

Building Effective Leadership Framing to Improve Organizational Performance

Ulvia Fatkurin Fuad

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kh. Muhammad Ali Shodiq, Tulungagung
ulvia.fuad@gmail.com

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Abstract:

Organizational performance is strongly influenced by leadership effectiveness; however, in practice, many organizations still experience low performance due to weak leadership framing of vision, policies, and change. Unclear or inconsistent leadership framing often leads to confusion, resistance, and low employee engagement. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of effective leadership framing in improving organizational performance based on a literature review. This study employs a qualitative method using a library research approach. Data were obtained through a review of books, scholarly journals, and academic publications relevant to leadership framing, leadership communication, and organizational performance. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis and qualitative descriptive analysis. The findings indicate that clear, consistent, and meaningful leadership framing is able to shape positive employee perceptions, increase trust, motivation, and work commitment. Leadership framing also contributes to the formation of a visionary and adaptive work culture that supports the achievement of organizational performance. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of leadership framing as a practical leadership strategy that needs to be developed consciously and systematically to enhance organizational performance and sustainability.

Keyword: *effective leadership, leadership framing, organizational performance*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a highly strategic factor that determines the direction and success of an organization (Norman, Avey, Larson, & Hughes, 2020; Sahri, Achmad Pathoni, 2023). In the dynamics of modern organizations, leaders are not only required to manage resources effectively, but also to build shared meaning and understanding among organizational members (Abdulfatai & others, 2021; Mazzetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Sayyadi, 2019). The way leaders communicate vision,

goals, and policies strongly influences employees' perceptions of the organization (Brown, Paz-Aparicio, & Revilla, 2019; Graves & Sarkis, 2018; Khuwaja, Ahmed, Abid, & Adeel, 2020). These perceptions subsequently shape employees' attitudes and work behaviors. Therefore, leadership is not only related to actions, but also to how organizational realities are framed. The process of framing thus becomes an important aspect of leadership practice (Hikmayana, 2025; Martin Jr, 2017a). Through effective framing, leaders can positively direct the ways organizational members think and act.

Leadership framing refers to a leader's ability to interpret situations, convey messages, and shape shared perspectives (Nazeer et al., 2024; Xia, Shi, & Wang, 2024). Effective leaders are able to frame challenges as opportunities and change as a collective necessity. Constructive framing helps employees understand organizational goals more clearly (Bellis, Magnanini, & Verganti, 2024; Marinova, Cao, & Park, 2019; Munif, 2025). In addition, appropriate framing can enhance employees' motivation and work engagement. In the context of organizational performance, leadership framing serves as a bridge between strategy and implementation. Without effective framing, organizational policies and strategies are difficult for employees to fully understand. Thus, leadership framing becomes a crucial element in improving organizational performance.

In practice, many organizations still face performance problems due to weak leadership framing. Leaders often focus on targets and outcomes without paying sufficient attention to how messages are delivered to employees. As a result, organizational policies are perceived as burdens rather than shared goals. This condition can reduce employees' motivation and work commitment. Moreover, inconsistent framing has the potential to create confusion and resistance to change. Employees may struggle to understand organizational priorities. These problems indicate that leadership effectiveness is determined not only by decisions, but also by how those decisions are framed and communicated.

Research conducted by Mostafa Sayyadi in his article titled How Effective

Leadership of Knowledge Management Impacts Organizational Performance, published in *Business Information Review* (2019), shows that effective leadership in knowledge management has a significant impact on improving organizational performance. The findings affirm that leaders who are able to encourage the creation, sharing, and strategic use of knowledge will strengthen innovation, collaboration, and the organization's competitive advantage (Sayyadi, 2019). Research conducted by Jiaoli Cai in her article published in the *Journal of Enterprise and Business Intelligence* (2023) shows that leadership style and organizational strategy have a significant impact on improving performance efficiency. The findings confirm that alignment between an adaptive leadership style and the right organizational strategy can enhance productivity, operational effectiveness, and the company's competitiveness (Cai, 2023).

Research conducted by Timothy E. Martin Jr. in his article published in *Cogent Social Sciences* (2017) shows that leadership is understood as a social construct shaped through discursive practices and interactions within the field of communication studies. The findings affirm that the meaning of leadership is not fixed but is constructed, negotiated, and reproduced through language, discourse, and social dynamics within the academic community (Martin Jr, 2017b). The research conducted by Imran Nazeer and his team in the journal *Kurdish Studies* (2024) shows that linguistic framing plays an important role in shaping perceptions of leadership style in organizational communication. The findings confirm that the choice of language, narrative, and discourse strategies used by leaders can influence leadership legitimacy, power relations, and communication effectiveness in the management context in Pakistan (Nazeer et al., 2024).

