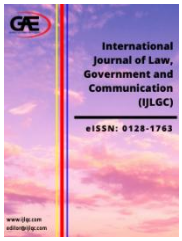
International Journal of Law, Government and Communication
IJLGC
EISSN : 0128-1763
Volume: 11 Issue: 45 (September 2026) PP. 956-974



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW, GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNICATION (IJLGC)
www.gaexcellence.com/ijlgc

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A FELDA JERANGAU LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

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Article Info:

Article history:
Received date: 03.08.2026
Revised date: 20.08.2026
Accepted date: 27.09.2026
Published date: 30.09.2026

Abstract:

This study examines how transformational leadership can be used in community governance, and how it influences community development in FELDA Jerangau. Within the rural development of Malaysia, FELDA communities are challenged by a number of issues including scarcity of resources, volatile degrees of community involvement and unstable socio-economic evolution. Thus, a proper leadership strategy is needed, making sure that community development can be conducted sustainably and inclusively. This paper is founded on the theory of transformational leadership by Bass and Avolio, who highlight four primary dimensions, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. A qualitative approach using a case study design was used to develop deep insight into leadership practices in the community. Purposive sampling was used during the selection of 11 informants, comprising community leaders

International Journal of Law, Government and Communication
EISSN : 0128-1763
Volume: 11 Issue: 45 (September 2026) PP. 956-974

To cite this document:

Mansor, K., Khori, H. M., Simin, H., & Adli, M. H. S. C. M. (2026). Community Governance And Transformational Leadership In Community Development: A FELDA Jerangau Leadership Case Study. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication, 11*(45), 956-974.

and members of the FELDA Jerangau community. The data were gathered with the help of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation, and document analysis, and analyzed with NVivo 14 software. The results suggest that transformational leadership contributes greatly to the development of effective community governance. The idealized influence dimension contributes to the development of trust and leadership legitimacy in the community, whereas inspirational motivation boosts communal spirit and community engagement. Moreover, intellectual stimulation prompts leaders and community members towards creative thinking to overcome the limitation of available resources, and individualized consideration enhances community engagement using a more inclusive and person-centered approach. Nevertheless, other critical challenges identified include financial limitations, inadequate participation of youth, and the necessity to adjust leadership strategies to existing changes. On the whole, this paper supports the idea that transformational leadership is an important factor impacting the effectiveness of community governance and the sustainability of community development. It also adds to the literature by expanding the application of transformational leadership theory in a rural setting and offers practical implications to community leaders and policymakers in developing more effective and resilient development strategies.

DOI: 10.35631/IJLGC.1145060

Keywords:

Community Development; Community Governance; FELDA; Transformational Leadership

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Introduction

Rural community development is one of the key agendas in ensuring a balanced socio-economic development of a country. FELDA Jerangau, in the context of Malaysia, faces special development issues, namely lack of resources, economic dependence and the social dynamics of the local community. FELDA remains one of Malaysia's most extensive rural land development programmes, and contemporary scholarship continues to highlight unresolved governance and land-related challenges within these settlements as the agency's strategic direction is reviewed (Ramli & Halim, 2025). According to a study by Rami et al. (2021), local leaders are critical as change agents, who not only devise community actions but also reinforce internal relationships to realize sustainable development. As such, a good leadership approach is a decisive aspect of the success of rural community development. In a related inquiry into FELDA governance, Mansor et al. (2026) further show that community leadership within a state-built settlement is shaped not only by formal authority but also by gender dynamics and the renewal of leadership across generations, underscoring the layered nature of leadership legitimacy in FELDA communities.

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EISSN : 0128-1763
Volume: 11 Issue: 45 (September 2026) PP. 956-974

Transformational leadership is a method that is frequently given prominence in modern leadership literature as useful when it comes to community development. This style focuses on the leadership capacity of inspiring and motivating members of the community to attain a common vision and to work together to tackle a variety of development issues (Fitriati & Marsanty, 2023; Riza et al., 2024). Urbano et al. (2021) also explain that transformational leadership is able to establish an inclusive atmosphere and promote the involvement of all members in the process to promote the welfare of the community and sustainable development. This renders transformational leadership a pertinent strategy in rural community development. The role played by leaders such as village heads or FELDA leaders in village or community administration is very crucial in planning and undertaking local development. According to Rachmawati et al. (2021), village leaders are the key actors in the management of resources and development policies aimed at realizing the welfare of the community. Moreover, Safaruddin et al. (2023) note that transformational leadership, especially inspirational motivation, can enable the community to discover its potential and help the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved at the grassroots. This implies that a leadership style that is transformation-based can be effective in improving community governance.

