

## Transformational Leadership in Higher Education Institutions: Review and Future Directions

Divya Thankom Varghese<sup>1</sup> & Helen Sheeba S D<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CMR University, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

### ABSTRACT:

As higher education institutions navigate severe macro-environmental shocks and technological disruptions, traditional bureaucratic and transactional management architectures have proven structurally inadequate. This paper synthesises empirical literature to evaluate how transformational leadership—specifically its core dimensions of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration—drives organisational agility and human capital cultivation. The findings reveal critical implementation gaps, showing that many institutions rely on superficial charisma rather than embedding deep structural empowerment. Furthermore, the review highlights significant demographic and generational variances in leadership reception; female faculty members systematically report lower satisfaction with transformational efficacy, while mid-career faculty (ages 35–45) exhibit profound institutional disillusionment and higher vulnerability to burnout compared to early-career scholars. This operational friction underscores that leadership efforts do not land uniformly across university staff, especially within specialised spaces like digital library infrastructures. Ultimately, these insights demand a comprehensive overhaul of academic vetting protocols, urging selection committees and human resource departments to prioritize emotional intelligence, relationship management, and transformative behavioural capacities over standard academic seniority or research tenure alone to ensure long-term institutional survival.

### Keywords:

Transformational Leadership; Higher Education; Institutional Agility; Faculty Burnout; Academic Governance; Individualized Consideration; Intellectual Stimulation

### Article History

Received: 10 April 2026

Revised: 02 May 2026

Accepted: 05 May 2026

### How to cite this article:

Varghese, D. T., & Sheeba, H. S. D. (2026). Transformational Leadership in Higher Education Institutions: Review and Future Directions. *LEADER: International Journal of Business Management*. 14(2), 69-80.

**Correspondence:** Dr Divya Thankom Varghese, CMR University, Bengaluru, Karnataka.  
(email – [divya.tv@cmr.edu.in](mailto:divya.tv@cmr.edu.in))