

# Effects of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Change Management and Organizational Ambidexterity<sup>1,2</sup>

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## Abstract

This study analyzes the effects of transformational leadership on organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity in the construction industry. The purpose of this study is to define to what extent transformational leadership affects organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. Compared to similar studies, this study shows a significant difference. This difference arises from the fact that the concept of organizational ambidexterity is considered together with the concepts of transformational leadership and organizational change management. The results of this study make two important contributions to the field. Initially, by adopting the transformational leadership style, organizations can achieve organizational ambidexterity that enable both to exploit their existing activities and to explore new activities. In addition, by adopting the transformational leadership style, organizations can have strong change management skills in order to adapt to the ever-changing environment. In order to make a statistical analysis within the scope of this research, a survey study was conducted by targeting the construction sector employees in the city of Muğla. The questionnaire of this study was applied to 39 construction companies. According to the results of the research, it is observed that transformational leadership has a positive effects on organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity.

**Keywords:** Organizational Change Management, Organizational Ambidexterity, Transformational Leadership

**Jel Codes:** M1, M10.

## Dönüşümcü Liderliğin Örgütsel Değişim Yönetimi ve Örgütsel Çift Yeteneklilik Üzerindeki Etkileri

### Özet

Bu çalışma, inşaat sektöründe dönüşümcü liderliğin örgütsel değişim yönetimi ve örgütsel çift yeteneklilik üzerindeki etkilerini analiz etmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, dönüşümcü liderliğin örgütsel değişim yönetimini ve örgütsel çift yetenekliliği ne ölçüde etkilediğini belirlemektir. Benzer çalışmalarla karşılaştırıldığında, bu çalışma anlamlı bir farklılık göstermektedir. Bu farklılık, örgütsel çift yeteneklilik kavramının dönüşümcü liderlik ve örgütsel değişim yönetimi kavramlarıyla birlikte ele alınmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları alana iki önemli katkı sağlamaktadır. Öncelikle, dönüşümcü liderlik stilini benimsemesiyle örgütler hem var olan faaliyetlerini geliştirebilmeyi hemde yeni faaliyetler keşfedebilmeyi sağlayan örgütsel çift yetenekliliğe ulaşabilmektedir. Ayrıca, dönüşümcü liderlik stilini benimseyen örgütler, sürekli değişen çevreye uyum sağlamak için güçlü değişim yönetimi becerilerine sahip olabilmektedirler. Bu araştırma kapsamında istatistiksel bir analiz yapılabilmesi için Muğla ili inşaat sektörü çalışanları hedef alınarak bir anket çalışması uygulanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın anketi 39 inşaat firmasında uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre dönüşümcü liderliğin örgütsel değişim yönetimi ve örgütsel çift yeteneklilik üzerinde pozitif etkiye sahip olduğu gözlemlenmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Örgütsel Değişim Yönetimi, Örgütsel Çift Yeteneklilik, Dönüşümcü Liderlik

**Jel Kodları:** M1, M10.

<b>Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı</b>	Çalışma "Etik kurul kararı gerektirmemektedir."
<b>Yazarların Makaleye Olan Katkıları</b>	(Tamamına katkı): G.Y.K ve Ö.N.T.Ö. araştırmanın tasarımı ve uygulanmasına, sonuçların analizine ve metnin yazılmasına katkıda bulunmuştur. G.Y.K.'nın makaleye katkısı %100 ve Ö.N.T.Ö.'nin makaleye katkısı %100'dir.
<b>Çıkar Beyanı</b>	Yazarlar ya da üçüncü taraflar açısından çalışmada çıkar ilişkisi/çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

<sup>1</sup> Bu çalışma Effects of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Change Management and Organizational Ambidexterity başlıklı yüksek lisans tezinden üretilmiştir (Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 2014).

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## 1. Introduction

In the past, change may have been infrequent or gradual, but today it is constant and inevitable (Daft, 2001). Furthermore, there is a shift from stability to change (Daft, 2008). Change takes important place for the organizations so organizations should keep up with changes. In order to survive in a competitive world, organizations should prepare themselves to change in any situation (Kotter, 1996). The process of change has various difficulties and these difficulties can be reduced with the help of an effective leader. In addition, if leaders view the process of change as an advantage, the difficulties of this process are not seen as an obstacle (Hoag et al., 2002). On the other side, employees may view organizational change as their own goal and may be willing to sacrifice their own interests in the process of change. (Peng et al., 2021).

