CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of literature of transformational leadership style over a period of 15 years and in five different journals. Information was extracted after reviewing fifty two research articles from five journals on leadership i.e. Leadership and Organization Development Journal, Management and Labour Studies, International Journal of Leadership Studies, South African Journal of Human Resource Management and Leadership Quarterly. The results of the studies show that lot of research is done on transformational leadership style and results are positive. This style of leadership motivates the subordinates and enhances the morale of employees through reward system and goal setting which in turn benefits the organization.

Keywords: Leadership, Transformational Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an issue drawn by researchers since olden times. Because of their unique traits, leaders influence the organization and society as well. Leadership is an interpersonal influence exercised in a situation and directed through the communication process towards attainment of the goals. Leader’s role
in achieving organizational goal largely depends on how well they communicate. In an organization, where success depends on the effort of all its members, the leaders depend completely upon the quality, the amount, and the rate at which relevant information reaches them. The ability to obtain, assimilate, analyze and communicate information is critical to organizational success. Organizations, thus, depend upon the efficiency with which leaders deal with this information and make important decisions.

Transformational leaders could be a competitive advantage to increase the efficacy and performance of business organizations. These organizations have to pose some changes in order to adapt themselves with the changing environment. These changes could occur in areas such as human resources, aims, strategies, structures, etc. and even sometimes, the need for radical and fundamental changes is felt in the organizations. In such cases, transformational leadership is required to make radical changes.

Transformational leaders are referred to those ones who try to show the organizations a new route for improvement and progress by generating new ideas and perspectives. They also rebuild the organization by motivating managers, employees and members of the organizations to radical changes, transforming organizational pillars to achieve necessary readiness and capabilities to move in this new route as well as achieving higher levels of idealized performance. Transformational leaders bring in change in their followers, empower them to develop and create new needs, tendencies and values so as to meet their requirements. Therefore, the followers may grow, develop and change the way their leaders take them on. Transformational leaders deal with values, ethics, standards and long-term goals and focus on their followers’ performance and development in order to increase their capabilities. Often, transformational leaders have strong internal ideals and values.

Transformational leadership theory was developed by Burns (1978) and later enhanced by Bass (1985, 1998) and others (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). The major premise of the transformational leadership theory is the leader’s ability to motivate the follower to accomplish more than what the follower planned to accomplish. Transformational leadership has four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Burns postulated that transformational leaders inspire followers to accomplish more by concentrating on the follower’s values and helping the follower align these values with the values of the organization. Furthermore, Burns identified transformational leadership as a relationship in which the leader and the follower motivated each other to higher levels which resulted in value system congruence between the leader and the follower. (Farjami, A., 2009.)

FACTORS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Bass identified four transformational leadership behaviours which represent four basic components or “I’s” of transformational leadership.

1. Idealized influence (charisma) arouses strong emotions from followers and identification with, and emulation of, the leader because leaders act as strong role models for followers. They also display very
high moral standards and conduct themselves in an ethical manner, and can thus be counted on to do the right thing.

2. Individualized consideration involves providing support, encouragement, coaching, delegation, advice, and feedback for use in the personal development of followers.

3. Intellectual stimulation increases awareness of problems and influences followers to view problems from a new point of view. Followers are stimulated to be creative and innovative and also to challenge their own beliefs and values and those of their leaders and organization. In addition they are also encouraged to take intellectual risks and to question assumptions.

4. Inspirational motivation includes developing and communicating an appealing vision, using symbols and images to focus the efforts of subordinates, and modelling behaviours that are deemed appropriate. (Cillers & Vingers, 2006)

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue concerning leadership is a very complex one. Effective leadership always plays an important role in the growth and better performance of the organization. Several studies have been conducted on transformational leadership in India and abroad. Most of the studies reveal positive outcomes.

Rus (2012) conducted a comparative study leadership i.e. transformational vs. transactional in terms of employee performance in public and private organizations. It showed that transformational leadership is better than transactional perceived as transformational leaders are closer to the needs of employees and continuously investigate these necessities. Another study conducted in a pharmaceutical company revealed that transformational leadership behaviour has a positive and significant correlation between the components of organizational culture such as long / short term orientation, masculinity / femininity, power distance, individualism / collectivism and uncertainty avoidance. (Aydogdu & Sigil, 2011). Khan & Ramzan (2011) identified that the professional should be more transformational or transactional in order to satisfy the followers and avoid the liassez faire style as it is not significantly related with follower satisfaction and extra effort rather it has a negative relationship. Giri & Santra (2008) concluded in their study that the transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles were found to be positively correlated to organizational effectiveness and lassai-faire leadership style was found to be negatively correlated with organizational effectiveness. Further, it was observed that transformational and transactional leadership styles were positively correlated with Face to Face communication. Sinha & Gupta (2002) identified that leaders may flexibly use different styles and influence tactics depending possibly on the contingencies of different situations. Similarly Riaz & Haider (2010) identified that job success is more dependent on transformational and transactional leadership as compared to career satisfaction. Srinivas, Kumar & Vikramaditya (2006) found that when the transformational leadership was added as predictor to the transactional leadership, significant proportions of additional variance were accounted for in three outcome variables.

