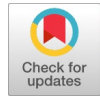


An Interrogation of the Factors that Hinder Municipal Leaders from Becoming Transformational Leaders

Amos Muguti, Chipo Mutongi, Cainos Chongombe



Abstract: In municipal governance, the potential for transformational leadership is often stifled by various factors that hinder local leaders from embracing innovative practices and driving meaningful change. This article examines the primary challenges that impede municipal leaders from evolving into transformational figures who can inspire their communities and promote progressive development. It explores the factors that interfere with municipal leaders from becoming transformational leaders, with special reference to the City of Harare. The study focused on local authorities due to their significant impact on the country's social, economic, and political development, as they provide core services at the regional level. The study population was made up of five hundred (500) people in Council leadership positions and a sample of 60 participants was drawn. The findings revealed that autocratic leadership was the most used leadership style. Factors that hinder municipal leaders to become transformational leaders brought about by the finding included lack of knowledge and qualifications, corruption, bureaucracy, economic challenges, politics at the expense of service delivery and silo mentality. It was recommended to draw inspiration from the Eagle Intelligent Transformation Strategy and propose Muguti's Diamond Transformational Leadership Model. A functional organisational culture is required where Ubuntu is practised.

Keywords: Leaders, Municipal Leaders, Transformational Leadership, Local Authorities

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been repeatedly studied across cultures, with different and, in some instances, opposing theoretical underpinnings. Transformational leadership is very crucial in transforming organisations. The puzzle is which factors are hindering municipal leaders from becoming transformational.

Marume (2015) [1] alludes that “as evidenced by continued conflicts at Town House, leaders are spending much of their time deliberating party politics in Council Chambers instead of discussing civic matters that affect residents and the community”. In the same vein, appointed officials, in collusion with Councillors, are busy pursuing self-enrichment agendas. When they are called to account, they rush to the parent Ministry of Local Government for protection. This new leadership crisis affecting leadership within the local government context in Zimbabwe creates fertile ground for continued poor service delivery and non-accountability among councillors and Council officials. Due to leadership challenges characterised by administrative and political conflicts, Harare, which was once termed a hub of economic development and ‘Sunshine City’, is today experiencing serious service delivery challenges. A performance assessment conducted by the Local Governance Community Capacity Building and Development Trust (LGCCBDT) in 2018 showed that the overall performance of the City of Harare was at 50.6% (Local Governance Community Capacity Building and Development Trust, 2018) [2]. The assessment conducted by LGCCBDT revealed that the City of Harare was not meeting the expectations of its residents. It is against this background that the researchers interrogate the factors that hinder municipal leaders from becoming transformational leaders.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Conceptual Framework Guiding the Research

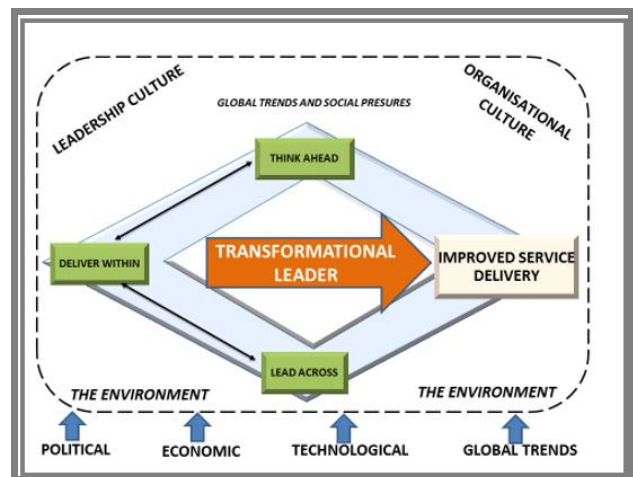


Figure 1: The Above Figure Depicts the Concept that was Developed for this Study

The influence of transformational leadership varies across organisational cultures.

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The conceptual framework guiding the study is based on three significant variables: transformational leadership as the independent variable, service delivery as the dependent variable, and culture embedded with conflict and the outside operating environment as the moderating variable. Both the independent and dependent variables are influenced by the prevailing political, social, and economic environments, as well as the organisational environment. Moderator effects

play considerable practical importance in reducing or enhancing the impact of specific independent variables on other specific dependent variables. For example, service delivery may be impossible to change immediately by changing leadership styles, but it may influence the outcomes for more mature or even more experienced groups.

Table 1: Leadership and Development Theories

Theory	Summary Description
Grand Man Theory (the 1930s) (leadership traits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the belief that leaders are born with innate qualities to lead. Focus on the innate characteristics and abilities that distinguish effective leaders from ineffective ones.
Behaviourist Theory (the 1940s to 1950s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concentration is on what leaders do rather than on their qualities. Different patterns of behaviors are observed and categorised as styles of leadership. Particular emphasis is on task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership behaviours.
Contingency Theory (the 1960s to 1970s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This approach views leadership as being specific to the situation in which it is practised. Leadership styles are best suited to different contexts. Situational variables are identified that best predict the most appropriate effective leadership style to fit a particular circumstance.
Transactional Theory (the 1970s to 1980s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approach emphasises the importance of the relationship between leader and followers, focusing on mutual benefits derived from a form of contract. Leaders reward subordinates for meeting performance expectations.
Transformational Theory (the 1980s to current)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The central concept here is change and the role of leadership in envisioning and implementing the transformation of organisational performance. Focus on the leader's vision and ability to inspire followers.

