

Innovating Leadership in the Digital Age: Transformational Approaches to Navigate the Convergence of Emerging Technologies and Organizational Change. A Case Study of Bank XYZ

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of transformational leadership at XYZ in facilitating digital innovation, with an emphasis on the incorporation of technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), mobile banking, and big data analytics. This study employs qualitative analysis of XYZ's annual and sustainability reports to illustrate how leadership has cultivated an innovative and adaptable culture, enabling the bank to integrate digital solutions and sustain a competitive advantage. The study highlights the significance of change management strategies, such as Lewin's, Kotter's, ADKAR, and McKinsey's 7S, in addressing technology disruption and organizational resistance. XYZ's leadership adopted digital technologies and aligned them with strategic objectives, thereby ensuring regulatory compliance and enhancing operational efficiency. The findings indicate that future banking leaders must manage technological disruption while promoting ongoing innovation. The study provides actionable recommendations for leadership, technology adoption, and change management applicable to financial institutions aiming for success in digital transformation.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Digital Innovation, Change Management Models, Organizational Change, Banking Sector*

INTRODUCTION

The banking industry is experiencing substantial transformation driven by technological innovations such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, and mobile banking. This digital disruption necessitates innovative leadership to transform conventional banking models. Contemporary leadership transcends the mere management of individuals and processes; it encompasses the cultivation of a vision for digital transformation and the establishment of a culture that welcomes technological change (Rakovic et al., 2024). In financial institutions, the adoption of new technologies is essential for sustaining competitiveness and addressing changing consumer expectations.

Transformational leadership, as articulated by (Burns, 1978), emphasizes the importance of motivating employees, establishing a vision, and fostering innovation. This approach is essential in digital transformation, as leaders need to incorporate new technologies and modify organizational culture to facilitate it (Bolden & O'Regan, 2016). Studies indicate that transformational leadership improves performance amid technological disruption, especially within the banking sector (Al Issa & Omar, 2024). Leaders employing this approach promote adaptability and creativity, which are crucial for the integration of emerging technologies such as blockchain and AI, while reducing resistance to change through a collective long-term vision (Sliwka et al., 2024). This method enables organizations to sustain a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing market.

The integration of technologies like AI, blockchain, and big data has significantly transformed the banking sector, improved efficiency and enabling tailored services (Jessica Weisman-Pitts, 2024). AI, in particular, revolutionizes banking by anticipating customer needs, automating processes, and enhancing decision-making. Organizational change is crucial in this digital transformation, especially in regulated sectors like banking. Leaders must not only implement new technology but also manage changes in business structure and culture. Lewin's Change Management Model highlights the need for a methodical approach—unfreezing old practices, implementing change, and refreezing new

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procedures for stability (Hussain et al., 2018). Cultivating a digital-first culture is essential for leveraging new technologies. Leaders play a key role in fostering continual learning, collaboration, and empowering staff to explore new tools, enabling the organization to adapt to market shifts (Chughtai et al., 2023). This cultural shift enhances banks' agility and competitiveness, better positioning them to meet evolving client expectations.

XYZ exemplifies a financial institution successfully adapting to the digital economy. As one of Indonesia's largest private banks, XYZ has integrated mobile banking, digital payments, and AI-based solutions to innovate its services. This reflects the global trend where leadership plays a crucial role in managing digital transformation and organizational change (Gachugu, 2023). XYZ's leadership has fostered a culture of innovation, with its mobile banking platform revolutionizing customer interactions. Transformational leadership, as seen in XYZ, has been key to successful digital adoption in Indonesian banks (Hermiyetti, 2024). XYZ's use of AI in customer service and blockchain for enhanced cybersecurity highlights the alignment of technology with organizational goals, emphasizing the role of leadership in digital transformation (Osei et al., 2023). The bank has also invested in employee training to ensure its workforce is equipped with digital skills, and its agile culture enables quick adaptation to technological trends and market shifts.

