Higher Education Transformational Leadership in Papua: Analysis of Behavioral and Competency

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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine the role of behavioral and competency aspects in leadership in tertiary institutions. **Methodology**: This study adopted a survey design conducted to identify the views of each respondent in assessing leadership based on two indicators, namely behavior and competence. The sample comprised 20 leaders who represented seven different positions at a university in Papua. An open questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument, having two sections on each main indicator, namely behavior indicators (with four sub-indicators) and competence indicators (with six sub-indicators). Data analysis was performed with NVivo 12. Percentage analysis was also carried out for each respondent's answer based on the total keywords.

Findings: The results of the study show that the behavioral aspects and competencies of transformational leadership have an important role in the effective and efficient management of tertiary institutions. The competency aspect had a very significant role in improving leadership at the University, the indicator of gaining trust has a very high percentage in transformational leadership at the University, which is 19%. **Implications for Research and Practice:** The success of higher education management does not only depend on structural and policy factors, but also depends on aspects of leadership competency.

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Introduction

Transformational leadership engulfs aspects of behavior and competence as they play a key role in shaping the quality of effective leadership (Larsson & Björklund, 2021). Good behavior such as the ability to motivate and inspire subordinates (Brown & Nwagbara, 2021), as well as the ability to communicate well (Mulyana et al., 2022), is very important in creating a productive and enjoyable work environment. Meanwhile, good competencies such as the ability to solve problems, make the right decisions, and lead with good strategies, are very important in achieving organizational goals. A leader who has good behavior and high competence can play an important role in improving organizational performance (Lee & Kim, 2022). Therefore, organizations must pay attention to behavioral and competency aspects in selecting and training employees to lead the organization successfully.

One of the main goals of transformational leadership is to positively influence the relationship between the organization/institution and its leader (Busari et al., 2019). This is usually achieved through an employee-oriented leadership approach (Lutz et al., 2023). This leadership view aims to place institutional goals at the center of attention and make connections between educators/lecturers, motivations, goals of educators/lecturers. Leadership communication plays an important role in this leadership approach, communication is built as a form of positive relationship between leaders and employees being the core goal (Lee & Kim, 2022). The emphasis on communication, especially in the emotional aspect, seems to have a high commitment in the transformational approach (Khaola & Rambe, 2021).

An effective transformational leader must be able to communicate clearly and transparently with all members of the tertiary institution. However, some leaders may be reluctant to open up and communicate honestly about their decisions and strategies. Leaders who lack self-awareness tend to be unable to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses. They also may not be able to correct unwanted behaviors or habits. Transformational leaders must be able to help employees feel valued and cared for. However, some leaders may be too focused on goals and results and pay little attention to the welfare of their employees.

Due to challenges faced by higher education like global competition, technological innovation, social change, and an unstable economy, transformational leadership in higher education is becoming increasingly important (Cai & Vinitwatanakhun, 2021). It is very important that universities must adapt to rapid changes and have effective leaders to lead these changes. Effective transformational leaders in higher education must be able to face complex challenges, build a culture oriented towards development and innovation, and motivate and inspire team members to achieve common goals (Görgens-Ekermans & Roux, 2021). Although there exist good research studies on transformational leadership in higher education, there is still a gap between research results and transformational leadership practices implemented by university leaders. There are several transformational leadership behaviors that have not been optimally implemented in research studies such as higher education leaders showing insufficient intellectual stimulation in providing challenges and opportunities to improve academic abilities and employee creativity. Vision inspiration that has not yet been felt by employees in increasing enthusiasm and motivation to achieve organizational goals. Giving individual attention that is not given enough attention in the career development and self-development of employees.

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It is often noticed that some leaders may be too behind in recognizing and adapting as well as responding to environmental or industrial challenges. Transformational leaders must be able to motivate their employees to perform better. In contrast to the field, it is found that some leaders may be less able to motivate and inspire their employees, thereby affecting the productivity and performance of the university as a whole. A transformational leader must be able to build a strong and solid team. Leaders may be less able to motivate and coordinate their employees to work together effectively and productively. Some leaders do not understand academic needs and curriculum, thus affecting the quality of education provided by tertiary institutions.