How leaders can support organizational ambidexterity remains an intriguing question (Baskarada et al., 2016). There is a great interest in research on organizational ambidexterity (Hughes, 2018). The rapid development of the business world forces organizations to regularly improve the efficiency of their existing business models and at the same time constantly develop new solutions to cope with the challenges of newly acquired business (Li, 2020; Bican and Brem, 2020). In order to remain strong against environmental turbulence, organizations need to be ambidextrous in the long run (Dolz et al., 2019). Given that organizations have to face macro and micro environmental changes, an organization's long-term success depends on its ability to explore future opportunities while exploiting existing skills (Alghamdi, 2018). Organizational ambidexterity refers to the capability of an organization to both become aware of the exploration of new developments and improve the exploitation of current position in the market (March, 1991). While existing resources and capabilities must be exploited efficiently to increase a company's competitiveness, there is a regular need to explore skills that will be needed in the future (Asif and De Vries, 2015). For all these, adopting an appropriate leadership style has an important place to achieve organizational ambidexterity (Beckman, 2006). Organizational ambidexterity can be achieved by adopting a transformational leadership style (Jansen et al, 2008).

There are three main concepts of this study which are organizational change management, transformational leadership, and organizational ambidexterity. This study is handled because more research is needed on whether transformational leadership can support the development of organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. Significantly, even though there is a lot of information about organizational ambidexterity, it is not clear how organizational ambidexterity can be achieved (Asif and De Vries, 2015). This study emphasizes that a strong organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity can be achieved through transformational leadership style. Within the scope of this study, it is aimed to measure the effects of transformational leadership on both organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. As a result, research questions of this study are defined as:

- Is there any effect of transformational leadership on organizational change management?
- Is there any effect of transformational leadership on organizational ambidexterity?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Transformational Leadership

A transformational leader has some characteristics like inspiration, stimulation, and facilitation. Besides, transformational leaders have common features which are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Therefore, these leaders have a powerful connection with their followers (Madsen and Albrechtsen, 2008). Leaders who have the specialty of idealized influence generally take risks for their company. Also, these leaders can find the right style to manage their followers. In terms of inspirational motivation, sharing the vision is

very important. Enthusiasm and optimism is highly used to attain goals. In addition, leaders should intellectually stimulate their followers by giving flexibility to them (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Moreover, individualized consideration helps to understand followers' demands (Avolio et al., 1999). With the help of all these features, transformational leaders capable of adapting to a constantly changing environment (Hughes et al., 2012). Leaders who adopt the transformational leadership style can successfully manage organizational change and make their organizations ambidextrous owing to their strong characteristics.

## *2.2. Organizational Change Management*

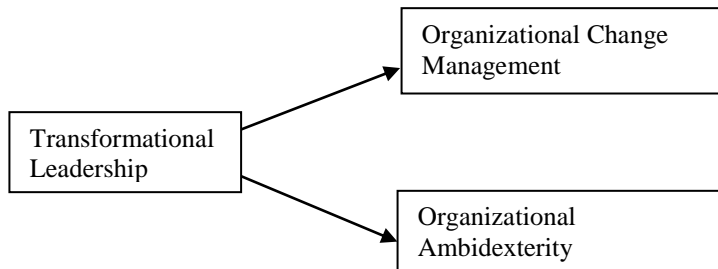
Organizational change, especially unplanned change, can cause many problems and lead to uncertainties. In this process, the resistance developed against organizational change can prevent successful implementation of organizational change (Oreg et al., 2018). Change management is a skill that enables organizations to adapt to changes easily, while at the same time reducing the unexpected effects of this change process and the resistance to the change process (Sung and Kim, 2021). Even though organizations indicate distinctions among them, the change process in each organization is identical. Nevertheless, the sense of change indicates distinctions for each organization. If organizations resist to change, the failure is inevitable. On the other hand, change can be felt as an advantage for organizations that can successfully manage change (Rashid et al., 2004). Despite all the challenges of the change process, an appropriate leadership style is necessary for the successful implementation of change (Burke, 2017).