Additionally, past research has revealed that transformational leadership coupled with a community-based approach can enhance the economic and social growth of a particular region. Rakhman et al. (2021) discovered that this leadership model proved effective in the development of rural tourism, whereas Ambarizki et al. (2024) and Wahyuningsih et al. (2021) revealed that transformational leadership is one of the major factors contributing to the success of village-owned enterprises. In that regard, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration among leaders can facilitate overall community engagement in development endeavors (Setyaningrum & Kriswibowo, 2022; Suryani et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of transformational leadership cannot be divorced from community governance. Good governance is characterized by aspects such as transparency, accountability and equitable use of resources in the administration of development programs. Research by Puspitasari et al. (2022), Shabatini and Hanafi (2023), and Utami et al. (2022) reveals that transformational leadership may help improve financial accountability and create trust within the community. The style of leadership also helps to build an innovative culture and enhance the work of community organizations (Yasni et al., 2023), which in turn enhances community resilience to change (Verawati et al., 2023).

As such, this research examines in detail the application of the aspects of transformational leadership by community leaders in FELDA Jerangau and its effect on community governance and local development. The study adopts a qualitative case study method to gain insights into community perceptions and experiences related to the leadership style exercised (Abidjulu et al., 2024). In particular, this paper discusses the role of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration in increasing community engagement in societal activities and in promoting sustainable development (Abolade & Abolade, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). It is hoped that this research will help develop an elaborate leadership framework and offer practical implications for community development strategies in Malaysia.

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EISSN : 0128-1763
Volume: 11 Issue: 45 (September 2026) PP. 956-974

Problem Statement

One of the effective methods in community development that has been cited is transformational leadership. Nevertheless, a gap remains in the depth of knowledge on how this leadership style is effectively implemented in a rural community setting such as FELDA Jerangau. Past research has extensively addressed the theoretical issues and overall effectiveness of transformational leadership but has not paid much attention to the real dynamics of its application within a community that has its own socio-economic problems. Thus, there is a need to analyze in more detail the role of transformational leadership in the process of holistic community development at the local level.

Moreover, community governance challenges encompassing transparency, accountability, and participation are also major challenges in rural development. Despite the fact that transformational leadership can help to improve these features, there is still a lack of empirical evidence that supports a direct correlation between this type of leadership and the quality of community governance. Saadah (2024) highlights the necessity to comprehend how certain leadership styles can shape adaptive community responses to existing issues and allow communities to take advantage of socio-economic development prospects. This research is therefore significant in investigating how far transformational leadership can indeed play a role in enhancing community governance.

In addition, the change in development orientation, from a community-based model to a more village-driven model, has cast doubt on the ability of local leadership to handle autonomy and development capabilities. According to Sutopo et al. (2022), such a transition demands leaders who can incorporate both strategic and participatory leadership. Nevertheless, the extent to which transformational leadership can facilitate this change, especially in promoting accountability in managing village funds and community involvement in decision-making, is not well investigated (Anowta, 2023; Indriasih et al., 2022).

Moreover, the challenges rural communities face with digitalization and technological change have raised new questions about leadership and governance. Despite existing research indicating that transformational leadership has an impact on digital preparedness and technology use in organizations (Sulistiarini et al., 2025), the literature remains scarce on how the two concepts are implemented in communities like FELDA Jerangau. As pointed out by Kawiana (2023) and B et al. (2023), the digital age has required leaders to be able to deal with volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, but the real ability of community leaders to do so is unclear.