This study seeks to grow how a leader in developing an institution or higher education is seen from the aspects of behavior and competence. However, transformational leadership competencies in tertiary institutions are still relatively small. Some of the transformational leadership competencies that need to be considered by higher education leaders' Interpersonal skills in building harmonious relationships with university employees and stakeholders include ability to make decisions appropriately and quickly in dealing with change and challenges; and ability to manage resources effectively and efficiently in achieving organizational goals. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of the behavioral and competency aspects in leadership in tertiary institutions.

Literature Review

Transformational leadership research in higher education has become a topic that has attracted the attention of many researchers. Several studies have explored how transformational leadership in higher education can affect the performance, commitment, and job satisfaction of faculty and staff. Several studies of transformational leadership in tertiary institutions are meta-analytic studies that examine the impact of transformational leadership on performance, commitment, and job satisfaction in tertiary institutions. A study found out that transformational leadership is significantly positively correlated with performance, commitment, and job satisfaction (Balwant, 2016). Transformational leadership is significantly positively correlated with performance, commitment, and job satisfaction at the individual and group levels (Wang, Chontawan, & Nantsupawat, 2012). Transformational leadership is significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Duyan & Yildiz, 2020). Transformational leadership positively influences academic performance through academic optimism (Prasetia, Melfayetty, & Dewi, 2020).

A transformational leader tries to exceed expectations by motivating his subordinates and reflecting the expectations to be achieved on the team and the organization (Saad Alessa, 2021). The leader initially focuses on intellectually enhancing efforts and influencing the attitudes and assumptions of the team (Puni, Hilton, & Quao, 2021). Leaders want employees not to get stuck in the status quo and show different valuable ideas (Knezović & Drkić, 2021). A transformational leader seeks to lead to diversity of opinion by demonstrating unexpected and creative behavior to encourage cognitive freedom (Drechsler, 2019), thereby creating a climate in which different opinions will support the development of Institutions or Higher Education (Indragiri, 2022). Differences in problem solving and opinions are assumed by these leaders as an effort to encourage their subordinates to adopt an inquisitive and open mindset (Hoai, Hung, & Nguyen,

2022). This difference will result in original and creative ideas and lead to the right solutions (Colombo, 2023).

Leaders who are role model help employees generate new ideas, enabling them to participate and learn. Transformational leaders also increase employee self-efficacy (Layaman et al., 2021). The motivational dimension supports the process of generating ideas that are in line with the vision of the organization. Increased motivational inspiration is due to the behavior of transformational leaders and is a source of creativity (Phuong & Takahashi, 2021). Transformational leadership promotes creative behavior, and leaders have an important role in displaying the creative behavior of their employees (Cengiz Ucar, Alpkan, & Elci, 2021).

According to Bennis and Wehrmann (1987); cited in Thach and Thompson (2007), there are several leadership competencies that have been proven time and time again as imperative for effective leadership (Muchiri, Gamage, & Samad, 2023). These include the competency groups of vision and goal setting, interpersonal skills, self-knowledge and technical competencies concerning the specifics of the business in which the leader works (Ahmed, Philbin, & Cheema, 2021). In addition, the competencies commonly referred to include: integrity/honesty, communication, technical competency, awareness of diversity, development of others, result orientation, change management, interpersonal skills, problem solving, decision making, political intelligence, strategic/visionary thinking, focus customers, business skills, team leadership, influencing skills, conflict management, emotional intelligence, social and environmental responsibility (Goldberg et al., 2021). Development of leadership competencies as an educational innovation enables achieving societal and educational goals, improves training efficiency and quality, develops practical and prognostic leadership skills, contributes to personal and professional success (Bailey et al., 2022).

Behavior, on the other hand, is a very important aspect of leadership (Fries, Kammerlander, & Leitterstorf, 2021). Effective leadership requires expertise in managing behavior and interactions with others. Improving the effectiveness of a good leadership team requires the ability to motivate and direct the team to achieve common goals (Lu, Swaab, & Galinsky, 2022). One of the main factors affecting team effectiveness is the leader's behavior in leading and interacting with team members. A study conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership found that effective leader behaviors, such as building trust, inspiring, and supporting team members, can increase team effectiveness (Hajiali et al., 2022).