Source: Developed from literature by researchers

The term "transformational leadership" was first coined by sociologist James Victor Downton in 1973, when he undertook his study entitled "Rebel Leadership: Revisiting the Concept of Charisma Leadership" (Downton, 1973). It was further developed by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, who is now regarded as the father of the transformational concept. Transformational leadership involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. It is a process that often incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership (Northhouse, 2007) [3]. Transformational leaders are defined by Burns (2004) [4] as those that inspire individuals to meet organisational and team goals beyond their self-interests. Transformational leadership is characterised by the ability to inspire and motivate followers to exceed their self-interests for the sake of the organization or community (Bass & Avolio, 1994) [5]. Avolio et al (2009) [6] opine that transformational leadership is about changing leaders' behaviour and inspiring followers to perform beyond expectations while at the same time transcending self-interests for the good of the organisation. Bass and Avolio (2004) [7] avers that transformational leadership practices are the most current and comprise four dimensions, namely, idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. The transformational approach to leadership is one of the most popular approaches, having been the focus of extensive research since the early 1980s. It is a broad-based perspective that encompasses many facets and dimensions of the leadership process. Bass (2000) argues that transformational leadership represents a leadership style characterised by charisma and a shared vision between leaders and followers. Bryman (1992) [8] argues that transformational leadership is part of the new leadership paradigm, which gives more attention to the charismatic elements of leadership.

B. Five (5) I's of Transformational Leadership

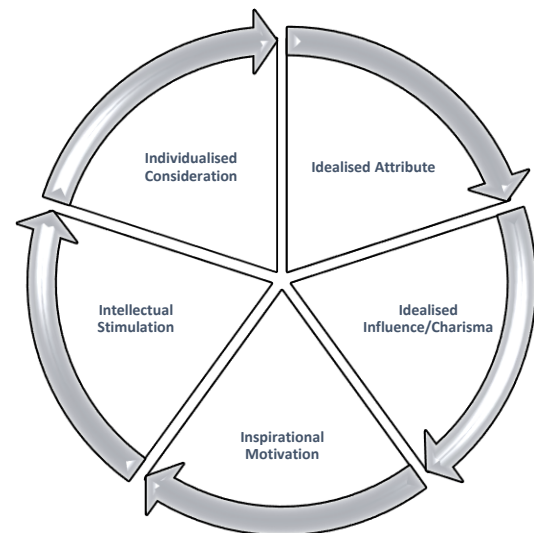


Figure 2: Five (5) I's of Transformational Leadership

i. Idealised Attribute

It is evident when followers report their leader as charismatic, confident, ethical, idealistic and trustworthy (Abasilim, 2014) [9]. According to this view, what subordinates attribute to the leader defines the leader's style. Obiwuru et al. (2011) [10] argue that idealised attributes are characterised by vision and a sense of mission, instilling pride among group members and gaining the respect of those being led. Kee, Newcomer and Davis (2006) [11] opine that, there are four (4) attributes of transformational leaders that are key to service delivery. These are Interpersonal Traits (reflectiveness, empathy, vision); Operational Attributes (mission-driven, accountable and paying attention to detail);

Interpersonal Abilities (trust builder, an empowered leader, a power-sharing leader and coalition builder) and Change Centric Approach (Integrative, creative and innovative).

ii. Idealised Influence/Charisma

It enables a leader to instil pride, faith and respect in followers, causing them to emulate their leaders (Avolio and Bass, 2004) [12]. Leaders display conviction, emphasise trust, take particular stands on complex issues, present important values and demonstrate the importance of commitment and the ethical consequences of decisions made (Abasilim, 2014) [13]. Yukl (2010) [14] argues that there are two aspects to idealised influence, which are the leader's behaviour and the fundamentals that are attributed by followers to the leader. Leaders motivate subordinates and are regarded by their followers as possessing astonishing skills. They are persistent and determined, and they are respected, trusted and considered by their followers as such.

iii. Inspirational Motivation

It presents behaviour that provides symbols and simplified emotional appeals, and in the process, raises expectations and optimism among followers. It also articulates an appealing and envisioned future with high standards and encouragements concerning what needs to be done (Jonson, 2009) [15]. Trusted transformational leaders act in manners that inspire and stimulate those around them by bestowing challenge and meaning to their followers' work and through communicated expectations. They also share their inspirational vision, which they are all determined to accomplish (Storey, 2004; Bass and Avilion, 2004) [16]

iv. Intellectual Stimulation

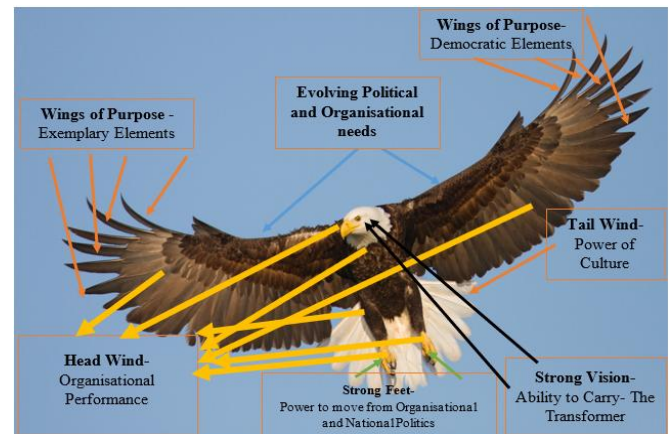
It inspires followers to adopt new approaches to problem-solving through proactive thinking and encourages them to think critically. Podosakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter (1990) [17] argue that followers are encouraged to be innovative and creative, encouraging the promulgation of new ideas by employees whom they appraise favourably and never accuse them publicly for mistakes they would have made. Obiwuru et al. (2011) [18] add that intellectual stimulation provides employees with challenging new ideas and encourages them to break away from old ways of thinking or doing business.

v. Individualised Consideration

This refers to the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor and listens to subordinates' concerns and needs. Leaders reward their followers for creativity and innovation, treating employees differently according to their talents and knowledge. They also empower employees to make decisions and provide the needed support (Abasilim, 2014) [19]. According to Long, Yusof, Kowang [20] & leaders pay particular attention to every single

individual follower's needs by assuming the responsibility of the coach or mentor.

