

## Organizational Culture Transformation Towards Inclusive Development in Timor Leste: Dynamics of Equalizing Social and Cultural Development

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**ABSTRACT:** This topic is a significant part of my dissertation research which reviews the Transformation of Organizational Culture in the Environment of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion in Timor-Leste. This discussion aims to; 1) describe in detail the Transformation of Organizational Culture in the Environment of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion in Timor-Leste, and 2) reveal how the important role of this ministry in its efforts for development in Timor-Leste. The research was conducted with a descriptive qualitative approach by utilizing the theory of transformation principles introduced by Bernard Bass (1985). Improvement of an institution can only be done by recognizing the organizational culture that applies in the organization or institution, namely the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion. As a large organization that oversees a number of social offices under it, this ministry functions not only as a reference institution but also as a role model institution for organizations under it throughout the country. The results of this study indicate that change is the impact of development to improve the welfare of the Timorese people so that equitable social resilience is created. Organizational culture transformation is by establishing core values that must be understood together, under inspiring leadership, providing recognition and appreciation (reward system), training and development (capacity quality improvement), and building a solid team.

**KEY WORDS:** Inclusive Development, Organizational Culture, Social Program, Solidarity, Transformation.

### INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is a set of values, beliefs, attitudes, systems, and rules that define and influence employee behavior within an organization. According to Ariani (2018), organizational culture can be defined as the values that guide human resources in carrying out their duties and also their behavior within the organization. Functionally, organizational culture has several tasks, one of which is fostering commitment to something broader than individual interests.

This aligns with Robbins (2007: 721). According to Robbins, organizational culture is a system of meaning held by members that simultaneously distinguishes one organization from another. Luthans, in Susanto (2006:111), defines organizational culture as the norms and values that guide the behavior of each member of an organization. In principle, each member will behave in accordance with the prevailing culture to be accepted within that environment. In other words, culture is a series of habits that apply to the daily lives of organizational members and become their customary behavior (Sweeney & McFarlin, 2002).

Sarplin (in Susanto, 2006:120) provides a firm opinion, stating that "organizational culture is a system of values, beliefs, and habits with a formal structure that produces norms of organizational behavior." The prevailing organizational culture then becomes a tool for shaping norms used within an organization.

In line with the discussion on leadership, Sondang (1995:233) states that "organizational culture is a combination of top management's leadership style and the norms and value systems of organizational members." This is formed due to the existing leadership style and norms within the organization. In turn, the combination of leadership style and prevailing norms automatically forms a culture. The organization within that specific environment.

The following study by Mulyadi (2006: 270) emphasizes that organizational culture is what employees perceive and how they perceive prevailing and practiced customs, which then creates a pattern and form of exemplary behavior, belief in values, and expectations within that organizational environment.

Organizational culture, which develops within an organization, whether government offices, private offices, or non-governmental social institutions, can only be improved by beginning with problem mapping, planning involving all components/stakeholders to create a conducive work environment, fostering communication between elements, and creating space for interaction among members.



The Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion of Timor-Leste is a state-level parent organization that handles issues related to social issues in Timor-Leste. The Ministry of Social Affairs of Timor-Leste's primary task is to formulate, establish, and implement policies in the areas of social rehabilitation, social security, social empowerment, social protection, and assistance to the poor. Its primary function is to assist the government in administering government affairs in the social sector.

Inclusive development is development that ensures equal participation and benefits for all groups in society, including marginalized groups, in the development process. This means that development must consider the needs and interests of all citizens, regardless of their group, and not just specific groups. The aims to thoroughly examine the transformation of organizational culture within the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion in Timor-Leste, while also highlighting the ministry's vital role in supporting national development. Through this exploration, the study underscores how institutional change and strategic leadership contribute to broader social progress in Timor-Leste.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Types of Transformation

Regarding transformation in the realm of organizational culture, transformation, in a general sense, is a change, whether in the form, nature, function, or structure of something. Transformation can occur gradually or suddenly, and often results in something completely different from its original form. Several types of transformation are currently identified: a) digital transformation, b) business transformation, c) social transformation, d) cultural transformation, and e) institutional transformation. An explanation of each is as follows:

#### a) Digital Transformation:

Companies planning to transition to a digital business model, for example, must have a clear vision of how technology can be used to improve their business, a strong commitment to making the necessary changes, changing structures and processes, focusing on improvement and innovation, and regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress of the transformation (Rahman, 2019; Nursaadah et al., 2025).