Moreover, community-based knowledge management and innovation are also significant issues that need to be addressed. Transformational leadership is considered to contribute to knowledge acquisition, dissemination, and application processes that improve the resilience and innovativeness of the community (Hutagalung et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the success of community leaders in handling knowledge and fostering lifelong learning is not without doubt, particularly in rural settings that are limited in resources and access to technologies (Purbiyantari et al., 2023; Zahri et al., 2023).

Lastly, despite evidence that transformational leadership relates to better organizational performance, satisfaction, and trust among community members (Budiyanti et al., 2022), the question of the actual mechanisms that allow leaders to create a clear vision, motivate

communities, and constantly drive innovation remains unexplored (Norizan et al., 2024; Yamin & Murwaningsari, 2023). Also, the skills of leaders to solve complicated issues and implement organizational change in the digital age must be researched further (Shahid, 2024; Ugwuja, 2024). Thus, this research is conducted to bridge these knowledge gaps by concentrating on FELDA Jerangau as an important case study in understanding the relationship between transformational leadership, community governance and sustainable development.

Literature Review

The theoretical basis of this research lies in the transformational leadership theory proposed by Bass and Avolio, which focuses on the role of leaders in bringing about change in the attitudes, values, and behaviour of followers to accomplish common objectives. The model consists of four key dimensions, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Prianggono, 2022). The theory emphasizes that leaders are not just managers, but change agents who can increase the commitment and performance of followers beyond expectations (Purwanto et al., 2021; Ravet-Brown et al., 2023). This theory is of significant use in the context of community development because it helps explain how social change and sustainable development can be motivated through leadership.

The first dimension, idealized influence, describes the leader's capacity to be a role model who is respected and trusted by followers. According to Fauziyah (2022), leaders who possess high idealized influence are able to instill positive values in the community that persuade people to focus on the common good rather than personal benefit. Thanh et al. (2021) also highlight that this dimension entails the internalization of values and vision that can rally the community together. Idealized influence is essential in establishing trust and leadership legitimacy among members of the FELDA Jerangau community, which enhances the basis of effective governance.

The second dimension, inspirational motivation, focuses on the leader's ability to articulate a clear, strong, and compelling vision that inspires the community. Windarwati et al. (2021) and Yanti and Mursidi (2021) note that communication is an effective method that enables leaders to energize followers and instill new hope. Inspirational motivation is regarded as an important factor in mobilizing communities and establishing a collective will to develop within this theoretical framework, which is especially applicable in rural societies that need to be sustained to attain sustainable socio-economic growth.

The third dimension, intellectual stimulation, means that the leader should be able to stimulate followers to think critically, creatively, and innovatively. According to Iskandar and Hasbi (2024), transformational leaders make their followers question assumptions and find new answers to problems. Ferreira (2021) and Nilasari et al. (2023) also emphasize that such a strategy is necessary in a dynamic environment that requires constant adaptation. In the community development context, intellectual stimulation serves to make communities more creative and sensitive to development issues such as digitalization and technological change.

The fourth dimension, individualized consideration, emphasizes the leader's role as a mentor to every individual in the community, offering attention and support. Nafal et al. (2024) and Sari and Fernando (2021) elaborate that leaders who engage in individualized consideration can develop individual potential through more personal and inclusive methods. Kurniawan and

International Journal of Law, Government and Communication
EISSN : 0128-1763
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Daeli (2021) further explain that such a practice facilitates personal and professional growth. In the theoretical framework of this study, this dimension is significant so that each member of the community feels appreciated and encouraged to work towards common community development.

On the whole, these four dimensions of transformational leadership complement one another and can be used to construct a complete theory of the connection between leadership, community governance, and community development. Delgado-Bello and Gahona-Flores (2022) and Setyaningsih and Sunaryo (2021) highlight that transformational leadership has the potential to motivate followers to invest in a common vision and find new perspectives on problems. Moreover, it has been shown to improve innovation, organizational learning, and creativity (Purbiyantari et al., 2023; Ajisasmito & Saryatmo, 2024; Nurmayanti et al., 2021). Thus, this theoretical framework serves as the starting point for studying the impact of transformational leadership on community governance and, in turn, on sustainable development in FELDA Jerangau.