C. Eagle Intelligent Transformation Strategy



**Figure 3: Eagle Intelligent Transformation Strategy.
(Proposed by the Writers)**

Leaders should be visionary, strong, and decisive, and not be swayed by petty issues that divert their attention from achieving organisational objectives. Like an eagle, a leader must possess the zeal to undertake painful but necessary steps that foster organisational performance whenever the need arises.

III. METHODOLOGY

The pragmatic philosophical approach chosen for this study draws heavily from inductive and deductive reasoning. The use of mixed-methodology provided much-needed solutions to problems encountered in research, mainly when one approach is utilised at the expense of the other. In this research, the study population was made up of five hundred (500) people in Council leadership positions (both Councillors and officials), key stakeholders from residents' representatives, independent pressure groups and government represented by the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Finance. A sample size of 60 Participants was drawn up utilising the developed sample frame. This was a more realistic and admissible sample that included all key players in local governance administration. In determining the sample size for this study, input from various scholars was taken into consideration. The retired academic professor's Rule of Thumb method of selecting a sample was factored in.

A. Findings

i. Factors that Hinder Municipal Leaders from Becoming Transformational Leaders

Table 2: Participants' Sex and Average Age Distribution

	Sample Frame	Sample Size	Sex		Average Age Band	Percentage
			Males	Female		
Strata 1	Executive Management	10	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	50 -55	75%
Strata 2	Middle Management	30	12(44.4%)	15 (55.6%)	46-49	56%
Strata 3	Councillors	10	6 (75%)	2 (25%)	26-35	62.5%
Strata 4	Government Officials	3	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	36-45	66.7%

Strata 5	Key Stakeholders	7	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	36-45	57%
Total		60	31(57.4%)	23 (42.6%)		

Source: Survey Data 2019

The questionnaire results showed that 72.7% (N = 64) of the respondents were male, while 27.3% (N = 24) were female. Among all the interviewed participants, 8% (N = 2) were female, while males constituted 92% (N = 23). This was more or less representative of the ratio of males to females in Grades 9-1 on the Employee Establishment of the CoH, which was made available to the researcher during the study, as well as in Council and directorship positions. The study revealed that the young generation was not part of the realm of powers in Council administration, as the majority of Council Senior Management is within the retirement zone (75% within the age group of early retirement). The secondary data revealed that the council had several effective human resource policies, including employee training and development policies, a recruitment policy, and a succession planning policy. The entry requirements can explain the age range, as the Council stated in its recruitment policy that the minimum age for appointment to the executive directorate position is 40 years. This means that the youth was ineligible for the positions and could only be considered for internal promotion or succession planning, which established a minimum age of 35 years for grooming into a senior management position. The issue of succession planning in the Council became critical at one point, as Councillors wanted to ensure continuity of service delivery. One of the directors interviewed explained how the succession planning issue was considered key: "There is huge evidence of a lack of a collaborative and consultative attitude in the Council. In 2016, the Manyenyeni Council, which had shifted its focus from policy issues to administrative issues, suspended the then Town Clerk on allegations of failing to implement the Council Succession Policy. However, at the same time, they were opposed to employing young people who were ready to take on leadership roles. It is confusing my brother. We are suffering from policy inconsistency and political expediency".

ii. Key Informant Number 8

An analysis of the Succession Plan Policy of the Council showed that for one to be appointed to the position of the Town Clerk, one has to first work as a Director for at least 5 years or at least 10 years in the senior management position and for appointment into the position of Director through succession plan, one has to be employed in the managerial position for a minimum of 7 years. This explains why the executive leadership was made up of people in their early retirement age. A file analysis of the suspended directors revealed that two of them were already over 60 years old, and one was within the early retirement age.

Table 3: Leadership Style Practised in Council

Employee Rating of the Prevailing Leadership Style Practised in the City					
	Style	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Transformational	6	24	24	24
	Transactional	6	24	24	48
	Democratic	4	16	16	64
	Autocratic	8	32	32	96
	Other than the above	1	4	4	100
	Total	25	100	100	

Source: 2019 Survey Data

The results, as presented above, showed that the Autocratic leadership style was highly ranked as prevalent in the Council, with a total score of 32%, followed by Transformational and transactional practices, with 24% each. The Democratic leadership style was also practised, but not as prevalently as the other three styles.

The mixed responses to the prevailing leadership practices were highly expected, considering the organisation's size, which had more than 12,000 employees, 8 Departments, and 48 Divisions. The information received from secondary sources indicated that the City of Harare was the second-largest employer after the central government. The employment trends and records showed that a diverse workforce was in place. One of the participants commented that.