#### b) Business Transformation:

Companies seeking to improve business performance must have a clear vision of how they can become more efficient and innovative, a strong commitment to making the necessary changes, changing structures and processes, focusing on improvement and innovation, and regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress of the transformation.

#### c) Social Transformation:

Social transformation is the process of fundamental change in structures and systems. This will impact societal culture. This process involves changes in individual values, norms, and behavior, as well as relationships between groups within society. Social transformation can occur due to various factors, such as technology, globalization, and demographic change, and has significant implications for society.

#### d) Cultural Transformation

Cultural transformation is closely related to social transformation, which involves changes in the way people interact and communicate within a society. As a result of social transformation, fundamental changes will occur in the social and cultural structures and systems of society.

#### e) Institutional Transformation

Changes in the structure and governance of an organization or institution, from something static to something more dynamic, or from bureaucratic to providing excellent service. Transformation is strongly determined by the institution's vision and mission, along with changes in the perspectives of its members. A strong desire for this transformation must be supported by the policies of the organization's leadership.

### B. Organizational Culture and Institutional Transformation in the Public Sector

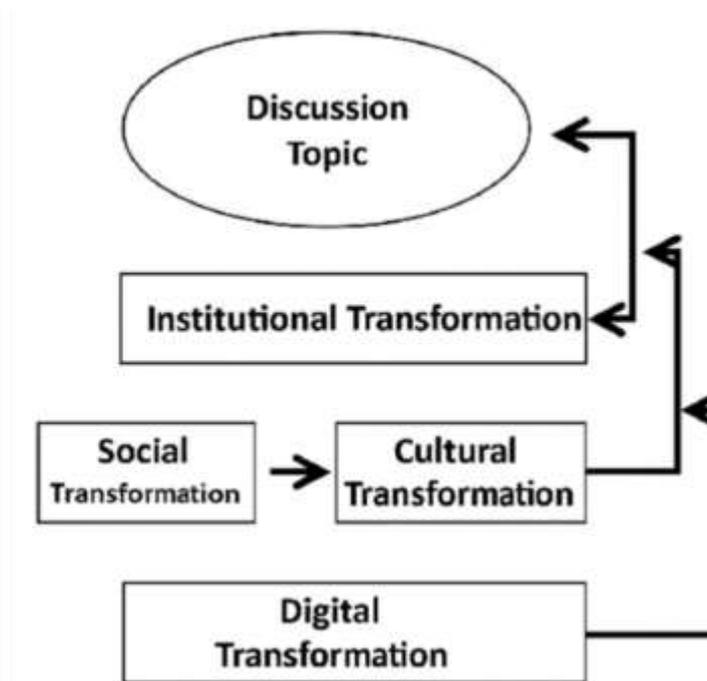
Organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping institutional effectiveness and public service delivery, particularly in governmental settings. According to Schein (2010), organizational culture encompasses the shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that govern how people behave in organizations. A successful transformation of organizational culture requires a clear vision, strong leadership, and the alignment of institutional goals with national development priorities. In the context of public administration, Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) emphasize the importance of shifting from a bureaucratic model to one that prioritizes collaboration,

citizen engagement, and ethical governance. This is especially relevant for ministries in developing nations, such as Timor-Leste, where the effectiveness of social programs is closely tied to internal organizational dynamics. A strong, adaptive culture within the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion can significantly enhance its ability to address social challenges, implement inclusive policies, and foster national cohesion.

**METHOD**

The method used to discuss this topic is a survey, collecting data and information through a questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire relate to prevailing customs within the ministry, proportional division of labor, rewards and punishments, leadership support, togetherness, commitment, role models, future hopes, and so on.

Considering the various types of transformation mentioned above, the most relevant to this topic is institutional transformation. However, other types of transformation are mutually supportive. The relationship between these types of transformation can be illustrated as follows:



**Diagram 1. Types of Transformation Relevant to the Discussion Topic**

To achieve the objectives of this topic, the best approach is through institutional transformation. It should be noted that this approach must be supported by other forms of transformation, namely social and cultural transformation. If both are part of the changes undertaken, digital transformation must be the key to the changes that occur, in line with what is currently prevailing, the digital world of the internet. It is explained that organizations or institutions that will shift to an inclusive model, internet networks are a necessity.

