with another technology company, Gojek, to form a new company called GoTo Group. The formation of the GoTo Group is claimed to be the most significant business collaboration in Indonesia and the largest between two internet and media service companies in Asia to date. GoTo combines the strengths of two leading technology companies in Indonesia, creating a unique and complementary ecosystem globally. The business merger between Tokopedia and Gojek signifies that William Tanuwijaya, as CEO of Tokopedia, is more open and tolerant of change. (Akimas & Claudia, 2024) They stated that millennial leaders tend to be more open and tolerant of change. The change referred to here is the merger of Tokopedia and Gojek, which will establish new policies and rules, eliminating previous changes and rules.

Some key achievements of William Tanuwijaya in leading Tokopedia include:

1. Tokopedia's Growth: Under William Tanuwijaya's leadership, Tokopedia has experienced rapid growth and has become one of Indonesia's leading e-commerce platforms. The platform has become a place for millions of sellers and buyers to transact in various product and service categories.
2. Innovation in Products and Services: Tokopedia has continued to innovate in the products and services it offers. William Tanuwijaya and his team have developed new features and strive to meet customer needs by providing various services, including online payment, logistics, and financial services.
3. Digital Transformation: Tokopedia has played a role in driving digital transformation in Indonesia by providing opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to trade

online. This has had a positive impact on Indonesia's economy and the well-being of SME business owners. This is in line with the mission of Group GoTo to create a significant social impact by providing equal opportunities for local SMEs in business development and providing access across the country.

4. Investment in the Startup Ecosystem: William Tanuwijaya supports the Indonesian startup ecosystem. Tokopedia has invested in several startups and has contributed to the growth of the digital economy in Indonesia.
5. Collaboration with the Government: William Tanuwijaya has collaborated with the Indonesian government to support digitalization initiatives and promote an inclusive digital economy. This includes support for financial inclusion programs and training for SMEs.
6. Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility: Under William Tanuwijaya's leadership, Tokopedia has considered sustainability and corporate social responsibility issues. They have taken steps to support various social and environmental initiatives.

Based on the achievements mentioned, William Tanuwijaya has played a highly significant role in the success of Tokopedia. William Tanuwijaya is an innovator who has developed Tokopedia to this point. He received the "Innovation Leadership Achievement Awards" organized by The Asian Banker in 2021. From the perspective of leadership theory, William Tanuwijaya is considered a transformational leader. William Tanuwijaya had a clear vision when building Tokopedia to address the problem of limited access to purchasing needs. Since Indonesia is the largest archipelago country, many needs are only available in major cities. It can be said that William Tanuwijaya is a visionary who has brought significant changes in Tokopedia's management, driving the company's growth and innovation, and has made positive contributions to Indonesia's economy. In William Tanuwijaya's leadership at Tokopedia, the characteristics of millennial leadership are evident, focusing on social and environmental issues, sustainability, and the implementation of enduring values (Rifda, 2022). Additionally, William Tanuwijaya has collaborated with the government to create an inclusive environment and focus on digital innovation. In some aspects, he has also supported the development of technology and innovation in business by investing in the startup economy.

According to Kotter's theory in research conducted by Bedard (2023) of the eight stages of change management, William Tanuwijaya created a sense of urgency among all Tokopedia employees to change by explaining the rapidly changing market situation and the need for adaptation. Once the urgency was established, Tokopedia's leader began building a team of celebrities or public figures in Indonesia to promote Tokopedia and strengthen its image. The following steps included formulating the company's vision and initiatives, motivating all employees, eliminating barriers such as increasing work efficiency, achieving small but successful changes, ensuring that the changes were well-integrated, and making the changes part of the company's culture and system. Through these steps, William Tanuwijaya successfully implemented changes at Tokopedia and addressed the crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic 2020.

CONCLUSION

It is estimated that by 2030, 75% of the workforce will be from the millennial generation, raising new concerns about whether millennials can become leaders in the future. The development of technology in the digital/industry 4.0 era is a suitable environment for millennials to grow. The presence of millennials brings new changes due to their unique characteristics, such as adaptability to technology, openness to new ideas and perspectives, and the ability to respond quickly to changes. These characteristics are hoped to enable millennials to become great transformational leaders. The leadership style of millennials may differ from previous generations because each generation, including each individual, has its own leadership style. Millennials face

the challenge of managing change, where every organization must be ready for change to grow and develop.

Change management, in essence, is a systematic system that will run effectively if all its components are well organized. William Tanuwijaya is an example of a millennial leader who has led Tokopedia to its success in Indonesia. Having the courage to establish an e-commerce application at a young age makes him a role model for young people. Tokopedia has positively impacted Indonesia, driving digital transformation and supporting the economy. In 2021, this millennial leader led Tokopedia to merge with Gojek, forming the new name GoTo. This certainly brought many changes within the organization from joining two different organizations. Changes in every organization are inevitable, and it must be recognized that changes can bring an organization to a higher level with competent leaders.

William Tanuwijaya, the co-founder and CEO of Tokopedia, plays a significant role in leading change management within the digital transformation of Tokopedia and the formed GoTo group. His leadership is perceived positively in several aspects:

1. **Visionary Leadership:** Tanuwijaya is credited with driving the vision of digitally impacting the Indonesian economy. He emphasizes the importance of social impact, equal opportunities for local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and providing access to quality products and services for all segments of society.
2. **Strategic Partnerships:** Under his leadership, Tokopedia has formed strategic partnerships with significant investors such as Alibaba Group, SoftBank Vision Fund, and others, significantly contributing to the company's growth and valuation.
3. **Innovation and Expansion:** Tanuwijaya has overseen the expansion of Tokopedia's services beyond its initial customer-to-customer marketplace model. This includes developing financial technology products and services, such as GoPay, which is now part of GoTo Financial.
4. **Cultural Alignment:** The merger with Gojek to form GoTo is seen as a strategic move that aligns with both companies' shared principles, thinking, and work ethic. This alignment is crucial for the success of the digital transformation efforts.
5. **Social Impact:** Tanuwijaya's mission to create a significant social impact through digital transformation is well-received. This includes providing equal opportunities for local SMEs and enhancing access to quality products and services nationwide.

William Tanuwijaya's leadership is credited with accelerating Tokopedia and GoTo's digital transformation by encouraging strategic alliances, innovation, and vital cultural alignment. His dedication to social impact and equitable chances bolsters his status as a visionary leader in the digital economy.

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