This research examines how transformational leadership at XYZ has driven the bank's digital transformation by integrating new technology with organizational change. It analyzes global and national literature to explore the role of leadership in managing digital disruption within banking, focusing on XYZ's adoption of AI, blockchain, and mobile banking and their effects on organizational culture, processes, and performance. Understanding leadership's role in digital transformation is crucial for financial institutions globally. This study offers valuable insights for banks, particularly in developing economies like Indonesia, where effective technology integration can enhance market competitiveness. XYZ serves as a key case study on how leadership fosters organizational transformation in response to technological advancements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Leadership in Digital Age

By matching their objectives with the vision of the company, transformational leadership focusses on inspiring and encouraging followers to reach better degrees of performance. Burns J. G. (1978) initially presented this notion in the framework of political leadership, separating between transformational and transactional leadership, therefore greatly developing this concept. Burns claims that transformational leaders want to improve the ethical standards and incentives of their subordinates, therefore causing significant changes in both leaders and followers. These facets of transformational leadership help leaders to inspire creativity, propel change, and steer companies towards realization of their long-term goals. Emphasizing the development of a culture of constant improvement and high performance as well as rapid outcomes, Bass & Riggio (2006) work highlighted transformational leaders.

Extending Burns's work, Bass & Riggio (2006) developed the idea by pinpointing four main elements of transformative leadership:

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- Leaders inspire their people by acting as role models, therefore building respect and trust
- Leaders who clearly and powerfully provide a vision that motivates their subordinates to dedicate themselves to organizational objectives.
- Leaders challenge their subordinates to be creative, critical thinkers and problem solvers, therefore fostering intellectual stimulation and questioning of ideas.
- Leaders provide customized mentoring and assistance to meet the demands for development of every follower.

B. Digital Leadership

Digital leadership is the capacity to use technology to drive a company through digital transformation thereby enhancing processes, products, and business models. It calls for a combination of conventional leadership abilities with thorough awareness of digital trends, technology, and how they affect the company. Recent research, such those by Bolden & O'Regan (2016), underline how crucial digital leadership is in negotiating the convoluted terrain of technological disturbance. Digital leaders must be nimble, open to change, and skilled in using data-driven insights to guide strategic choices. Their emphasis is on building a digital culture that supports innovation, experimentation, and the acceptance of emerging technologies like big data, blockchain, artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain. Bolden & O'Regan (2016) see effective digital leaders as having the following traits:

- Visionary thinking allows one to predict future trends and match digital initiatives to long-term objectives of the company.
- Agility: They pick up changes in technology and market dynamics fast.
- Cooperation: They create an atmosphere that makes use of many teams and digital resources to inspire inventions.

C. Transformational Leadership in Banking Sector

The banking industry has seen major changes as a result of digital transformation, necessitating a shift in leadership strategies. Transformational leadership is critical for navigating banks through this period of rapid technological innovation. Financial institution leaders are rapidly embracing new technologies such as AI, blockchain, and big data to stay competitive and satisfy changing client expectations. Studies over the last three years illustrate the relevance of transformative leadership in the banking business.

1. AI Integration: Banking executives utilize AI to improve client experiences, simplify processes, and make informed choices. For example, AI-powered chatbots and automated services have transformed client relationships by giving personalized, real-time replies (Kumar et al., 2022)
2. Leaders use blockchain technology for better transparency, security, and efficiency in transactions and data management. Transformational leaders in banks foster an innovative culture, encouraging teams to investigate the possibilities of blockchain for new financial services and safe transactions (Vinciguerra et al., 2021)
3. Big Data Analytics: Banks use big data to analyze client behavior, anticipate trends, and uncover hazards. Data analytics is used by transformational leaders to inform strategic choices, generate customized goods, and improve customer happiness (Hussain et al., 2018).

Ly (2024) discovered that banks with transformational leaders are more effective at adopting digital strategies that result in higher efficiency and better customer experiences. Transformational leaders in this area prioritize instilling an innovative mentality in their people, pushing them to accept change, and continually upskilling in digital technology.

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D. Model of Organizational Change

Organizational change models provide structured approaches that guide organizations in navigating shifts in their operations, culture, or technology. These models are crucial for addressing external pressures such as technological advancements. Below is a detailed review of some of the most influential models, focusing on how they apply to adaptation.