There is no agreed-upon performance culture in the Council, and as such, the leadership style being practised is situational. The council should adopt a common culture that would influence the type of leadership practice to be adopted. There's no consensus in the Council; it's a mixed leadership style, which is not even suitable for a large organisation like ours (Questionnaire respondent 8). Although the interviewed participants provided mixed responses to the perceived leadership style being practised, the overall consensus was that autocratic and transformational practices were dominant across the Council Departments. The research was undertaken during the period when the City was in the process of transforming its operations in line with its Vision of attaining World-Class City Status. The following snapshots were extracted from the interviews with the participants.

In this organisation, different styles are being used depending on the situation. The styles practised are as many as the number of Directors themselves. Each exhibits a different style (Key Informant Number 8). I would say that generally, we are autocratic due to our heritage. We, as local governments, simply adopted the autocratic styles associated with all government institutions. In the future, we need to be exemplary leaders, charismatic, and above all, transformational, to drive the City's vision. Currently, we are suffering from indecision, and maybe it's because of the nature of our organisation, which is highly political" (Interview with one Director). Council is a product of a democratic process because Councillors are elected by people and, as such, they are democratic; however, due to bureaucracy and red tape, we ended up being dictators (One Councillor Key informant). As a participant observer, the researcher observed some of the practices in action. It was noted that each council department had a distinct culture, and there were no commonly agreed-upon positions on how things were supposed to be done. The results from the interviews, questionnaire, and secondary data sources revealed that the City of Harare had a mixed leadership style. The practice noted in the City conforms to the Situational Theory, which came into existence in the early 1960s, emphasizing that the practice to be adopted is dependent on the prevailing

situation (Buckingham, 2005) [21]. The researcher conducted a cross-tabulation of the leadership practices being implemented in the Council regarding gender.

Table 4: Gender and Leadership Practice

What is Your Sex * Leadership Style Practised Cross Tabulation								
			Leadership Style Practised					Total
			Transformational	Transactional	Democratic	Autocratic	Other	
Sex	Male	Count	3	3	3	4	1	14
		% of Total	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	16.00%	4.00%	56.00%
	Female	Count	3	3	1	4	0	11
		% of Total	12.00%	12.00%	4.00%	16.00%	0.00%	44.00%
Total		Count	6	6	4	8	1	25
		% of Total	24.00%	24.00%	16.00%	32.00%	4.00%	100.00%

Source: 2019 Survey Data

A cross-tabulation was conducted to understand how males and females perceive leadership practices being implemented in the Council. The results presented in Table 16 showed that an equal number of males and females (16%) held the view that the autocratic style was the most prevalent, followed by transformational and transactional styles, each at 12%. While males also noted that democratic leadership was being practised, women did not share the same view, as only one participant, representing 4%, voted for it. The various leadership styles practised in Council conform to Yukl's (2010) [22] remarks that different leadership styles are employed depending on the situation. After a cross-tabulation of results, the researcher concluded that in Council, various leadership styles were being practiced and this was an indication that there was a lack of shared culture and vision as different styles within a single organisation can brew varying cultures, thereby negatively affecting unison, oneness and shared beliefs, values and principles. The City of Harare's Vision was underpinned by two critical pillars of stakeholder participation and the creation of a high-performance team. Transformational leadership in the municipal context entails positively influencing the desired service delivery outcomes for Harare, enabling it to achieve World-Class City status. In answering this question and as discussed in Chapter 3, the researcher adopted the standard MLQ but customised it to suit the purpose of the study and reduced the 32 MLQ questions to 16 standard questions focusing on five key factors of the transformational leadership practice as put forward by Avolio and Bass (2004) [23], Abasilim (2014) [24] and Jonson (2009) [25]. These five key factors are idealised attributes, idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. In an interview, one of the key informants stated that Harare, unlike any other local authority in Zimbabwe, had exemplary transformational leadership ready to deliver. Still, their efforts are being hindered by the prevailing political situation in Zimbabwe, characterised by urban power contestation featuring the ruling ZANU-PF Government and urban MDC-controlled councils. The informant highlighted that the visionary executive leadership of Harare in 2016 proposed the idea of setting up a plant to manufacture smart water meters in partnership with an Egyptian company, EL Sewedy. The idea was not implemented and has lost traction. In 2017, at the height of political tension in Zimbabwe, municipal executive leaders were exposed to intense political battles involving the MDC, ZANU-PF, and factional intra-party conflicts. In May 2017 and on September 14, 2017, the Minister of Local Government, Kasukuwere, suspended the Chitungwiza

Council and its Town Clerk, respectively, in contravention of procedures. Harare was not spared as the Mayor and Four Directors were suspended. This affected leadership's capacity to deliver, as they were spending much time focusing on political issues. The suspension of the Chitungwiza Town Clerk and the Directors of the City of Harare, including the Town Clerk, has nothing to do with performance. It was because they crossed paths on political grounds with the Minister (Key informant Number 4). The researcher evaluated several documents to check how the suspensions of Town Clerks and Directors were being handled. There were numerous irregularities in the said suspensions, resulting in the Council incurring significant financial losses through litigation and salary payments. The city of Harare faces a considerable challenge of mismanagement and corruption. Incompetent leaders thrive in maladministered environments. That is why our sunshine city is in the state it is now. The executives at Town House focus on enriching themselves and have no regard for their duty to the long-suffering ratepayers (J Mushore on 27th of February 2019) [1].

¹ James Mushore is the former Town Clerk for Harare. He was appointed but never took up his duties after the Minister of Local Government, Public Works, and National Housing, Hon. S. Kasukuwere, blocked him from assuming his responsibilities, citing irregularities in the appointment procedure.