Material and Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach and a case study design to investigate in detail the practice of transformational leadership and community governance in the context of community development in FELDA Jerangau. This approach was selected because it offers a comprehensive view of intricate social phenomena, especially leadership behaviour and its effects on the community (Saadah, 2024; Ambawani et al., 2024; Armiyanti et al., 2023). Moreover, the qualitative method allows the researcher to explore experiences, perceptions, and social interactions in detail within a natural environment (Suryadi et al., 2024; Lindawaty, 2023).

A single case study design was employed because the case study approach is suitable for studying phenomena in depth within a given setting, namely the FELDA Jerangau community. This approach enables the researcher to determine patterns, relationships, and dynamics that occur in real-life situations (Syafi'i et al., 2023; Yusup & Maulani, 2023). Moreover, this method allows for learning more about the specificities of social relationships and power relations that shape community leadership and governance (Slahanti & Setyowati, 2022; Aneta et al., 2023). This is why the case study method was chosen, so that the results can be more context-specific and relevant.

Purposive sampling was used in this study to identify informants with appropriate knowledge and experience pertaining to community leadership in FELDA Jerangau. Eleven informants were interviewed, comprising community leaders and members directly engaged in local development activities. This intentional sampling corresponds to the qualitative research methodology, where the focus is on selecting participants who can provide rich and information-relevant data (Ma'rifatin et al., 2023). This approach allowed the researcher to obtain a wide range of detailed and diverse views on the phenomenon being examined.

To collect data, this study applies various methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), participant observation and document analysis. These multiple methods were used to obtain holistic data and promote triangulation to increase the validity and reliability of the results (Abidin, 2023). Interviews serve to understand the experiences and perceptions of informants, and FGDs provide group discussions that enrich the data. Participant

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observation assists the researcher in understanding the actual state of social interactions, while document analysis supports the empirical data gathered.

All interview data were transcribed verbatim during the data analysis process and subsequently analyzed inductively to extract the most important themes and conceptual categories arising from the data (Sara, 2022). NVivo 14 software was used to analyze the data and to assist with data management, coding, and the systematic development of themes. This software also increases transparency and accuracy in qualitative data analysis and allows the researcher to discern patterns and relationships in complex data.

All in all, this methodological design enables a detailed insight into how transformational leadership contributes to community governance and local development in FELDA Jerangau. This study generates deep, contextual and meaningful results through the integration of the data collection process and systematic analysis. The strategy also aligns with the aim of the study, which is to understand the experiences and social realities of the community holistically, and hence helps develop knowledge in the area of leadership and community development.

Result and Finding

Leadership Challenges in Community Governance

The study results reveal that leadership in community governance within FELDA Jerangau is a multi-dimensional and intricate challenge. These difficulties relate to community management, communication, and the capability of leaders to fulfil the duties assigned to them. According to informants, leadership is not just an office but a duty that requires a high degree of dedication and awareness of community needs. As an example, IR1 said:

> *"As a leader, we have to confront different challenges. The trust entrusted is not only a position, but a duty that should be fulfilled to the best of our capacity. As leaders, we should always be aware of all that occurs and make sure that things are handled with care."*

This finding indicates that community leaders must act as monitors and problem-solvers. Moreover, the challenges are also seen as collective in nature, whereby leadership involves working together with all parties. This is elaborated on by IR2:

> *"We are not going to struggle on our own, but all together... when we are together, we can make the hardest burden light."*

These results indicate that leadership issues are not just personal, but include both organizational and community-wide dimensions.

Resource and Financial Constraints in Program Implementation

The study also found that resource limitation, especially in financial terms, is a significant issue affecting the effective implementation of community programs. Restrained funding directly affects the planning and implementation of activities, thus influencing the degree of community involvement. As stated by IR3:

> *"Our biggest issue whenever we wish to plan programs is the financial issue. We do not have enough money, so we have to consider everything we do before putting any activity into practice, since we do not have enough resources to carry it out."*

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This passage suggests that structural constraints, such as financial limitations, remain a major impediment despite the high commitment and planning of leaders. Consequently, community leaders need to be more creative and strategic in attracting resources, including through the involvement of outside agencies.