## *2.3. Organizational Ambidexterity*

It is important for organizations to be able to successfully use existing resources and explore new resources (Vera and Crossan, 2004). So as to achieve to new technologies and markets exploration should be done. On the other hand, effective use of existing talents is important in order to compete among existing markets (O'Reilly and Tushman, 2008). The long-term performance of an organization depends on its stability in exploring new talents and successfully exploiting existing talents (March, 1991). A balance of exploration of new capabilities and successful exploitation of existing capabilities is necessary to achieve ambidexterity (Asif, 2019). Because ambidexterity is a combination of exploration and exploitation, it is an important capability to maintain a competitive advantage in the market (Menguc and Auh, 2008; Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996; Levinthal and March, 1993). Ambidextrous organizations have both stability and agility (Vinekar et al., 2006). Ambidexterity can be considered a paradoxical thought (Lewis, 2000). Ambidextrous organizations can find new opportunities while taking advantage of existing qualities in the market (Lubatkin et al, 2006). As a result, if organizations give balanced significance on exploration and exploitation they can be considered as ambidextrous (He and Wong, 2004).

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

Transformational leadership promotes the organizational ambidexterity (Chang, 2016). Leaders enable organizational change to occur while directing their attitudes and behaviors (Blom et al., 2021). Especially, leaders who exhibit transformational leadership behavior with respectful and fair attitudes can receive commitment support from their followers (Thompson et al., 2021). In addition, transformational leadership seems to be particularly important in times of change in organizations (Herold et al., 2008). So as to figure out the theoretical framework of this study, the Figure 1 is demonstrated below:

**Figure 1.** Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework illustrates the influence of transformational leadership on both organizational change management, and organizational ambidexterity.

### 3.1. Organizational Change Management and Transformational Leadership

Comprehensive change cannot be achieved only with the enthusiasm of the employees, the talents of the leaders are also important (Herold et al., 2008). Appropriate leadership ability is essential to drive courage and change (Conger, 1999). Significantly, transformational leaders may form meaningful basis for change (Bass, 1985). Guiding change and facilitating the change process should be evaluated on the basis of transformational behaviors (Yukl, 1999). Transformational leadership is necessary in order to create change. Leaders should be transformational so as to apply environmental changes (Bass, 1999). Transformational leaders precisely provides a seamless change management because they have the ability to engage their followers during the change process. Therefore, so as to comply with changes, leaders should apply transformational leadership style (Hallinger, 2003). As a result, several studies demonstrate that transformational leadership can affects positively the organizational change management. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study is defined as;

H1: There is an effect of transformational leadership on organizational change management.

### 3.2. Organizational Ambidexterity and Transformational Leadership

Exploitation and exploration activities are very important for organizations. It is significant to evaluate these two capabilities that have managerial importance as a whole for organizations (Knight and Cuganesan, 2020). For the achievement to the ambidexterity, individual actors such as leaders and employees have a great effect (Swart et al., 2016). Inasmuch as, exploration and exploitation are affected by transformational leadership (Vera and Crossan, 2004). Transformational leadership has a powerful effect on achieving organizational ambidexterity because these leaders apply synergies in terms of exploratory and exploitative innovative activities (Jansen et al., 2008). Leaders with transformational leadership help achieve organizational ambidexterity (Li et al., 2015).

Transformational leaders can facilitate explorative innovation by providing support to their employees that they need to improve their vision (Berson et al., 2006). When considered as a whole, it is seen that transformational leadership in the firm level increases the grade of organizational ambidexterity (Chang, 2016). Transformational leadership provides suitable conditions for exploration and exploitation (Ojha, et al., 2018). According to the information in the literature, it is assumed that transformational leadership is effective for exploring and exploiting organizational ambidexterity. Therefore, second hypothesis of this study is defined as;

H2: There is an effect of transformational leadership on organizational ambidexterity.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. Data Collection and Sampling

In order to explore to what extent transformational leaders may promote organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity a quantitative research methods was handled. Population of this study are the employees of the construction companies in Muğla. With the growth of the university in Muğla in terms of the number of staff and students, the opening of new faculties and colleges, there is an urgent need for housing in the center. Parallel to this, a residential construction sector is developing in the city center (Yıldız-Özsalmanlı, 2014). Survey method was preferred for the data collection. Evaluation of their top managers and their organization was requested. Lists of the target companies are achieved from the web site of Chamber of Commerce of Muğla. Because all of the companies do not have web site and e-mail address all surveys were delivered by hand.