An analysis of the Council Resolutions and management reports indicated that issues of corruption, land management, and conflicts of interest were affecting service delivery. The MLQ respondents' low votes on transformational leadership (integrity: 2.16, moral-ethical: 2.44) may be due to the information revealed by documentary evidence. The *Newsday* of October 23, 2017, reported that Harare was in dire need of transformational leadership. In that article, the writer recommended implementing the Eagle Transformation Strategy. The issues raised pertained to perceived ongoing corruption in the City of Harare, political polarisation, poor financial management, a lack of shared vision, and maladministration. It was highlighted that the City of Harare lost its 'Sunshine City' status due to poor service delivery and financial performance. He stated that the City needs transformational leaders with a blend of diversified leadership styles to serve in the position of the Town Clerk. Commenting on municipal leadership, M. T. Majome argued that in Zimbabwe, leadership positions in local authorities are occupied by councillors whose qualification is to win an election to occupy a post that requires sophisticated skills

and expertise for policy interpretation. Councillors' positions cannot be entrusted to people who are not qualified and skilled, yet this is allowed in Zimbabwe without a second thought. Councillors should be conversant with reading and interpreting legislation, particularly the Urban Councils Act, the Rural District Councils Act, and the Regional and Town Planning Act, as well as other laws, including acts of parliament, bills, and draft by-laws.

The current calibre of councillors lacks the necessary skills to lead the Council. There is no leadership to discuss in the Council (M. T. Majome, 2019). An analysis of the Auditor General Local Authority Report of 2018, in support of Majome's arguments, revealed that for the 2018 financial year, out of the 92 Local Authorities, only three (3) (Bindura Municipality, Tongogara Rural District Council and Marondera District Council) had 2018 Audited Financial Statements.

The report further stated that in the case of Harare, the Finance and Development Committee and the Audit Committee did not have a single councillor with a finance and accounting qualification or skill and this could be the reason why Harare was financially burning and faced with a barrage of reports on poor service delivery, leadership incapacity and collapsed infrastructure. These committees are responsible for an oversight role in financial performance, internal control, systems and procedures, business investment decisions, asset management, and ensuring the integrity of financial reporting. If governance issues are compromised, it is challenging to discuss transformational leadership, and worse still, sustainable service delivery.

Commenting on the municipal political leadership, the Harare Residents Trust (HRT) Director weighed in, saying that city fathers are transactional leaders who have since abandoned residents, lacking the accountability, transparency, and leadership credentials that can propel the city forward. The review of documentary evidence showed that the City of Harare was operating Strategic Business Entities (Mabvazuva, Sunshine Holdings, City Parking, Harare Quarry and Harare Medical Aid Society). City Councillors and Executive officials were the board members of these strategic units, which is tantamount to poor corporate governance. HRT's arguments that the transactional Harare City Council leadership used the business entities to siphon Council resources could therefore not be dismissed. One key informant argued:

The local government area is marred with controversies. At the Ministry Level, the composition of the Local Government Board is not known. We wonder which organisation in this day and age prides itself on its non-disclosure. There is no transparency. At the Council level, Councillors are copying their master and are busy looting resources. Directors have since stolen council tills, and nothing is being done because policymakers and those playing oversight roles are also involved in shadow deals. I think we need better transformational leaders in this City (Informant number 3).

At a highly charged local government meeting held in 2018, which the researcher attended as part of a study investigation, the Minister of Local Government and Minister of Provincial Affairs for Mashonaland Province spoke highly of the need by the electorate to vote councillors of sound minds, right attitude and qualifications with correct leadership characteristics into office. The residents and senior council officials however requested the government to tighten the

screw by putting provisions in the relevant Acts so that the electorate would be guided.

The researcher from that meeting noted that rhetoric was familiar, and the political positions necessary to field a potential candidate with the power to convince the electorate were nowhere near being replaced by law. A documentary review, media reports, Council resolutions and reports, and group-focused discussions, while interacting with council leadership and management, revealed several leadership and governance issues within the City of Harare. The following is a summary of key leadership issues that were shown:

Table 5: Key Leadership Issues

Corruption and System Capture	Financial Management Compromised
Poor governance systems	Weak internal control systems
Poor prioritisation of resources	Integrated Development Planning
Politically charged environment	Resource Limitations
Lack of Training and Development	Community Resistance

i. Corruption and System Capture

Allegations of corruption in land management, development, and the allocation of residential, commercial, and business stands significantly compromised the integrity of municipal leaders. Administrative corruption and institutional capture were evident in every Department of the Council. Leadership, both councillors and executives, were either suspended and/or arrested on allegations of corruption during the period of study.

A Special Council Committee set up to investigate land scams in Harare for the period 2004-2009 found that massive corruption was occurring in land management, as provisions of Section 152 of the Urban Council Act were not being followed in inland alienation. A cartel, extending from the ministry level to the lowest-ranked officers, was uncovered in land corruption by the investigation team. Strategic deployments by the Minister were noted in the appointment of former subordinates to influential positions in the Council, notably in the Department of Housing and the then Urban Planning. The Special Committee's recommendation, however, was not implemented by the Council, possibly because they were also involved.

ii. Poor Governance Systems

Leadership ethics, morals and dignity were questionable across all levels. Nepotism was rife in human resource management. Allegations of political deployments, patronage, favouritism and so on were high. Both executive leadership and councillors were involved in shadowy recruitment processes where relatives and close friends were considered at the expense of merit.

Soon after the 2018 harmonised elections, MDC deployed its political appointees (Deputy National Party Spokesperson, Shadow Minister of Local Government, Youth Leaders) in key areas of the council (business development, licensing, valuations and estates, housing allocations, development control, planning and human resources) to enable easy coordination of part activities in Council.