Leaders' behavior also affects overall organizational performance (Stoker, Garretsen, & Lammers, 2022). Positive and open leader behavior can improve organizational performance and employee job satisfaction (Sirait et al., 2022). Improving Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention Leader behavior also influences job satisfaction and employee retention. A study published in the Journal of Applied Psychology found that supportive leader behavior and demonstrating trust in employees can increase job satisfaction and employee retention (Eisenberg, Post, & DiTomaso, 2019). Increasing Innovation and Creativity Leader behavior can also affect innovation and creativity in organizations. A study published in the Academy of Management Journal found that leader behavior that supports and facilitates innovation can increase innovation and creativity among employees (Hirst, Van Dick, & Van Knippenberg, 2009)). Enhancing Sustainable Leadership Leader behavior can also influence continued leadership.

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Leaders in the organization must ensure the acquisition of new skills for their subordinates, further delegating tasks and roles to them, making them more valuable to the organization or institution. The new philosophy of managing teams is based on the assumption that lecturers/staff are treated as the most valuable capital. The fact that to achieve success, the common interests of employees and employers are necessary. Lecturers/staff must be directed to a new, different way of doing work, discussing problems faced professionally, setting common goals, creating a climate that is supportive and mutually beneficial (Sobocka-Szczapa, 2019).

Over the past several decades, numerous studies have examined the relationship between gender and leadership styles, with references to publications such as Klug, Felfe, and Krick (2022); Köppe, Kammerhoff, and Schütz (2018); Thanh and Quang (2022). These studies indicate that men and women require similar leadership skills, such as intelligence, but differ significantly in terms of their preferred leadership style. Women are more likely to use an interactive and transformational leadership style that emphasizes trust, shared vision, and leading by example. This leadership style aligns with feminine traits and is characterized by transformational qualities (McDonagh et al., 2014). On the other hand, women tend to have a participative or democratic leadership style (Berdecia-Cruz, Flecha, & Ortiz, 2022). Meanwhile, men are typically associated with an authoritarian leadership style that emphasizes instrumental, rational, and competent approaches.

Transformational leadership is a leadership theory that emphasizes inspiring and motivating followers to achieve exceptional performance and surpass their own expectations. This leadership approach was first introduced by James V. Downton in 1973 and later developed by James MacGregor Burns in 1978. It has since become a prominent theory in the field of leadership studies. Transformational leaders are characterized by their ability to create a vision and inspire their followers to embrace it. They exhibit charisma, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence. These leaders inspire their followers to go beyond their own self-interests and work towards a common goal. Charisma is a crucial component of transformational leadership. Leaders with charisma are able to create a compelling vision and communicate it effectively to their followers. They inspire trust and confidence, and their enthusiasm is contagious, motivating others to perform at their best. Intellectual stimulation is another key aspect of transformational leadership. These leaders encourage creativity and innovation among their followers. They challenge traditional ways of thinking and promote an environment that fosters intellectual growth and learning. Individualized consideration is the ability of transformational leaders to understand and address the individual needs and aspirations of their followers. They provide support and mentorship, and they create a sense of belonging and personal growth opportunities within the organization.

Idealized influence refers to the ability of transformational leaders to serve as role models for their followers. They exemplify the values and behaviors they expect from others and are highly respected and admired by their subordinates. Transformational leadership has been associated with numerous positive outcomes. It has been linked to increased employee satisfaction, engagement, and commitment. Followers of transformational leaders often experience higher levels of intrinsic motivation and are more likely to exhibit innovative and proactive behaviors.

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However, transformational leadership is not without its limitations. It requires a certain level of charisma and personal qualities that not all leaders possess. Additionally, the effectiveness of transformational leadership may vary depending on the organizational context and the characteristics of the followers. In conclusion, transformational leadership theory highlights the importance of inspiring and motivating followers to achieve exceptional performance. By creating a compelling vision, fostering intellectual stimulation, providing individualized consideration, and exhibiting idealized influence, transformational leaders can positively impact their organizations and enhance the motivation and satisfaction of their followers.