The direction of change must have a clear vision of how technology can be used to improve their programs to meet community needs and a strong commitment to making the necessary changes, altering structures and processes, focusing on improvement and innovation, and monitoring and evaluating the progress of the transformation periodically and in a controlled manner.

To achieve organizational culture transformation in this study, the researcher used the method proposed by Bahari Antono (2001) as follows:



Diagram 2. Bahari Antono's Method

These steps are absolutely necessary, at least to further investigate whether this has been implemented at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion in Timor-Leste.

For this topic, the discussion was conducted using a descriptive exploratory approach, utilizing organizational culture theory along with the transformation principles theory introduced by Bernard Bass (1985 [1990]). According to Bernard Bass, the transformation principle is a leadership model that emphasizes the leader's ability to transform followers to become better and more capable, and achieve performance that exceeds normal expectations. Transformational leaders are able to inspire, motivate, and provide support to their followers, so they feel motivated and highly committed to organizational goals.

The data is presented in a categorized table. The results of this discussion indicate that Bass's transformational leadership focuses on changing the organizational structure toward something more effective, or better viewed as a step forward by using power and control to get things done.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As stated in the title of this topic (Chapter II), it discusses how the organizational culture transformation within the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion in Timor-Leste was mapped in detail to identify specific points that need to be addressed to improve public service functions.

This ministry's programs directly address community needs. Sustainable work is essential. By creating social resilience, community participation will increase, and public awareness of the importance of protecting and safeguarding themselves will also increase.

From an inclusive development perspective, this can be engineered through government policies that favor the community (through regulations, specific policies, funding, monitoring and evaluation systems for actual implementation of activities at the grassroots level).

One of the most popular forms of transformation is social transformation. Social transformation is observed where communities seeking to create positive social change must have a clear vision of how they can create a more just and inclusive society, a strong commitment to making the necessary changes, changing structures and processes, focusing on improvement and innovation, and regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress of the transformation.



Table 1. Preparation for Organizational Culture Transformation

No	Aspect	Present	Not Present	Notes
1	Analysis of Current Culture		✓	
2	Defining New Vision and Values	✓		Existing old vision and mission
3	Developing a Transformation Plan		✓	
4	Communicating Vision and Plan		✓	
5	Involving Employees in the Process		✓	
6	Integrating Changes into Daily Practices		✓	
7	Measuring and Evaluating Progress		✓	

Until now, 1) Analysis of the Current Culture has not been conducted at all. This step is essential as a fundamental requirement for organizational culture transformation towards inclusive development. The next step involves 2) Defining a New Vision and Values. Although the ministry does have an organizational vision, it has existed for a long time and is not well socialized among all staff. As a consequence, 3) Developing a Transformation Plan is clearly absent. This should be the responsibility of the planning division to prepare.

As for 4) Communicating the Vision and Plan, while it certainly exists, it has not been effectively communicated to all staff who serve as technical implementers of the ministry's programs. An important note must be made regarding 5) Involving Employees in the Process. This has become a key reason why certain programs fail to achieve optimal results—because not all employees are involved in the planning process. Employees who understand the underlying goals of a program are more likely to innovate and take initiative to reach those goals.

In reality, frequent policy changes at the national level often occur without a process to 6) Integrate Changes into Daily Practices. This undoubtedly requires special attention, as does 7) Measuring and Evaluating Progress. If all the steps mentioned above are carried out properly, then what is equally important is assessing the extent to which the program is running and conducting integrated evaluations to identify what needs improvement in order to remain consistent with the original plan.

A detailed transformation is unlikely to be achieved without a well-prepared, structured, and controlled plan. The mapping shown in the table above indicates that the organizational culture currently running in the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion of Timor-Leste may have persisted unknowingly amidst ongoing routines. One of the objectives of this study is to guide this ministry toward a better condition and to influence other government organizations in Timor-Leste.

**CONCLUSION**

Organizational culture transformation is a profound process of change aimed at transforming values, behaviors, and practices within an organization toward something better and more aligned with the interests of society. The key to this change is the impact of development to improve community welfare, thereby creating equitable social resilience.

Several steps that can be taken to transform organizational culture include establishing core values that must be shared, establishing inspirational leadership, providing recognition and rewards (a reward system), training and development (capacity building), and building a strong team.

The discussion in this section will then be integrated with another topic, namely "The Strategy of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Inclusion of Timor-Leste in Promoting Social Resilience Development." Social resilience is a focal point that must be maintained in a country, alongside other development aspects, such as food security and political stability.

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