This was done in direct violation of Section 266 of the Constitution, which prohibits employees of the



Provincial and local governments from holding political positions or acting in a partisan manner. Across council departments, the researcher noted a lack of systems and control measures. The housing department was being run without adhering to standard operating procedures in land allocation, land development, and management.

The Department of Works, Planning Division, and Survey was an authority unto itself and used council premises for private jobs and consultancy services without censure.

At a PBB Workshop held in 2019, the Auditor General challenged municipal leaders to lead by example and establish governance systems that they would also be bound to follow. The Auditor noted that, due to poor planning, Harare City Council suffered significant losses in freshwater supplies, averaging 56% in 2018. Water supplied from the Morton Jaffray plant totalled 163,497,365 cubic meters, while the billed quantity was 71,640,400 cubic meters, resulting in a loss of 91,856,965 cubic meters.

iii. Financial Management Compromised

Lack of accountability. The Auditor-General Report of 2018 indicated that the City of Harare's financial statements were not consolidated to reflect the Council's total financial performance and position, which is in contravention of the Public Finance and Management Act [Chapter 22:19] [26]. The report also noted a lack of accountability in Council business transactions, as well as a lack of transparency to shareholders or potential investors regarding the nature of the Council's business and the possible risks associated with its investments.

There are massive revenue leakages in the council, especially in the informal sector, farms (where the council proudly reported that 434 cattle died in one year without intervention), undisclosed bank accounts (reportedly above 60 banking accounts), business licensing and investment, lease management, and procurement irregularities and connivance. Councillors and executives ran business entities that received favourable tender awards and payments. In 2018, Harare City Council did not reconcile its cashbook overdraft balance of USD 208,430,777, as per the financial statements, with the bank overdraft balances of \$7,590,828, resulting in a significant variance of \$200,839,949.

iv. Weak Internal Control Systems

The leadership at the City of Harare deliberately wanted not to undertake business process re-engineering. The researcher noted that the recommendation was made by the World Bank in 2010, and at the time of the study, no action had been taken.

The Auditor General's Report of 2018 indicated that the City of Harare had weaknesses in internal controls, which resulted in significant variances between the system and financial statements. The report stated a lack of controls on the sale of stands, lease agreements and shop licences.

v. Poor Prioritisation of Resources

Council departments were unable to deliver services. The researcher noted in particular that the City Emergency Services Operations was operating with only two ambulances out of a total requirement of 36 to cover the whole city, 12 Fire Engines out of the required 25, and two service vehicles out of the required 14 for fuel licensing and fire prevention teams. The last time the City procured a fire engine was in 1992, and now relies on donations. All these issues point to

poor leadership in the City of Harare. As big as it is, the City of Harare had no disaster Plan and is merely reactionary instead of following a documented plan of action.

vi. Integrated Development Planning

Agility and visioning. The world is changing rapidly, at the speed of light, due to a variety of reasons. There is an increased need for organisations to rapidly develop forward plans, react and respond to both internal and external change. Agility becomes the new paradigm that every leader should adopt, implying a shift in attitudes, goals, work processes, and practices to leapfrog and thrive. In the City of Harare, the survey revealed mixed reactions, as some leaders were ready for the challenge, while others were not yet ready, and forward-integrated planning was beyond their current reality.

vii. A Politically Charged Environment

Municipal leaders frequently operate within a politically charged environment where short-term electoral considerations overshadow long-term vision (Hawkins, 2020) [27]. This pressure to conform to constituents' immediate demands can inhibit leaders from pursuing bold initiatives that may not yield immediate results.

viii. Resource Limitations

The scarcity of financial and human resources can significantly limit a leader's ability to implement change. Many municipalities face budget constraints that restrict investment in innovative programs and initiatives (Bahl & Linn, 2018) [28]. Without adequate resources, even the most visionary leaders may struggle to effectively implement their ideas.

ix. Lack of Training and Development

The absence of adequate training programmes for municipal leaders can also be a critical impediment. Many local leaders lack access to professional development opportunities that equip them with the skills necessary for transformational leadership (Gordon, 2021) [29]. Continuous learning and skill enhancement are vital for leaders to adapt to changing environments and challenges. This, in turn, leads to a lack of knowledge, hindering the practice of transformational leadership.

x. Community Resistance

Finally, community resistance can pose a substantial challenge. Change often breeds uncertainty, and constituents may be hesitant to embrace new ideas or initiatives proposed by their leaders (Kotter, 1996) [30]. Building trust and fostering open communication is essential for overcoming this resistance and facilitating transformational change. A review of the Strategic Plans indicated a positive move towards adopting the concept of sustainable planning, drawing from the central government down to local-level governments. However, there were still some gaps, especially in aligning local and national budgets with IDP programmes and projects. The researcher noted that since 2012, efforts have been made to integrate national-level plans with local-level plans.

The IDP was gaining momentum in the Council during the study period. Some of the interviewed people had this to say: The city of Harare is now on the right trajectory. This is



the first of its kind for the City to develop strategic plans. The vision is good, but it needs support, as some of the directors are not supportive of the Strategic Plans (Key Informant number 2).

The vision of this City is to have a reliable water supply that supports our world-class city strategy. We now need to start considering drawing water from Kariba, as it's cheaper than constructing the much-discussed dams without action.

Transformation and leadership agility are required (Deputy Mayor of Harare, 2018).