Sunindijo (2012) in his study conducted to find out the relationship between the emotional intelligence, political skill, and transformational leadership in construction project environment revealed that there is
theoretical understanding by showing the relationships between emotional intelligence, political skill, and transformational leadership. Practically, it helps construction organizations strategies in recruiting and developing their project personnel. Vinger & Cilliers (2006) found that these leaders exhibit transformational leadership fairly often and that, contrary to criticism, they manage change fairly successfully. There is more transformational leadership in successful companies than unsuccessful ones. (Jandaghi, Matin, & Farjami, 2009).

Givens (2008) in his study conducted to know the impact of transformational leadership on organization and personal outcomes such as organizational citizenship behaviour/performance, organizational culture, and organizational vision, empowerment, job satisfaction, commitment, trust, self-efficacy beliefs, and motivation and results showed that transformational leaders can influence employee behavior so that the behavior has a positive impact on the organization. Holloway (2012) examined a research question in his study that whether task-oriented and relations-oriented leadership behaviors are related to different dimensions of organizational climate in a non-profit organization. The results of the study show that certain leadership behaviors do have an impact on a few dimensions of organizational climate. In a study conducted by Somani & Krishnan (2004) in multinational bank operating in India, to know the relationship between charismatic leadership, job involvement and corporate image building, found that all three variables are significantly positively related to each other. Further, job involvement fully mediates the relationship between charismatic leadership and customer-focused image building. Regression analyses suggest that job involvement does not moderate the relationship between charismatic leadership and image building. Ngodo (2008) arrived at that transformational leadership approach is capable of producing positive outcomes such as leadership effectiveness, development of organizational citizenship behavior, follower commitment to the leader and the organization as well as follower satisfaction on the job.

Leader’s individual personality plays a role in determining his or her leadership style (Phipps & Prieto, 2011). Leaders do not emerge as a consequence of events or incidents but a journey of distinctive life experiences and processes (Sahgal & Pathak, 2007). It was found in another study conducted by Kent, et al (2010) that men and women leaders behave as leaders in the same way and men and women do not differ in their general perceptions of others as leaders. Modassir & Singh (2008) conducted a study to examine the relationship of emotional intelligence (EI) with transformational leadership (TL) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of the followers. The results indicated that EI of leaders enhances the OCB of followers. However, EI of the leader may not be the only factor determining the perception of TL. Personal strategies for career advancement and leadership skills are developed by drawing a red line from the trait theories of leadership and charismatic-transformational leadership, Juli & Atmadja (2005).

Huysamen, Schepers & Zaaiman (2003) found that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership style and creativity. It was found that there is a higher statistically significant positive relation between transformational leadership style and creativity than between creativity and the other leadership styles. Ismail, Mohamed, Sulaiman, Mohamad, et al. (2011) arrived at in their study that the relationship between empowerment and transformational leadership positively and significantly correlated with the organizational commitment. Mehta & Krishnan, (2004) arrived at that transformational leadership is the
highest when soft tactics are used in a strong culture and the lowest when hard tactics are used in a weak culture. Nandal & Krishnan (2000) indicated no relationship between charisma and self-efficacy. Three of the five factors of charismatic leadership were however positively related to lack of role ambiguity, which in turn was positively related to self-efficacy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To conduct a review of literature on transformational leadership style over a period of 15 years and in the five journals of Leadership.

METHODOLOGY

When leaders interact with followers they employ combination of traits, skills and behaviors, that is called leadership style (Lussier, 2004). The style which a leader adopts is commonly based on combination of their beliefs, ideas, norms and values. Different theories and assumptions lead to a number of different leadership styles that include authoritarian, democratic and laissez faire. (Iqbal, 2012).

Current study sourced the articles on transformational leadership style published in five journals of leadership i.e. Leadership and Organization Development Journal, Management and Labour Studies, International Journal of Leadership Studies, South African Journal of Human Resource Management and Leadership Quarterly between 2000 to 2014. Altogether 52 articles were selected from five journals for the purpose of this review.

The different variables from the articles were analyzed and then presented in count and percentages. In order to get important information regarding transformational leadership style a detailed examination was conducted. Hence, for this purpose each article was thoroughly studied, then the information was individually examined to obtain information such as unit of study, areas, actively involved authors, number of authors, sample size, data source, data collection tools used, research techniques used and results of transformational leadership style.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

1. Transformational leadership studies according to Leadership Journals

Figure 1 depicts various journals reviewed for the purpose of study; the largest number of articles i.e., 36.54% appeared in Leadership and Organization and Development Journal and least numbers of articles appeared in Leadership Quarterly. South African Journal of Human Resource Management and Labour Studies contributed 19.23 % and in the International Journal of Leadership appeared 13.46%.
2. Authors actively contributed / No. of authors to transformational leadership style

Fig. 2 provides information about the authors with the top contributors in transformational leadership style and also number of authors contributed in each paper. A total of 125 authors have contributed. The top contributors were Venkat R. Krishnan (6), Julian Barling (3) and E. Kevin Kelloway & J. Schepers (2). Group of five have written one article, team of four and three contributed 5 articles and 15 articles respectively. Two together researched 24 articles and seven articles were written by single author.