TABLE I
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MODEL

Model	Description	Key Stages	Application in Technological Change
Lewin's Change Management Model (Lewin, 1951)	A three-step paradigm emphasizing the need of preparing an organization for change, implementing it, and stabilizing it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unfreeze: Create awareness for change. 2. Change: Transition to new methods or technologies. 3. Refreeze: Solidify the new practices. 	Encourages overcoming opposition by conveying the advantages of technological advancements, giving training, and incorporating technology into organizational culture.
Kotter's 8-Step Process (Kotter, 1996)	A step-by-step method that emphasizes building urgency, developing alliances, and incorporating changes into organizational culture.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Urgency 2. Build a Guiding Coalition 3. Develop a Vision and Strategy 4. Communicate the Vision 5. Empower Broad-based Action 6. Generate Short-term Wins 7. Consolidate Gains 8. Anchor New Approaches in the Culture 	Useful for steering organizations through complicated digital changes by creating momentum, engaging important stakeholders, and encouraging quick victories to keep the change going.
ADKAR Model (Prosci) (Hiatt, 2006)	Concentrates on individual-level change to enable organizational transformation via awareness and reinforcement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of the need for change 2. Desire to participate in and support the change 3. Knowledge on how to change 4. Ability to implement new skills 5. Reinforcement to sustain the change 	The model's emphasis on individual transformation is effective in increasing employee buy-in and preparedness to adopt new digital tools or technological procedures.
McKinsey 7-S Framework (Waterman, 1980)	Analyses seven interconnected aspects (strategy, structure, systems, shared values, skills, style, and personnel) that must be aligned for effective transformation.	Considers strategy, structure, systems, skills, style, staff, and shared values as factors that must be aligned to implement and sustain change effectively.	This comprehensive approach ensures that technology adoption is consistent with organizational strategy, culture, and skill sets, maximizing the effect of digital transformation.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative approach, focusing on an in-depth analysis of existing literature to examine transformational leadership in the context of digital transformation within the banking sector. Specifically, it explores how leadership styles influence the adoption of technologies like AI, blockchain, and big data analytics, with a focus on XYZ. The research draws on peer-reviewed articles, industry reports, case studies, and leadership theories to understand how transformational leadership drives technological adoption and organizational change. Data is collected from academic sources such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect, prioritizing recent studies on leadership and digital

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transformation. Industry reports from consulting firms and XYZ's public documents, including annual and CSR reports, are also analyzed for practical insights.

A thematic analysis is used to identify common patterns in leadership techniques for technology-driven innovation and organizational change. Key themes include transformational leadership's role in fostering innovation, overcoming resistance to change, and promoting a culture of continuous learning. The study offers a comprehensive view of how XYZ's leadership successfully navigates digital transformation, providing valuable insights for financial institutions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Leadership Practice at Bank XYZ

In the realm of digital banking in Indonesia, XYZ has taken the lead thanks to its proactive leadership. Their success is a result of leadership that prioritizes creating an atmosphere of innovation and flexibility, which is essential in a dynamic business world. Computerization has been emphasized by XYZ's management, who have encouraged staff to see financial technology, mobile banking, and artificial intelligence as opportunities. Through fostering collaboration and doing away with traditional organizational hierarchies, XYZ has inculcated an innovative mindset across the firm. Recognizing that people are the engine that propels digital transformation, XYZ has put an emphasis on employee advancement. In order to equip employees with skills relevant to the digital age, management has funded training programs that focus on increasing digital literacy. With an emphasis on ongoing training, XYZ has assembled a team that is prepared to contribute to its transformation initiatives.

XYZ's digital strategy revolves on prioritizing the needs of customers. In an effort to better serve its customers, the bank has introduced digital solutions including the XYZ smartphone app. Virtual assistants and chatbots driven by AI enhance service even further, fostering customer loyalty. To improve data analysis, risk management, and decision-making, XYZ's upper management has embraced fintech and artificial intelligence and integrated these technologies into business processes. The digital capabilities of XYZ have been expanded by collaborations with financial technology businesses. By emphasizing cybersecurity, communicating openly, and staying in line with regulations, XYZ's leadership has skillfully surmounted obstacles including data security and organizational resistance, all while cultivating a change-tolerant culture.

B. Impact of Emerging Technology on Bank XYZ Operation

Emerging technologies—including mobile banking, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics—have greatly changed XYZ, thereby confirming its leadership in the banking industry of Indonesia. These technologies have improved customer service and operational efficiency, therefore enabling XYZ to stay competitive in a financial scene undergoing rapid change.

Mobile Banking: A New Convenient Era

With its mobile banking app, which lets customers do a variety of transactions without visiting a branch, XYZ's offerings now revolve mostly on. Especially helpful given Indonesia's high smartphone penetration setting, this change improves consumer convenience and lowers foot traffic at branches. Working with GoPay, XYZ has further enhanced consumer access to digital payments.