Inconsistent Level of Community Participation

Another important community governance challenge revealed by the findings is inconsistent community participation. Even in well-organized programs, some community members remain less active and are hard to reach for planned activities. IR4 explains:

> *"Occasionally we have really done well planning programs, but it is not going as well with the community as we had thought. Some are interested, some are not..."*

This observation implies that community leaders need to use proper communication strategies and relevant motivational techniques to improve engagement. Moreover, age, work commitments, and location are other factors that affect the degree of community participation.

Transformational Leadership and Community Cohesion

The findings indicate that transformational leadership is relevant to promoting unity within the community. Community leaders embrace practices that emphasize collaboration, transparency, and collective responsibility among members. Indicatively, IR5 stated:

> *"In this community, we never go alone; cooperation is very important, since all issues can be solved with much ease when we are united."*

Moreover, external relationships with agencies are also part of the transformational leadership strategies employed. IR6 explained:

> *"We also work with NGOs and outside agencies to execute programs... this assists with funding and running the activities."*

These results suggest that transformational leadership extends beyond internal community relationships to incorporate external networks.

Challenges in Youth Participation

The research also highlights the problem of engaging youth in community activities. Lifestyle changes, technology, and migration to urban areas are key reasons for decreased youth participation. According to IR9 and IR10, who substantiate each other:

> *"The greatest difficulty now is how to attract young people... they are more concerned with their phones and with life outside the village." (IR9)*
> *"Many youths are migrating into urban areas in search of employment..." (IR10)*

These findings suggest that the sustainability of community leadership depends on the ability to actively engage the younger generation.

Strategies to Attract Youth Participation through Creative Approaches

The results indicate that community leaders have undertaken various measures to overcome this challenge by being more innovative and youth-focused. Interest-based programmes such

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as sporting activities, training programs, and social activities are perceived to be effective in enhancing youth participation. An example is given by IR11:

> *"By arranging good programs such as sports or activities that they desire, in due course they would become involved and have fun being members of the community."*

Meanwhile, IR1 added:

> *"When we take them to courses or external programs, they feel appreciated and are more interested..."*

These results indicate that interest-based practices and exposure are relevant strategies for developing future leadership and guaranteeing the sustainability of community development.

Discussion

Discussion of Findings Based on Transformational Leadership Theory

The results of the current study suggest that leadership in community governance in FELDA Jerangau is considerably connected with the aspects of transformational leadership suggested by Bass and Avolio. Regarding idealized influence, the results indicate that community leaders act as role models and trusted custodians within the community. This aligns with IR1's statement that leadership must be sensitive and full of responsibility in facilitating the smooth running of community affairs. This observation confirms the argument of Fauziyah (2022), who asserts that idealized leaders can develop a sense of trust and collective values in society. This aspect, in the context of FELDA Jerangau, forms the basis of leadership legitimacy and builds effective community governance.

Moreover, the results also demonstrate that the component of inspirational motivation can be observed in leadership strategies that focus on collaboration and community unity. The fact that IR2 emphasizes meeting challenges as a community shows that leaders have been able to instil a sense of shared commitment among community members. This is in line with Windarwati et al. (2021), who point out that transformational leaders can mobilize followers through a common vision and communication. Inspirational motivation also emerges as one of the factors boosting community commitment to the execution of development programs in this research.

However, the results also show that financial and resource limitations pose a challenge that requires intellectual stimulation in leadership. According to IR3, small budgets require leaders to be strategic and innovative when developing programs. This is in line with Iskandar and Hasbi (2024), who contend that transformational leaders need to arouse creative thinking among followers in order to develop new solutions. In this respect, the findings indicate that community leaders are attempting to implement innovative strategies, including partnering with outside agencies, to address resource constraints.

Besides, the problem of non-uniform community involvement indicates the necessity of the individualized consideration dimension of leadership. The fact that not all community members actively engage, as stated by IR4, means that leaders should be aware of the personal needs and limitations of community members. This agrees with Nafal et al. (2024), who state that transformational leaders should offer personalized attention to increase the level of engagement

and motivation of followers. A more personalized and inclusive approach is perceived in this research as a key factor in enhancing community involvement.