3. Transformational leadership style according to countries

Fig. 3 shows that in the field of transformational leadership style across 52 publications, a total of 14 countries have been covered. The largest numbers of publications are associated with India (26.92%) followed by South Africa (19.23%), USA (17.31%) and UK (9.62%). A number of countries including counties...
like UK, America, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Malaysia, Norway Turkey and Cyprus have been located resulting in low number of publications. Over viewing the overall research activities at country level, it can be suggested that there exists still opportunities for further research.


Fig. 4 provides information about the number of articles published on the topic of “Transformational Leadership style” published between 2000 to 2014. The largest percentage of articles published is 13.46 %, which appeared in 2002 and 2012 and smallest percentage i.e., 1.92% appeared in 2000, 2001, & 2005. In 2010 total articles published 11.54%. Thereafter in the year 2003 and 2004 showed 9.62%. 5.77% articles published in the year 2008 and 2011 and 3.85% in the years 2006, 2007, 2009. Within the scope of our article, these findings show that there was no steady increase or decrease trend in the articles published on transformational leadership style.
5. Unit of Study in transformational leadership style

Fig. 5 provides information about the common forms of unit of study working within transformational leadership style. Employees, group/team, managers/executive/officers, students, leaders and other categories have been customized according to topic. The results showed that majority of articles i.e. 34.62% were issues related to managers/executives & officers, followed by the studies focused on educational institutes (Students) i.e. 15.38%. Fewer percent studies focus on leadership in different contexts and at different levels i.e. employees and not known category (13.46%), other (superior, subordinate etc) & group/team (5.77%), and leaders (11.54%). These findings showed mostly managers/executives & officers were of key interest of researchers in studying transformational leadership style. In addition, an educational sector- students of engineering, undergraduates, and MBA, M. Com and research scholars were focused in some studies. Unit not known category belongs to secondary data studies. From our findings we can conclude that transformational leadership style is least focused at other and group/team level.

6. Transformational leadership style & Research methodology.

The research methodology used in transformational leadership style i.e. source of data, data collection tool, sample size and research techniques. Fig. 6 shows the percentages of primary data and secondary data used in the study. Findings show that around 87% studies were based on primary data which is collected by using a data collection tools like Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio and structured interviews, group face to face communication, interviews, video clippings, email video conferencing, semi structured interviews, experimental pre test post design. Thirteen percent studies were based on secondary data. Average sample size of the study was 724. The highest sample size used is 1398 and lowest is 49. The various statistical research techniques which were used in the study are descriptive statistics, correlation analysis- spearman’s rank correlation, t-test, regression analysis- linear and multiple regression, Chi-square analysis, content analysis, ANOVA- one way and two way, exploratory analysis, single factor test etc.
Findings of transformational leadership style

The study is entirely based on transformational leadership style. The research findings from the majority of research articles show that transformational leadership style motivates and enhances the morale of employees through reward system and goals. Research papers studied show that transformational leaders tend to focus more on organizational objectives, trust plays a central role in the work, individual personalities influence leadership behaviours in general and transformational leadership in particular, interpersonal justice and supervision satisfaction were perceived to be highly influencing on followers’ attributes of work engagement. Leadership style of managers and supervisors highly influence the organizational effectiveness, positively related to followers' job satisfaction at individual as well as team levels and to attain team performance, Emotional Intelligence of leaders enhances the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour of followers, positive correlation with subordinate leadership acceptance, performance and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Transformational leadership style has gained a lot of attention and importance from different authors from various countries in the recent years. This demonstrates the significance of this style of leadership. Researchers need to explore and give attention to highlight further aspects and dimensions of Transformational leadership style. The major premise of the transformational leadership theory is the leader’s ability to motivate the follower to attain more than what is ordinarily expected from the followers. Transformational leaders are referred to as those who generate new ideas and perspectives and will make use of them to bring about radical changes in the organisation, transforming each and every members of the organization, motivating them to direct their maximum potential for achieving higher levels of organizational performance.
LIMITATIONS

Although this review paper has been prepared carefully, it suffers from the limitations that only 52 papers from five journals were considered, which are not enough to highlight every aspect of transformational leadership style. Secondly this paper has not considered studies done prior to the year 2000. Other limitations are lack of accessibility to all articles pertaining to the topic and limited availability of articles.

REFERENCES


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