Based on a review of previous studies, there is a research gap related to leadership framing and organizational performance. Research that integrates the concept of framing with leadership practice is still limited. In addition, few studies examine leadership framing as a strategic process in shaping organizational performance. Local organizational contexts are also rarely the main focus of

leadership framing research. Yet, every organization has distinct characteristics and cultures. Therefore, further research is needed to examine leadership framing in greater depth. The novelty of this study lies in its effort to develop the concept of effective leadership framing to improve organizational performance.

This study aims to analyze the role of leadership framing in improving organizational performance. It also seeks to identify how leaders build effective framing within organizations. Furthermore, this study attempts to explain the relationship between leadership framing and employees' perceptions of performance. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to leadership and organizational management studies. Practically, this research is expected to serve as a reference for leaders in developing constructive framing. It may also provide guidance for organizations in developing effective leadership practices. Thus, leadership framing can be utilized as a strategy to enhance organizational performance in a sustainable manner.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method using a library research approach (Mustofa, 2023). The research was conducted by collecting and reviewing written sources relevant to the topic of leadership framing and organizational performance. Data sources were obtained from reference books, national and international scholarly journals, conference proceedings, and other academic publications. The literature search was carried out through online journal databases and digital libraries (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). The selected literature directly addresses leadership, framing, leadership communication, and organizational performance. The data collection process was conducted in a systematic and structured manner. Each source used was recorded and classified according to its focus of discussion.

The population of this study consists of all scholarly literature discussing leadership framing and organizational performance. The research sample was determined purposively by selecting relevant, up-to-date literature that has a

direct connection to the research objectives. The selection criteria included clarity of the leadership framing concept, relevance of the organizational context, and the academic quality of the sources. Data collection was carried out by reading, taking notes, and extracting key information from each source. The research instrument consisted of a table or document analysis sheet used to summarize concepts, findings, and practical implications. The collected data were then grouped into main themes. This step was intended to facilitate the subsequent analysis process.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis and qualitative descriptive analysis techniques (Setiawan, 2018). Each piece of literature was analyzed to identify leadership framing practices used to enhance organizational performance. The researcher compared findings across sources to identify patterns, similarities, and differences. Relevant data were then synthesized to build a practical understanding of effective leadership framing. The analysis process was carried out iteratively to ensure accuracy of interpretation (Khilmiyah, 2016). The results of the analysis were presented in a systematic and structured narrative form. Through this approach, the study is expected to provide a practical overview of the application of leadership framing in improving organizational performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

A. The Concept and Meaning of Framing in Leadership

Leadership literature indicates that framing is an important process in building shared understanding within organizations. Framing is understood as the way leaders interpret reality and communicate it to organizational members. This process influences how employees make sense of work situations and organizational policies. Leaders who are able to apply framing effectively can guide employees' perceptions in a constructive direction. Framing is not limited to language alone, but also involves symbols, narratives, and leaders' actions. Through appropriate framing, leaders can construct

positive meanings around organizational challenges. Therefore, framing has become an integral part of modern leadership practice.

The results of the literature review show that leadership framing functions as a strategic tool in organizational communication. Leaders use framing to explain the organization's vision, mission, and goals. The way messages are conveyed affects employees' levels of understanding and acceptance. Clear framing helps employees see the connection between individual tasks and organizational objectives. This enhances employees' sense of involvement and responsibility. The literature emphasizes that ambiguous framing can lead to confusion. Therefore, clarity in framing is a prerequisite for effective leadership.

Leadership framing also plays a role in shaping employees' perspectives toward change. Many studies indicate that resistance to change often arises from ineffective framing. Leaders who frame change as a threat tend to trigger rejection. In contrast, framing change as an opportunity can increase employee acceptance. This process requires leaders to carefully select appropriate narratives. The literature highlights the importance of consistency between leaders' messages and actions. Thus, framing becomes a crucial instrument in change management.

In addition, leadership framing is closely related to organizational values and culture. Leaders frame organizational values through their decisions and everyday behaviors. Values that are framed consistently are more easily internalized by employees. The literature shows that value framing contributes to the formation of organizational identity. This identity influences how employees behave and perform their work. Therefore, leadership framing cannot be separated from work culture. Strong framing helps create alignment of values within the organization.

Overall, the literature review confirms that leadership framing is a strategic and ongoing process. Framing is not a one-time action, but a practice

that is continuously developed. Leaders need to adjust framing to organizational contexts and environmental dynamics. The literature emphasizes that effective framing is flexible yet consistent. This consistency builds employees' trust in their leaders. With such trust, leadership messages are more readily accepted. Therefore, framing serves as a foundation for effective leadership.