In addition, the results associated with the difficulties of youth engagement indicate the necessity of combining inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. IR9 and IR10's statements indicate that lifestyle changes and youth migration influence the continuity of community leadership. Nevertheless, programs such as those cited by IR11, involving the arrangement of interest-based programmes for young people, are innovative strategies to trigger youth participation. This finding aligns with Ferreira (2021), who states that creativity and innovation are essential aspects of transformational leadership in responding to social change. It also resonates with Mansor et al. (2026), who found that generational renewal is a persistent structural concern in FELDA settlements, requiring leaders to deliberately cultivate pathways for younger and female members of the community to move into leadership roles rather than assuming that renewal will occur organically.

On the whole, the results of the study support the notion that idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, as the four dimensions of transformational leadership, interact to contribute to the efficacy of community governance in FELDA Jerangau. Transformational leadership does not only assist leaders in solving difficult problems but also serves as a driver of sustainable community development. These findings are in line with those of Delgado-Bello and Gahona-Flores (2022), who claim that transformational leadership improves commitment, innovation, and community resilience to development-related issues.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this research affirm that community leadership in FELDA Jerangau functions within the transformational leadership framework proposed by Bass and Avolio. The idealized influence dimension is well exemplified by the role of leaders as trusted and ethical role models within the community. This can be seen in the way informants underline the fact that leadership is a form of trust that should be highly sensitive to community needs. This shows that the legitimacy of leadership in rural society greatly hinges on the capacity of leaders to develop trust and effective social contact.

The inspirational motivation dimension can also be observed in leaders' attempts to promote a spirit of collaboration and cooperation within the community. The results indicate that leaders are effective in fostering unity by pursuing a common strategy to tackle obstacles. This is in line with the theory that transformational leaders can mobilize their followers through a common vision and communication. This motivational aspect is a driving force behind community engagement in various development activities in the context of FELDA Jerangau. Nevertheless, the paper also uncovers that financial and resource limitations demand that leaders apply intellectual stimulation. Through cooperation with other agencies and the application of creative solutions, leaders were observed to pursue alternative solutions to a significant extent. This proves that transformational leadership is not merely motivational but also entails strategic and innovative thinking in the face of structural constraints.

Moreover, the problem of unequal community involvement and the difficulty of engaging young people also reveal the significance of the individualized consideration dimension. Leaders must learn about the background, needs and motivations of individuals within the

community in order to make them more active. This finding demonstrates that an inclusive and people-centered leadership model is crucial to effective community governance.

In general, the results suggest that the four dimensions of transformational leadership do not operate independently but complement one another in creating effective leadership. Transformational leadership within the FELDA community setting not only affects the management of organizations but also contributes significantly to community culture, enhancing social participation, and sustainable development.

Research Contribution

The current research has important empirical value as it presents evidence of how transformational leadership can be applied within the FELDA community context, an aspect that remains little studied in the current literature. The results depict the practical application of the dimensions of transformational leadership in managing rural communities, especially in handling issues of governance and community development. Hence, this research enhances the empirical basis for extrapolating the application of transformational leadership theory from non-formal organizational environments to community contexts.

Contextually, this research will help provide a better interpretation of leadership processes in rural societies in Malaysia, especially within FELDA contexts that have unique social, economic and cultural systems. The results indicate that social relationships, community traditions, and demographic changes are among the factors that affect community leadership in FELDA. In this way, the study contributes to the current body of knowledge by offering a better understanding of leadership realities in special rural community contexts. The financial and resource constraints identified in this study also point towards the relevance of digital strategies as an emerging avenue for community-level economic resilience; Awang et al. (2026), for instance, demonstrate that digital marketing platforms, including social media, e-commerce and storytelling-based promotion, have enabled rural entrepreneurs in Malaysia to expand market access and strengthen product identity despite infrastructural limitations, suggesting a practical extension of intellectual stimulation that FELDA Jerangau's leaders could adopt to diversify the community's economic base.