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AI Improving Decision-Making and Customer Service

Through chatbots and virtual assistants handling simple questions, AI is changing XYZ's customer service by lowering wait times and enhancing the general experience. This technology enables XYZ to provide 24/7 service, therefore freeing human agents to handle more difficult problems. By analyzing transactional data in real-time to find suspicious activity, AI also significantly helps risk management and fraud detection thereby defending the bank and its clients.

Big Data Analytics: Changing Corporate Strategy

Central to XYZ's approach, big data analytics offers understanding of customer behavior and preferences. Customized offers made possible by this data-driven strategy help to build consumer loyalty. Through the analysis of spending and saving trends, XYZ can properly target certain groups and segment its customer base, therefore improving the banking experience.

Cybersecurity Improvements: Safeguarding the Digital Terrace

Strong cybersecurity is very critical as XYZ embraces new technology. To protect consumer information, the bank has put real-time threat monitoring and multi-factor authentication into place. By working with foreign professionals and using artificial intelligence-driven security technologies, XYZ improves its cybersecurity capacity, therefore safeguarding consumer assets in a digital terrain growing in complexity.

C. Organizational Change at Bank XYZ

Against fast technological developments and a shifting financial scene, XYZ has started a transforming journey to match its operations, people, and culture for success in the digital age. Through operational reorganization, comprehensive staff training, and a move towards an agile corporate culture, the bank's efficient management of organizational change has been absolutely crucial in establishing itself as a leader in Indonesia's digital banking market.

Rebuilding for Digital Agility

XYZ realized that its conventional hierarchical structure hampered adaptability, hence it developed a cross-functional, team-based strategy encouraging cooperation across divisions including customer service, IT, and product development. While digital transformation teams concentrate on certain projects such mobile banking and AI integration, this structure allows speedier decision-making and creativity. This strategy fits Lewin's Change Management Model as "unfreezing" current procedures opens the path for new, flexible solutions.

Upskillability and Employee Development

Knowing that effective digital transformation depends on staff, XYZ started an extensive training program to improve digital literacy all over the company. Training aimed at combining technical and soft skills, therefore promoting an attitude of lifetime learning. Based on John Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, especially stressing "empowering broad-based action," which enabled staff members with the required skills and confidence to embrace digital technology, hence increasing morale and readiness for change.

Developing an Agile Business Culture

The leadership of XYZ gave top priority to building a flexible culture to fit technology developments and changes in the industry. Through agile approaches, the bank promoted iterative project creation and ongoing enhancement. By encouraging openness and cross-departmental cooperation, leadership created a culture that emphasizes little steps and accountability, hence producing a more responsive company able to quickly satisfy customer needs.

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Difficulties in Change Resistance

XYZ encountered opposition from staff members used to conventional banking practices even with its advancement. Many lacked the skills needed in a digital world or worried about job displacement. XYZ's leadership used Lewin's and Kotter's models to handle opposition in order to offset this. Through constant assistance and success story sharing, they included fresh ideas into the business culture. Effective digital projects brought short-term gains that helped to retain momentum and promote the adoption of new technology.

Managing Legal Challenges

For XYZ, negotiating Indonesia's convoluted legal terrain presented even another difficulty, particularly with relation to data security and protection. XYZ's leadership responded by working with authorities and funding cybersecurity initiatives like real-time monitoring and data encryption. They created a governing coalition to guarantee legal standard compliance, therefore simplifying the regulatory road for digital initiatives and proving a dedication to both innovation and regulatory compliance.

TABLE II
RESULT OF ANALYSIS

Model	Stage/Element	XYZ Implementation	Details
Lewin's Change Model	1. Unfreeze	Restructuring and employee buy-in	XYZ unfreezes old practices by restructuring teams for digital agility. Leaders communicate the need for digital transformation and prepare employees for change.
	2. Change	Adoption of new technologies and processes	XYZ introduces mobile banking, AI tools, and cross-departmental collaboration. Training is provided to upskill employees for new digital roles.
	3. Refreeze	Cultural embedding and reinforcement	New digital practices are reinforced through continuous support, success stories, and rewarding employees embracing the changes.
Kotter's 8-Step Model	1. Create urgency	Establishing the need for digital transformation	Leadership communicates the risks of falling behind in a digital-first market, highlighting the competitive advantage of adopting technologies.
	2. Form a guiding coalition	Leadership and cross-functional teams to lead change	Senior leaders from technology, HR, and legal form a team to drive the transformation and ensure alignment with both strategic and regulatory goals.
	3. Create a vision for change	Digital-first banking strategy	Leadership articulates a vision of a tech-driven XYZ, empowering customers through digital banking, AI, and big data analytics.
	4. Communicate the vision	Company-wide communication	Continuous internal communication campaigns to help employees understand the transformation and its benefits.
	5. Empower action	Upskilling employees and removing obstacles	Comprehensive training and upskilling programs give employees the skills to adapt to new technology, breaking down resistance.
	6. Create short-term wins	Launching successful digital projects	The successful deployment of mobile banking and AI tools helps to demonstrate the benefits of digitalization, encouraging further adoption.
	7. Build on the change	Scaling digital initiatives	Following small successes, XYZ builds on digital tools like GoPay integration and advanced cybersecurity systems.