Methodology

- *Research Design*

This research adopted the survey method technique to identify how each respondent views leadership and to assess leadership based on two indicators, namely behavior and competence. The research design was qualitative in nature as it required themes and sub themes to be derived from the data content collected as a result of the survey.

- *Sampling*

The sample in this study comprised leaders at the University in Papua. Their total number was twenty, and they held leadership positions. They included one Bureau Chief (BC), five Deans of Faculty (DF), seven Heads of Department (HOD), one Head of Institution(HOI), two Heads of UPT(HUPT), three Secretaries of Department (SD), and one Vice Dean(VD).

- *Research Instrument and Procedure*

The instrument in this study was an open questionnaire given to respondents via the Google form. The distribution of questions was presented based on indicators and sub-indicators. The two indicators were behavior and competence. The first indicator, behavior, had four sub-indicators: values and ethics as leaders; building lecturers' and students' morale; strategy to realize the vision, and; lecturers' learning and development strategy. The second indicator, competence, had six sub indicators: views of staff and colleagues about leadership style; leader's failure; solving problems; gaining trust; conflicts handled, and; changes brought. Hence, there were total 10 sub-indicators, and each of them served as a question submitted to respondents.

- *Data Analysis*

In order to find out the results of the analysis from the behavioral and competency aspects, the NVivo 12 application was used which enabled researchers to efficiently and effectively perform coding and analysis of data. to ease the analysis process, the responses of all participants were accumulated, though with much difficulty as they were very diverse because the instrument used was open-ended. Next, keywords were taken from each generated response as questions referred to indicators. In this study, we reviewed respondents' answers based on their position and the results will be presented based on findings using NVivo 12. Percentage analysis was also carried out for each answer from respondents based on the total keywords for each sub-indicator.

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Results and Discussion

Based on NVivo 12 analysis, respondents' answers were collated with respect to the order of questions and their position. Table 1, however, presents the responses of the respondents based on the keywords

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents' Answers.

Indicator	Sub-Indicators	Respondents' Answers Based on Keywords	Keyword Totals
Behavior	1. Values and Ethics as a Leader	1. Not forcing; 2. Appreciate; 3. Honest; 4. Communicative; 5. Manners; 6. Togetherness; 7. Cooperation; 8. Professionals; 9. Good organizational culture; 10. Discipline; 11. Have integrity; 12. Persevere; 13. Dedicated; 14. Trusts; 15. Development of potential; 16. Character; 17. Have morals; 18. Serving; 19. Work according to the target; 20. Open; 21. Dare to apologize when wrong; 22. Behave well; 23. Competent; 24. Responsibilities; 25. Agile, and; 26. Wise	26
	2. Building Lecturers' and students' Morale	1. Equality of lecturers and students; 2. Communications; 3. Feedback; 4. Positive thinking; 5. Strengthen mentally; 6. Empower lecturers or students; 7. Personal approach; 8. Keep trying; 9. Discussions; 10. Become a servant; 11. Equal division of tasks; 12. Giving trusts; 13. The principle of kinship; 14. Mutual respect; 15.Open; 16. Eliminate the nature of the boss; 17. Giving directions; 18. Develop alternative solutions; 19. Brainstorming; 20. Evaluation; 21. Perform Actions; 22. Building a work ethic; 23. Give appreciation; 24. Ensure welfare; 25. Professionals; 26. Give motivation; 27. Set an example; 28. Control emotions, and; 29. Be grateful	29
	3. Strategy to Realize the Vision	1. Positive thinking; 2. Motivating; 3. Communications; 4. Embracing; 5. Set an example; 6. Give understanding; 7. Giving trust; 8. Discussions; 9. Personal approach; 10. Arranging activities; 11. Gives a sense of security; 12. Humanists; 13. Creative; 14. Form a team; 15. Family; 16. Giving orders; 17. Collaboration, and; 18. Commitments	18
	4. Lecturer Learning and Development Strategy	1. Motivating; 2. Giving ideas; 3. Support functional promotion; 4. Discussions; 5. Evaluation; 6. Competency development; 7. Giving assignments; 8. comparative studies; 9. Giving directions; 10. Encouraging to join professional organizations; 11. Collaboration; 12. Research; 13. Publications; 14. Strive for international recognition, and; 15. Monitoring	15
Competence	1. Views of Staff and Colleagues on My Leadership Style	1. Democratic; 2. Prioritizing the interests of the organization; 3. Protect; 4. Discipline; 5. Firm; 6. Conceptual; 7. Good vision; 8. Good; 9. Professionals; 10. Creative freedom; 11. Trust members; 12. Open; 13. Family; 14. Serving; 15. Authoritative; 16. Transformation; 17. Can't Judge Yourself; 18. Sportsmanship; 19. Straightforward; 20. Transparencies; 21. Organized, and; 22. Responsibility	22
	2. Leader failure	1. Haughty; 2. Considered lacking; 3. No motivation; 4. Selfish; 5. Racists; 6. Do not open; 7. Not Prosperous; 8. Not visionary; 9. Does not meet the needs of students; 10. No responsibility; 11. Not going according to plan; 12. The working atmosphere is not conducive; 13. The dilemma of making a decision; 14. Not innovative; 15. Lots of burdens; 16. Failed in recruiting; 17. Emotions; 18. Assume boss; 19. Not sincere; 20. There is a conflict, and; 21. Can't Believe It	21