Data collected between the dates of February-June 2014. Surveys were delivered to 41 construction companies but 2 of the companies didn't want to attend to study. These two companies hesitated to attend to a survey study so they turned back the request. Therefore, the survey questions were implied to 39 construction companies. In total, 145 surveys were delivered but 136 people attended to the study. Therefore, 93,79% of the delivered surveys are returned.

### 4.2. Measurements of the Study

So as to measure transformational leadership MLQ 5X Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1997) was chosen. There are 16 items of this survey. MLQ survey has several positive sides. For example, this survey is one of the most known and preferred. A strong validity result was obtained from this measure. In addition, this measurement gives strong reliability (Bass et al., 2003). For the organizational change management Hammer's study of change engineering was covered. The concept of change management was measured with the survey arranged with 12 items by the study of M. Hammer called Change Engineering was taken from thesis of Çömez (2007). For the organizational ambidexterity, the survey questions of Jansen and colloquies (2006) was used for this study. Organizational ambidexterity concept has 14 items. Each item measured with 5 point scale. Scale continues from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Also, there are demographic questions which includes age, gender, education level, marital status, work department, and working years of the survey respondents.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

### 5.1. Study Findings

Demographic results show that 25,7% of the employees are between the age of 18-28, 64% of them between the age of 29-39, and 10,3% of them between the age of 40-50. According to these results it can be said that most of the employees are between the ages of 29-39. Also, according to gender information it can be observed that 33,8% are female and 66,2% are male. It can be said that male employees are almost double comparing with the females. In addition, education levels shows that 0,7% of the employees have primary school degree, 1,15% have secondary school degree, 24,3% have high school degree, 30,9% pre-licensing degree, and 42,6% have university degree. According to the results most of the employees have university degree.

According to department information 6,6% of the employees are working at the production department, 41,9% are working at sales, 2,2% are working at purchasing, 20,6% are working at accounting, and 28,7% are working at other departments. Results demonstrates that most of the employees are working at sales department. Also, according to work experience information that was evaluated by in terms of years

49,3% employees have between the 0-5 experience, 36,8% have between 6-11 years, 11% have between 12-17 years, and 2,9% of them have the work experience between 18-23. It can be seen that most of the employees have the work experience between 0-5 years. Demographic features are presented in Table 1 below:

**Table 1.** Demographic specialties

Variables	Descriptive Statistics	Percentage(%)
Age		
18-28	35	27,5
29-39	87	64
40-50	14	10,3
Gender		
Female	46	33,8
Male	90	66,2
Educational Level		
Primary School	1	0,7
Secondary School	2	1,15
High School	33	24,3
Pre-License	42	30,9
License	58	42,6
Department		
Production	9	6,6
Sales	57	41,9
Purchasing	3	2,2
Accounting	28	20,6
Other	39	28,7
Work Experience (Years)		
0-5	67	49,3
6-11	50	36,8
12-17	15	11
18-23	4	2,9

The means, standard deviations, inter-correlations, and reliabilities of the variables are reported in Table 2. Significant and positive correlation were found between transformational leadership and organizational change management, transformational leadership and organizational ambidexterity and organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
Transformational Leadership	4,02	,80	1	,77**	,73**
Organizational Change Management	3,84	,62	,77**	1	,60**
Organizational Ambidexterity	4,15	,63	,73**	,60**	1

Note. N= 136, M = Mean, SD = standard deviation. \*\* p < .01 (two-tailed), \*p < .05 (two-tailed).

In addition, exploratory factor analysis was applied before testing the hypotheses. According to results, KMO of the transformational leadership (independent variable) is 0,96, organizational change management (dependent variable) is 0,89, and organizational ambidexterity (dependent variable) 0,93. Therefore, scale show a good fit to this study. Also, %74,11 variance explained for transformational leadership, %63,61 variance explained for organizational change management, %66,12 variance explained for organizational ambidexterity.

For reliability of the scales Cronbach's alpha was evaluated. According to results Cronbach's alpha values of all variables was found more than 0,90. Cronbach's alpha results for the transformational leadership is 0,98, for the organizational change management is 0,93, and for the organizational ambidexterity is 0,94. In order to test the hypotheses of this study regression analysis was made. Effects of transformational leadership on two dependent variables can be observed after this analysis.