The remarks by the Deputy Mayor suggested that the City of Harare needed to expedite its planning and envision the future to address current and future problems. At one point, Harare developed a plan to construct the Kunzvi Dam to augment Lake Chivero's water supply; however, this plan has not been implemented for over 40 years, and its current status remains unknown. The last time a strategy for sustainable water delivery was developed was during the early 1980s to the 1990s; however, since then, no measures have been implemented to ensure a continued portable water supply in Harare.

The documentary data sources revealed that the City of Harare faced water challenges since the late 1990s. The primary water source and treatment Plant, Morton Jaffray, was built more than 60 years ago with a capacity to supply 400,000 people. The population is now more than 4.5 million, including residents of the satellite towns and the greater Harare area. The pollution levels at Lake Chivero were reported to be over 80%, necessitating the use of more water treatment chemicals. The issue of clean water in Harare during the study period was an emergency priority that required collective unity of purpose among stakeholders to avoid a possible looming disaster. The researcher, however, noted that the leadership was reluctant to solve the problem and preferred politics over service delivery.

The following suburbs were among those affected by water supply shortages: Warren Park, Mabvuku, Hatfield, Tafara, Kuwadzana, Budiro, and all the northern leafy suburbs of Harare. The water problems in Harare were a result of inadequate planning for sustainable development and a lack of cohesion reflected in the City leadership. Municipal leadership issues were not peculiar to Harare. In Chitungwiza, between 2011 and 2013, the then Town Clerk, Mayor, and Director of Housing were arrested and dismissed due to allegations of corruption.

In 2017, the entire Council was suspended for allegedly allocating tracts of land to themselves. Two years later, in 2019, the government established a commission of enquiry to investigate alleged irregularities in human resources, land sales, and corporate governance. In Gweru, the Town Clerk was suspended in October 2019 on allegations of incompetence. The Minister appointed a three-member commission whose terms of reference were to investigate the circumstances leading to the suspension of the Town Clerk, the relationship between councillors and management, and the suspension of engineering staff, and to establish the views of stakeholders and investigate the alleged corruption of councillors.

In Gokwe and Rusape, Town Secretaries were suspended on allegations of corruption relating to land and procurement. This was the trend in all Local Authorities in Zimbabwe,

where management was suspended on allegations of mismanagement, while councillors were suspended on allegations of corruption.

B. Factors Hindering Transformational Leadership



Figure 4: Factors Hindering Transformational Leadership

Individual perceptions and opinions were ideal for corroborating data obtained from the questionnaires and secondary data sources. The results indicated that municipal leaders employ mixed styles, with the autocratic style being the most prevalent, at 32%, followed by the transformational and transactional styles, at 24% each. The results also showed that the diverse workforce, which was male-dominated (56% in administrative leadership and 75% in political leadership), among other factors, contributed to the autocratic styles adopted in the Council. The factors that hindered municipal leaders from becoming transformational, as highlighted throughout the study, are summarised as a conflict of interest. On one hand, political leaders push for their agendas, while administrative leadership pushes for government plans as directed by the Minister and informed by Government Policies. The study, as supported by 72% of participants and secondary data sources, revealed that conflict between councillors and management has resulted in poor service delivery. Conflicts were more pronounced in the policy and governance arm, service delivery departments, housing and lease management operations, divisive party politics, failure to observe or separate political party structures and governance structures, interferences in executive appointments, unclear information flows and limited access to information by councillors, government interferences and counter directives and lack of technical skills and committee-specific competences by councillors to address policy issues. Lack of understanding of governance issues by councillors was being used by the Minister to issue Ministerial directives, ostensibly to protect the public. This has resulted in unprecedented conflicts, which have affected the smooth running of councils. The other identified factors included the municipal organisational culture that hinders innovation, research, development and industrialisation; the local governance structure which resulted in reporting dilemmas for the CEO and his executives; political interference in administrative work – lack of role clarity between the political leadership and administrative leadership; legal vacuum –

non-alignment of Acts of Parliament to the constitution resulting in policy shifts and inconsistencies.

The lack of political transformation in the administration of local authority affairs is another challenge that has affected the new school of thought in local governance in Zimbabwe, particularly that which subscribes to democratic participation, efficient service delivery, and resource mobilisation. The undertaking and transformational adoption of these progressive theories within the urban local authority context is further influenced by the actors in local governance, especially the space barons, urban mafias, the elite, and political players. The study also revealed that leadership was influenced by the political leadership's limited understanding of local governance issues. The researcher noted that a cumulative total of 90% of Councillors lacked formal education and had no ordinary level certificates. In comparison, 80.4% lacked local government experience, with some having never worked for a formal organisation. This lack of knowledge and education compromised the decision-making process. The researcher also noted that Urban Local Authorities are the most prominent organisation with a large complement of Board of Directors members. Harare had 48 Councillors as Board Members. Unfortunately, the majority of these members are not educated, have no formal employment and lack expertise in governance issues. The Councillors' recruitment process was a significant contributor to the poor leadership challenges, as the majority of them focused on wealth accumulation, resulting in massive corruption, administrative capture, patronage, and nepotism, as revealed by the study. The behaviour of both administrative and political leadership, which emphasises political expediency and internal conflict, is antagonistic to transformational leadership. Although the executives were qualified to run council affairs, their leadership styles were compromised by the fact that they were political deployments sent to spearhead the ideology of their respective political parties at councils. As a tier of government, Local Authorities are close to the people. As such, both the government and political parties have interests in these entities, as control of such entities helps them pursue their agendas of amassing grassroots political support. The study found that political contestation affected the adoption of appropriate leadership styles that are ideal for improved municipal organisation performance. The Researcher, however, noted a radical shift in the separation of functions during the Gomba era. Political activists were deployed to occupy strategic and key positions in the Council. Insubordination was rife, and there was a lack of respect for Council leadership among these officials, who publicly declared that, in their respective party structures, they were more senior to the Councillors and even the Mayor himself. This scenario of non-adherence to legislative requirements in the conduct of public officials was affecting the adoption of appropriate leadership styles, hindering the transformation of local authorities in Zimbabwe.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The conceptual theory developed by the researcher to guide the study, which focused on Transformational Leadership and identified gaps, was informed by the findings from the research study. This theory gave rise to the Integrated