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Indicator	Sub-Indicators	Respondents' Answers Based on Keywords	Keyword Totals
	3. Solve the problem	1. Discussions; 2. Honest; 3. Communicative; 4. Maximizing potential; 5. Changes in leadership style; 6.Fair; 7.Open; 8. Accompaniments; 9. Flexible; 10. Reviewing the rules; 11. Provide policies; 12. Giving assignments; 13. Responsibilities; 14. Team work; 15. Have a plan; 16. Networking; 17.Visionaries; 18. Agent of change; 19. Trial strategies; 20. Collaboration; 21. Problem identification; 22. Cross check; 23. Intervene; 24. Increasing knowledge; 25. Giving directions; 26. Innovation leader, and; 27. Sharing is caring	27
	4. Gaining Trust	1. Being part of the Institution; 2. Work according to the main duties and functions; 3. Family; 4. Team work; 5. Receiving criticism; 6. Accept suggestions; 7. Do not discriminate; 8. Communications; 9. Building trust; 10.Open; 11. Looking for potential; 12. Monitoring and evaluation; 13. Rolling team; 14.Support System; 15. problem solving; 16. Commitments; 17. Innovative; 18.Creative; 19. Cooperation; 20. Loyalty; 21. Dedicated; 22. Growing love for Institutions; 23. Work motivation; 24. Being a servant; 25. On good terms; 26. Accountability, and; 27. Responsibility	27
	5. Handled Conflict	1. Families of lecturers who are brought to work; 2. Between individuals; 3. Occupations; 4. Between lecturers and deans; 5. Course codes; 6. Trusts; 7. None; 8. Past; 9. Lecturer code of ethics; 10. Between lecturers; 11. Between lecturers and assessors; 12. Publication targets; 13. Oneself; 14. Lecturer activeness; 15. Head of department; 16. Student seniority, and; 17. Values	17
	6. Changes Brought	1. Communications; 2. Democracy; 3. Students graduate quickly; 4. Service; 5. Accreditation; 6. Regulations; 7. Networking; 8. Equality; 9. Creative freedom; 10. Freedom of opinion; 11. Innovative; 12. Preparation of teaching materials; 13. Institutional Component; 14. Work dynamics; 15. Discipline; 16. Humanists; 17. Conducive environment; 18. Interactive; 19. Application of MBKM; 20. Management; 21. Family; 22. Passion to serve Papuan education; 23. Improved performance, and; 24. Compactness	24

Respondents' responses in Table 1 are answers that have been compiled based on keywords from the results of internal analysis and as material for NVivo 12 analysis. Meanwhile, the keywords for the Behavior indicators include the first sub indicator with 26 keywords, second sub indicator with 29 keywords, third sub indicator with 18 keywords, and fourth sub indicator with 15 keywords. Meanwhile, competency indicators included the first sub indicator with 22 keywords, the second sub indicator with 21 keywords; the third sub indicator with 27 keywords; the fourth sub indicator with 27 keywords; the fifth sub indicator with 17 keywords, and the sixth sub indicator with 24 keywords. The sequence of responses was presented based on NVivo 12 analysis and based on the position of the respondents, namely: 1) BC; 2) DF; 3) HOD; 4) HI; 5) HUPT; 6) SD, and; 7) VD. The responses from the respondents were then processed using NVivo 12, while the findings of the research results were based on the position of Bureau Chief (BC).