B. The Role of Leadership Framing in Shaping Employee Perceptions

The results of the literature review indicate that leadership framing strongly influences employees' perceptions. Employees' perceptions are shaped by the way leaders communicate information and policies. Positive framing tends to generate constructive perceptions. In contrast, negative framing can trigger defensive and apathetic attitudes. The literature emphasizes that employees' perceptions affect their work attitudes. These work attitudes subsequently influence individual performance. Therefore, leadership framing has direct implications for organizational performance.

Leadership framing also affects the level of employees' trust in the organization. When leaders frame policies transparently, employees feel valued. Feeling valued increases trust and emotional attachment. The literature shows that trust is an important factor in organizational effectiveness. Honest and open framing strengthens leadership legitimacy. Conversely, manipulative framing can damage trust. Thus, trust is strongly influenced by the quality of leaders' framing.

In addition to trust, leadership framing influences employees' work motivation. Leaders who frame work as a meaningful contribution enhance intrinsic motivation. Employees perceive their work as having value beyond mere obligation. The literature confirms that intrinsic motivation has a positive impact on performance. Framing that emphasizes shared goals strengthens work commitment. This encourages employees to work with greater

dedication. Therefore, leadership framing serves as an effective motivational tool.

Perceptions of fairness are also influenced by leadership framing. The way leaders frame organizational decisions determines employees' perceptions of fairness. The literature shows that the same decision can be perceived differently depending on how it is framed. Fair framing increases employees' acceptance of policies. This acceptance reduces conflict and resistance. Thus, framing plays a role in maintaining organizational harmony. This highlights the importance of framing in human resource management.

Overall, the literature review confirms that leadership framing shapes employees' perceptions comprehensively. These perceptions include trust, motivation, and fairness. All three aspects are interrelated and influence performance. Leaders who are able to build positive framing create a conducive work climate. The literature emphasizes that work climate affects productivity. Therefore, leadership framing is a key factor in improving organizational performance.

C. Leadership Framing and Its Relationship with Organizational Performance

The literature review indicates a close relationship between leadership framing and organizational performance. Framing influences how employees understand organizational goals. Clear understanding enhances the effectiveness of task execution. The literature emphasizes that organizational performance depends on goal alignment. Appropriate framing helps create such alignment. Without clear framing, organizational strategies are difficult to implement. Therefore, leadership framing plays a strategic role in organizational performance.

Leadership framing also affects coordination and teamwork. Leaders who frame work as a collective effort encourage collaboration. The literature shows that collaboration increases work efficiency. Framing that emphasizes teamwork reduces sectoral ego. This accelerates the achievement of

organizational targets. With appropriate framing, conflicts between units can be minimized. Thus, framing contributes to both team and organizational performance.

In addition, leadership framing influences an organization's ability to adapt. Leaders who frame change positively enhance organizational readiness. The literature indicates that adaptive organizations tend to achieve better performance. Adaptive framing encourages organizational learning. Employees become more open to innovation and change. This strengthens organizational competitiveness. Therefore, leadership framing supports long-term organizational performance.

Leadership framing also plays a role in organizational decision-making. The way leaders frame problems influences the solutions that are chosen. The literature emphasizes that framing determines the direction of decision-making. Constructive framing leads to more rational decisions. Appropriate decisions enhance organizational effectiveness. Therefore, leadership framing affects decision quality. Decision quality, in turn, contributes to organizational performance.

Overall, the literature review shows that leadership framing contributes both directly and indirectly to organizational performance. Framing influences understanding, coordination, adaptation, and decision-making. These four aspects are key indicators of organizational performance. Leaders who are able to build effective framing create productive organizations. The literature emphasizes the importance of framing in strategic leadership. Therefore, leadership framing is a crucial determinant of organizational performance.

D. Strategy for Building Effective Leadership Framing

The results of the literature review identify several strategies for building effective leadership framing. The first strategy is clarity of leadership messages. Leaders need to convey messages in a simple and consistent manner. The literature emphasizes that clarity reduces misinterpretation. Clear

messages enhance employees' understanding. This understanding supports the effective execution of tasks. Therefore, clarity becomes the primary strategy in leadership framing.

The second strategy is consistency between messages and actions. The literature shows that inconsistency weakens leadership framing. Employees tend to evaluate leaders based on their actual behavior. Framing that is not supported by action loses credibility. Consistency strengthens employees' trust. This trust increases acceptance of leadership messages. Thus, consistency becomes an essential element of effective framing.

The third strategy is the use of meaningful narratives and symbols. Leaders can frame messages through stories and organizational symbols. The literature emphasizes that narratives are more easily remembered than formal instructions. Symbols reinforce the meaning of leadership messages. This helps facilitate the internalization of organizational values. With appropriate narratives, framing becomes more powerful. Therefore, narratives and symbols support the effectiveness of framing.