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ADKAR Model	8. Anchor changes in culture	Embedding a digital-first mindset	Leadership ensures that digital innovation becomes a core aspect of XYZ's culture through continuous learning and support systems.
	1. Awareness	Communication of the need for digital transformation	XYZ raises awareness among employees about the necessity of embracing digital change to stay competitive.
	2. Desire	Encouraging buy-in	XYZ encourages employees to actively participate in the transformation through reward systems and clear examples of benefits, like improved customer service through AI.
	3. Knowledge	Digital skills development	Training programs focused on equipping employees with the necessary digital literacy, including AI, mobile apps, and big data analytics.
	4. Ability	Empowering employees to adopt new tools	Hands-on training, workshops, and access to online resources enable employees to use new technologies effectively.
McKinsey 7S Model	5. Reinforcement	Ongoing support and recognition	Continued reinforcement through success stories, leadership communication, and recognition of employees embracing change.
	1. Strategy	Digital-first strategy for customer-centric banking	XYZ adopts a digital-first strategy to improve customer experience and optimize operations.
	2. Structure	Cross-functional teams for agility	Restructuring from hierarchical silos to cross-functional teams to improve responsiveness and collaboration.
	3. Systems	Implementation of new digital systems	New AI tools, mobile platforms, and big data analytics are integrated into XYZ's operations, enhancing efficiency and customer service.
	4. Shared Values	Fostering innovation and customer focus	Leadership promotes a culture that values innovation, agility, and customer-centricity, aligning with the new digital strategies.
	5. Style	Transformational leadership style	Leadership adopts a transformational approach, inspiring employees to embrace the digital future through clear communication and empowerment.
	6. Staff	Employee upskilling and digital talent acquisition	Investment in employee training and hiring new talent with expertise in emerging technologies.
	7. Skills	Building digital capabilities across the organization	Employees develop new skills in AI, data analytics, cybersecurity, and mobile banking, supporting XYZ's strategic goals.

CONCLUSION

A. Summary of Key Findings

Three important aspects of Bank XYZ's digital transformation are as follows:

- **Transformational Leadership:** XYZ's performance depends much on transformational leadership, which has been vital for digital innovation. At XYZ, leadership developed a clear digital strategy and enabled staff members to welcome change by encouraging creativity. Inspired by ideas from Burns (1978) and Bass & Riggio (2006), leaders pushed action via upskilling programs, cross-functional cooperation, and departmental embedding of digital technologies.
- **Effects of Modern Technologies:** Combining mobile banking, artificial intelligence, big data, and fintech solutions like GoPay changed XYZ's customer experience, improved operational effectiveness, and established XYZ as a digital leader. Through a customer-centric strategy

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and regulatory compliance maintenance, leadership effectively negotiated technology deployment.

- XYZ oversaw organizational transformation by means of significant staff training, open culture of innovation, and agile restructuring, thereby promoting by means of change management strategies such as Lewin's and Kotter's, XYZ's leadership successfully overcame opposition and regulatory constraints, therefore guaranteeing seamless integration of new technology into its operations.

B. Recommendation

Future leaders in the financial industry must be outstanding in managing technological upheavals and promoting an always innovative culture. Leaders have to not only embrace new technology but also motivate their staff to be nimble, customer-centric, and proactive in changing adaptation as digital tools develop.

Drawing on XYZ's experience, other financial institutions may use the following tactics:

- Transformational leadership that advances a clear vision for digital transformation and empowers staff members by means of communication and ongoing education
- Start with little, successful technological projects to generate quick gains and gather momentum for more ambitious endeavors.
- Use organized change models (such as Lewin or Kotter) to control staff opposition and guarantee seamless integration of new technology into the corporate culture.

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