Moreover, the paper makes a conceptual contribution, as it combines the notions of transformational leadership, community governance, and community development into a holistic approach. This integration allows for a more holistic view of the relationship between leadership and community development, in which leadership is the prime mover of effective governance, which in turn leads to sustainable community development. Therefore, this research can serve as a source of information for future studies in the area of leadership and community development.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

This model illustrates that transformational leadership acts as the main driver influencing the effectiveness of community governance. Transformational leaders who practise the four dimensions of leadership are in a position to improve cooperation, participation, and the effectiveness of community management.

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This is then followed by effective community governance, resulting in more sustainable community development, especially on the social and economic fronts. This relationship is demonstrated in the case of FELDA Jerangau, wherein strong leadership is able to mobilize the community despite the various challenges it encounters.

The model also reveals that community governance acts as a mediating mechanism that links leadership and community development. This implies that leadership can only be converted into community development when governance is enforced accordingly. The findings are summarized in the conceptual model below:



Figure 1: Community Development Model

Source: Compiled by the authors (2026)

Conclusion

Overall, this study successfully achieved its aim of examining the role played by transformational leadership in community governance and community development in FELDA Jerangau. The results show that transformational leadership is an important factor as the primary driver in mobilizing the community towards more sustainable development. Community leaders are able not only to establish trust and social cohesion through the dimensions of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, but also to increase the rate of community members' involvement in development programs. This proves that a transformation-based leadership style is pertinent and efficient in the rural community setting.

Moreover, the paper points out that obstacles such as the lack of financial resources, weak community involvement, and difficulties in engaging youth demand a more dynamic and creative approach to leadership. It was found that community leaders require creativity, partnership with outside agencies, and the use of interest-based strategies to sustain the level

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of community involvement. The fact that leaders are able to adjust to these challenges demonstrates that transformational leadership is not merely theoretical but also practical in addressing the intricacies of community development.

Lastly, this paper highlights that the synergy between transformational leadership and good community governance is critical to the effectiveness of community development. Open, participatory and accountable governance is a critical process that connects leadership with sustainable community development outcomes. This means that building the capacity of community leadership and ensuring the continued adoption of transformational leadership styles are essential to making rural community development sustainable, particularly in the case of FELDA Jerangau. Future research could build on the present findings by examining, as Mansor et al. (2026) suggest, how gender and generational renewal shape leadership succession in FELDA settlements, as well as by exploring, in line with Awang et al. (2026), how digital marketing and other digital economic strategies could be integrated into transformational leadership practice to strengthen the financial resilience of FELDA communities.

International Journal of Law, Government and Communication
EISSN : 0128-1763
Volume: 11 Issue: 45 (September 2026) PP. 956-974

Acknowledgements: The greatest appreciation and warmest gratitude are extended to FELDA Terengganu Region for the cooperation, support and permission given during the execution of this study. Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA) is also appreciated for its academic support, research facilities and constant encouragement in completing this study. Special appreciation is given to the FELDA Jerangau community and FELDA settlers who offered their fullest cooperation and freely shared their experiences and views during the data collection process.

Funding Statement: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. All authors have contributed to this work and approved the final version of the manuscript for submission to the International Journal of Law, Government and Communication (IJLGC).

Ethics Statement: Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable. This study did not require formal ethics committee approval; however, it was conducted in accordance with accepted academic integrity and ethical publishing standards. Informed consent was obtained verbally from all informants prior to the interviews and focus group discussions, and the confidentiality of participants' identities was maintained throughout the study by reporting findings under anonymized informant codes (IR1-IR11).

Author Contribution Statement: Conceptualization, K.M. and H.S.; methodology, H.S. and H.M.K.; formal analysis, A.T.A.R. and H.S.; investigation, K.M., H.S. and A.T.A.R.; writing - original draft preparation, K.M. and H.S.; writing - review and editing, H.M.K., A.A.M.R. and S.O.; supervision, H.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Declaration on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) The author(s) declare that generative AI-assisted technology (Claude, Anthropic) was used during the preparation of this manuscript for the purpose of formatting the article to comply with the journal's template and reference style. All AI-assisted content was reviewed and verified by the author(s), who take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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