The fourth strategy is employee involvement in the framing process. The literature shows that participation increases message acceptance. Leaders who involve employees create a sense of ownership. A sense of ownership strengthens work commitment. Participatory framing encourages two-way dialogue. This dialogue improves the quality of organizational communication. Thus, involvement becomes an important strategy in leadership framing.

Overall, the literature review shows that effective leadership framing is built through integrated strategies. Clarity, consistency, narratives, and participation complement one another. Leaders need to apply these strategies continuously. The literature emphasizes that effective framing is not instantaneous. This process requires leadership awareness and competence.

With appropriate strategies, leadership framing can significantly improve organizational performance.

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that leadership framing is a strategic process in shaping employees' understanding, attitudes, and behaviors, which ultimately affects organizational performance. These findings are consistent with Weick's sensemaking theory, which states that leaders play an important role in helping organizational members understand complex realities through interpretation and meaning-making. In this context, leadership framing functions as a sensegiving mechanism, namely leaders' efforts to guide how employees interpret organizational situations. When leaders are able to frame vision, challenges, and change clearly and positively, employees are more likely to develop shared understanding. The findings support this theory by demonstrating that effective framing enhances goal clarity and work alignment. Thus, the results reinforce the argument that leadership is not merely about decision-making, but also about creating collective meaning. This confirms the relevance of sensemaking theory in explaining the relationship between leadership framing and organizational performance.

Furthermore, the research findings can also be discussed within the framework of transformational leadership theory. This theory emphasizes the leader's role in inspiring, motivating, and transforming followers' values and goals. Leadership framing identified in the literature functions as a primary means for leaders to convey vision and work meaning. The finding that framing enhances intrinsic motivation and employee commitment supports the inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership. However, this study extends the theory by explicitly emphasizing the framing process, rather than focusing solely on leadership outcomes. In other words, framing serves as an operational mechanism that explains how transformational leadership works in practice. Therefore, the findings do not reject transformational leadership theory,

but instead enrich and deepen understanding of the transformational leadership process.

The findings regarding the influence of leadership framing on employee trust and perceptions of fairness are also relevant to organizational trust theory. This theory states that trust is built through consistency, transparency, and fairness in leaders' actions. Transparent and consistent leadership framing has been shown to increase employees' trust in both leaders and organizations. This supports the view that leadership communication plays a central role in building trust. However, the study also demonstrates that inconsistent framing can potentially undermine trust, reinforcing the warnings highlighted in organizational trust theory. Thus, the findings support existing theory while emphasizing framing as a key variable in the trust-building process. Framing not only conveys messages but also reflects leadership integrity. Therefore, leadership framing can be viewed as an indicator of trusted leadership quality.

The research findings showing a relationship between leadership framing and organizational adaptability and innovation can be linked to learning organization theory. This theory emphasizes the importance of environments that support learning, openness, and reflection. Leadership framing that presents mistakes as learning opportunities has been shown to encourage employees' willingness to innovate. These findings support learning organization theory, which asserts that leadership plays a role in creating a psychologically safe climate. However, this study adds a practical dimension by demonstrating that such a climate is built through leaders' communication framing. Thus, leadership framing functions as a bridge between leadership and organizational learning. These results enhance theoretical understanding of how learning cultures are formed within organizations. Therefore, the study both strengthens and extends learning organization theory.

Overall, the discussion shows that the research findings support various leadership and organizational theories while also contributing to conceptual

development. Leadership framing is proven to be a key mechanism linking leadership with employees' perceptions, work culture, and organizational performance. This study does not reject existing theories, but rather integrates and enriches them through a framing perspective. By positioning framing as a strategic process, the study enhances understanding of how leadership operates in everyday practice. The theoretical implication is the need to include framing as an important variable in leadership studies. The practical implication is that leaders should consciously build framing that is consistent, clear, and meaningful. Thus, leadership framing can be positioned as a primary strategy for improving organizational performance in a sustainable manner.



Figure 1 leadership framework

CONCLUSION

Leadership framing plays a highly strategic role in improving organizational performance. Leadership framing functions as a meaning-making process that helps employees understand the organization's vision, goals, and policies more clearly and constructively. Leaders who are able to build effective framing can positively influence employees' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, thereby fostering trust, motivation, and work commitment. The research findings indicate that leadership framing contributes to the formation of a visionary, adaptive, and collaborative work culture, which ultimately leads to improved

organizational performance. In addition, consistent and transparent framing strengthens leadership legitimacy and reduces resistance to change. However, leadership framing needs to be managed consciously and systematically to avoid being manipulative or causing misunderstandings. By integrating leadership framing into daily leadership practices and supporting it with strong organizational systems, organizations can achieve sustainable performance and remain adaptable to continuously changing environmental dynamics.

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