Municipal Diamond Transformation Leadership Model, recommended for adoption by local authorities. The adoption of this model is envisioned to bring sanity to municipal governance and enhance service delivery.

A. Amos Muguti Diamond Transformational Leadership Model

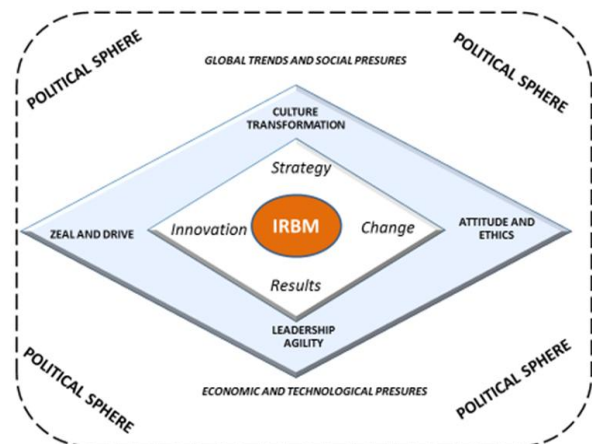


Figure 5: Amos Muguti Diamond Transformational Leadership Model

The model took cognisance of all critical factors that influence municipal leadership and service delivery. At the centre of the model is the adoption of Integrated Results-Based Management Systems, with four support pillars: Strategy, Innovation, Change, and Results. The focus is on integrated development planning, stakeholder engagement and participation, management commitment to results and the ability to change the status quo. The model is explained below:

i. Culture Transformation

A successful culture transformation requires changing the hearts, minds and skills of municipal employees to achieve organisational goals with unwavering support and active involvement of leaders at all levels. The change process is painful but necessary for municipal organisations to realise and achieve set goals. If properly executed, culture transformation revolutionises the municipal organisation in areas of customer experience, diversity, and inclusion, where leaders and employees embrace diversity and are committed to working together to impact performance, leadership development, and accountability positively.

ii. Attitude and Ethics

Leadership transformation is not for the faint of heart. There are many hurdles to successful organisational transformation. Leaders should take proactive initiatives that enhance leadership integrity. Rebuilding lost trust requires that municipal leaders change the way they have traditionally managed the affairs of local authorities. Positive attitude and ethical leadership are built on the foundation of fairness, power sharing, people orientation, concern for sustainability, goal achievement, change management, shared values and beliefs, as well as customer orientation – the "customer first" mantra.

iii. Zeal and Drive

World-class cities are anchored on excitement and the desire to be the best. For Harare and other urban local authorities in Zimbabwe to attain smart city status, everyone in the city should be excited and envision the smart city in their minds. Municipal leaders should motivate employees, embrace change, and involve everyone in achieving the organisational vision and goals. The model emphasises that leaders should create a narrative that connects employees' and stakeholders' contributions to a shared purpose, mission, and values. To make a joyous zeal and drive among employees, leaders need to gain insights into their employees and facilitate their growth potential.

iv. Leadership Agility

The survival of a municipal organisation is based on several key factors, including its ability to be agile. Municipal leaders should establish cultures and management approaches that encourage creativity and rapid innovation (Zahara et al., Reginio et al., Shrivastava et al.). These approaches promote leaders to adapt more quickly in response to volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and an increasingly ambiguous world. Agile transformation requires that leaders shift from a traditional leadership mindset, abilities and development.

Municipal organisations are not immune to fast-paced, ever-changing and disruptive times. Municipal leaders should be able to effectively lead organisational change, build teams and navigate challenging political, economic, social and technological operating environments. Once they adopt leadership agility, municipal leaders can assess risk, make courageous decisions, and act quickly to meet the rapidly changing climate, producing results and developing others' capacity to work towards improved service delivery. Leaders should be driven by the desire to uphold integrity (self-awareness and accountability), innovation (curiosity and experimentation), a sense of urgency (focus and decisiveness), engagement (inclusivity and collaboration), and direction (communicativeness, empowerment, and visioning).

The Diamond Leadership Transformational Model acknowledged that municipal leaders face numerous challenges due to the political, organisational, economic, social, environmental, and technological changes.

Leaders are, however, expected to navigate and overcome these challenges using an integrated approach to leadership and governance, as depicted in the model, where everyone is engaged and empowered through the adoption of IRBM as a key leadership attribute, focused not on individuals but on achieving results for improved service delivery.

- The pay it forward concept is called for, whereby one does something good to others, and those in turn will also do good to others
- Ubuntu
- A functional organisational culture

V. CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership brings about transformation, yet municipal leaders are facing stumbling blocks in becoming transformational leaders. It was concluded that autocratic leadership was mainly used in municipalities with special reference to the City of Harare. This is due to several

factors which include political interference, economic challenges, corruption, silo mentality, lack of qualifications and bureaucracy.

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