**Table 3.** Regression analysis of hypothesis 1

Coefficients	B	SE	Beta	t	P
Constant	1,458	,175		8,320	,000
Change Management	,593	,043	,768	13,880	,000

According to analysis results, the regression formula can be demonstrated for the effect of transformational leadership on the organizational change management as:

$$\text{Organizational Change Management} = 1,458 + 0,593 \times \text{Transformational Leadership}$$

Hypothesis 1 predicted that transformational leadership effects positively the organizational change management. Thus, one unit increase in transformational leadership will cause 0,593 unit increase on organizational change management. In addition, 59% of a movement on organizational change management is explained by transformational leadership ( $R^2=0,59$ ). As a result of the simple linear regression analysis, which was tested to observe the effect of transformational leadership on organizational change management, regression model demonstrates that regression is statistically significant ( $F=192,666$ ;  $P<0.001$ ). This finding supports Hypothesis 1.

**Table 4.** Regression analysis of hypothesis 2

Coefficients	B	SE	Beta	t	P
Constant	1,848	,188		9,857	,000
Ambidexterity	,571	,046	,734	12,553	,000

Hypothesis 2 predicted that transformational leadership effects positively the organizational ambidexterity. A regression formula can be created for the relations between transformational leadership and organizational ambidexterity;

$$\text{Organizational Ambidexterity} = 1,848 + 0,571 \times \text{Transformational Leadership}$$

According to this formula, one unit increase in transformational leadership will cause 0,571 unit increase on organizational ambidexterity. In addition, 53,8% of a movement on organizational ambidexterity is explained by transformational leadership ( $R^2=0,538$ ). As a result of the simple linear regression analysis, which was tested to observe the effect of transformational leadership on organizational ambidexterity, regression model demonstrates that regression is statistically significant ( $F=156,313$ ;  $P<0.001$ ). As a result, Hypothesis 2 is also supported according to findings of regression analysis.

## 5.2. Discussion

Results show that transformational leadership facilitates both the organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity in construction industry. This results implies that managers of construction industry that has the style of transformational leadership can manage successfully the process of change management. Transformational leadership is an important antecedent for organizational change management (Ghazali et al., 2008). Change may not be overcome only with the talent of employees but it may be released by leaders' talents (Herold et al. 2008). In addition, these managers can also specialty to affect their organization to be ambidextrous that their organizations can have both explorative and exploitative innovation style. Healthy survival for organizations necessitates a talent to be ambidextrous by exploring new talents while exploiting existing ones (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996).

In this study, by collecting and analyzing construction industry data it can be observed that, transformational leadership has strong links with organizational ambidexterity and organizational change management. According to regression analysis results, transformational leadership is effective to apply both organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. Moreover, it can be presented as equivalent information outside of the hypotheses that the influence of transformational leadership is higher on organizational change management than on organizational ambidexterity.

The results of this study contribute to theory in several ways. First, the relationship between variables have not been implemented sufficiently in recent years, so this study is important for the up-to-dateness of these relationship. However, there are some limitations for this study. This study has considered the main concepts into a single construct. Future studies should consider them as a multidimensional construct so as to investigate the impact of each dimensions in more detailed models. In addition, achieving to all of this companies in only one city is another limitation of this study.

## 6. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to demonstrate how transformational leadership facilitates the organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity in construction industry. The results of this study shows that transformational leadership effects both organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. By adopting a transformational leadership style, leaders can successfully manage the change process of their organizations and make their organizations ambidextrous for long-term success. Having these two important outputs which are change management and ambidexterity make significant contributions to companies. The first contribution of the results of this study is that by adopting the transformational leadership style, organizations achieve the ambidexterity of the organizations so that they can both cope with their current work and implement new formations. Another contribution of the results of this study is that with the adoption of the transformational leadership style by the leaders of the organizations, the organizations can smoothly implement the change management stages that can keep up with their constantly changing environment.

As a suggestion, antecedents and consequences of the subjects should be improved in future studies. Thus, it is recommended that the topics used in this study can be used in more advanced models in the future. Recently, researchers and practitioners in industries have pointed out the importance of employee supportive attitudes to successfully manage organizational change (Faupel and Süß, 2019). Therefore, further studies may investigate the issue of employee supportive attitudes towards organizational change management. In managerial side, construction industry managers should be aware of transformational leadership style that has strong influences on both organizational change management and ambidexterity. That is, managers have better to compromise that the improvement of transformational leadership style may ease the process of organizational change management and organizational ambidexterity. Lastly, future researchers should understand how organizational ambidexterity and organizational change management occurs in different industries.



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