Figure 1 summarizes the responses of the Bureau Chief (BC). The BC is a male aged around 41-50 years with one year of work experience. The answer given by BC for the behavior indicator in sub-indicator number 1 is keyword number 15 (red box). Meanwhile, sub-indicator number 2 answers four keywords, namely numbers 14, 15, 16, and 17 (box

orange). For sub-indicators number 3 and number 4 both provide answers of two keywords, namely key words number 6 and 9 for each sub-indicator (light green box and dark green box). As for competency indicators, for sub-indicator 1 (answers given are numbers 1 and 5) (blue box), for sub-indicator 2 (answer given is number 12) (box navy), for sub-indicator 3 (answer given is number 14 and 27) (purple box), for sub-indicator 4 (the answers given are numbers 4, 11, 12, 13, and 14) (pink box), for sub-indicator 5 (the answers given are numbers 2 and 8) (box mint), and for sub-indicator 6 (the answers given are given are numbers 4, 8, 13, and 14) (black box). The percentage for each answer given can be seen in Figure 2.
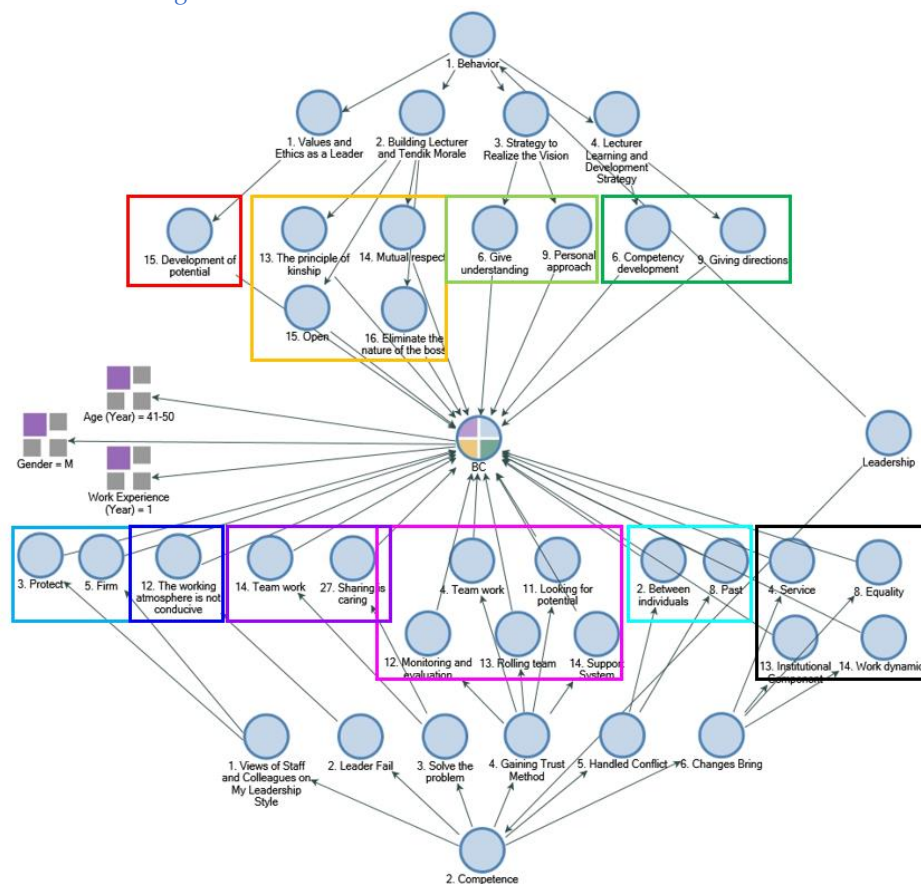

Figure 1. *Responses of the BC.*

Figure 2 summarizes the percentage of answers given by BC. The results indicate that Indicator 2 sub number 4 scored highest 19% regarding the method of gaining trust while the lowest percentage was found in Indicator 1 sub number 1 with a percentage of 4% regarding values and ethics as a leader. This result is reviewed from the number of keywords given compared to the total keywords as a whole.
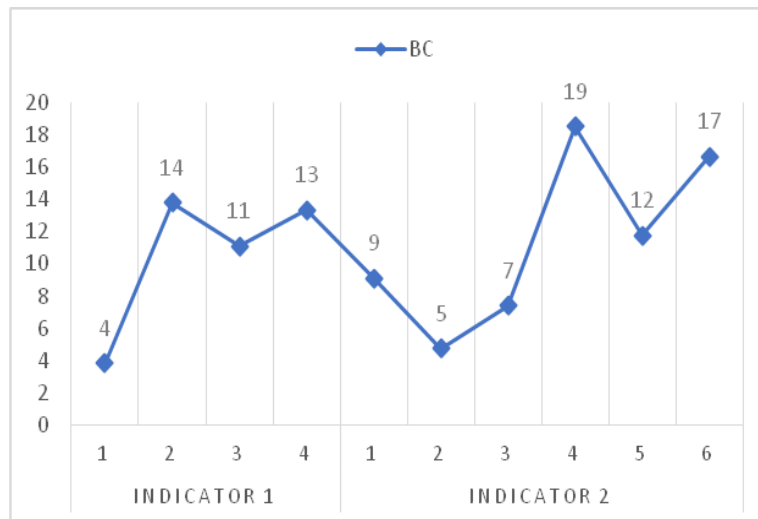
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Figure 2. *The Average Percentage of BC Answers.*

Figure 3 summarizes the comparison of average percentages of the two indicators. The highest average percentage overall in both indicators was obtained by respondents with the BC code with a percentage of 19% on the competency indicator sub number 4 concerning methods of gaining trust. While the lowest percentage was found in HUPT respondents of 2% on the competency indicator sub number 3 regarding problem solving. The level of trust employees have in their supervisors is an important factor in how leadership styles impact work outcomes, according to studies conducted (Breevaart & Zacher, 2019). According to research, trust in leadership can be a valuable solution in reducing deviant behaviors within the public sector workplace (Yasir & Khan, 2020). Trust involves an individual's beliefs, assumptions, and expectations about the positive results that will come from the future behavior of others (García-Contreras et al., 2022; Robinson & Bennett, 1995).
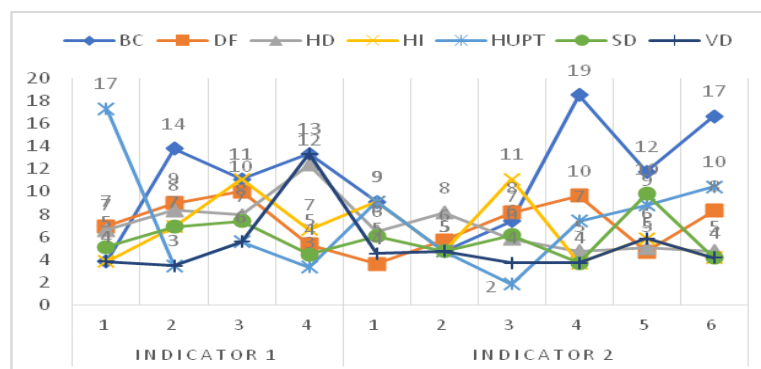

Figure 3. *Comparison of Average Percentages.*

Conclusion

Referring to the results of research using N Vivo 12 analyses, it shows that aspects of competence possessed by a leader have a very significant role in improving the quality of leadership at the University. The competencies that have a very important role are gaining trust. The results of the study show that the competency indicator for gaining trust has a very high role in leadership at the University, the level of this support is 19%. In transformational leadership at the university, problem solving in the Technical Implementation Unit environment is the lowest, the percentage of problem solving in the Technical Implementation Unit is 2%. The university as an institution that plays a role in the service sector, so gaining the trust of the public or users is a top priority that must be developed at the university.

Acknowledgement

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