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Transformational Leadership: Investing in Followers' Development

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate that transformational leadership that is foundational in developing leaders to benefit of the followers, the leaders themselves and the organization. Transformational leadership is a theory where a leader works with teams to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, executing the change, and executing it in tandem with committed members of a group; an integral part of the Full Range Leadership Model. Transformational leadership theory is used worldwide in the development of followers. To face the need of followers' development, transformational leadership theory seems to be adequate. This paper reviewed qualitative works on the use of transformational leadership theory in relationship with the development of followers. Reviewed literatures revealed that transformational leaders are motivators, stimulators of innovation and creativity, and they pay special attention to each follower' need for achievement and growth. The authors focused on the four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Ultimately, researchers determined that transformational leadership requires leaders to demonstrate specific skills focused on followers'' development. Transformational leaders experience success in empowering followers when they allow followers to participate and make input in organizational performance.

Keywords: *Transformational leadership, Investing, and Followers' development*

Introduction

Change within organizations and improvement of staff performance are daily points of consideration in this changing world. There is a great need of staff performance enhancement for better accomplishments. Transformational leadership theory seems adequate to challenge this need of staff performance enhancement. Transformational leadership is one of the most popular leadership theories because…. The theory was developed by political sociologist Burns (1978). In contrast to other leadership theories such as transactional leadership theory, which is a style of leadership in which leaders manage the followers through rewards and punishment, the transformational leadership "is a process that changes and transforms people. It includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings" (Northouse, 2019, p. 263). Bass (1985) builds on Burns' work by adding the four components of transformational leadership, which are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Craig, 2018).

Transformational leaders are role models for their followers, motivators, stimulators of innovation and creativity, and they pay special attention to each of their followers' need for achievement and growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They give them values by providing them with a sense of meaning and challenge. They work

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enthusiastically and optimistically to foster the spirit of teamwork moving together toward the common goals. Such leaders encourage their followers to be committed innovative and creative. Therefore, transformational leadership uses the active elements such idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration that develop every aspect of their followers. Transformational leadership theory has been found appropriate to develop followers' capacities in team building, to be innovative and creative. Furthermore, it helps to challenge status quo in organizations and build ever strong, trust-based relationships between leaders and followers.

The purpose of this work is to demonstrate that the transformational leadership is a leadership style that helps to develop followers into leaders. To reach this goal the leaders use variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the followers' sense of identity, self to a project and to the collective identity of the organization. They also behave as role model for followers in order to inspire them and to raise their interest in the project. They challenge followers to take greater ownership for their work, and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of followers, which allows the leader to align followers with tasks that enhance their performance.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory has been a subject of study around the world. Several authors have investigated in this field (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Sashkin, 1988; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). Relying on what argued DiFranza (2019), a marketing content producer at Northeastern University, surmised that transformational leadership is identified as a model of leadership used across the spectrum of politics, education, entertainment, finance, technology, and other industries. This specifically relies on encouraging and motivating followers to participate in molding a successful future for an organization. Contrary to transactional leadership where the leader obtains the cooperation of followers by offering something in exchange of their efforts; therefore, followers accept the leaders' authority because they have something to gain (Gomes, 2016), changes attitudes, beliefs, and values of followers. It is concerned about the goals of an organization and the vision of the leader are internalized and followers achieve performances beyond expectations (Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1999a; 1999b). In addition, "transformational leadership is important not because something needs to change, but because things are always changing" (Nongard, 2014, p. 1).

Differences between transformational leadership and other leadership theories

While theories abound on the approaches of an effective leader, one distinct leadership style has gained increasing attention in the leadership world: Transformational leadership theory. This leadership theory is often compared to other leadership theories. To make the difference with other leaders, a transformational leader demonstrates some specific qualities, such as being:

Visionary

According to Bass and Avolio (1994), a visionary leader generates awareness of the mission or vision of the team and organization and demonstrates a positive, idealized picture of its future (Gomes, 2016). A visionary leader exhibits persistence, finds new opportunities and stays on course. He or she never gives up when things get difficult, but remains resilient and resolute to the end. As argued by Pal and Kapur (2011), a visionary leader is broad-minded, inspirational,

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knowledgeable, conceptual, good communicator and listener, pragmatic, has presence of mind and is strategically sound. He or she leads by inspiration and can evoke emotional commitment for his employees. Furthermore, a visionary leader sets goals and establishes organizational direction (Styron, 2015). Visionary leadership is from God, for God is a God of vision (Jeremiah 29; Deuteronomy 32) and "vision plays a key role in producing useful change by helping, align, and inspire actions on the part of large numbers of people" (Bell, 2014, p. 347).

Team-Centric

According to Hughes et al. (2019), a team-centric leader is team-oriented leader who "emphasizes on effective team building and implementation of a common purpose or goal among team members" (p. 537). By engaging in a team-centric transformational leadership behaviors consist to emphasize a group identity, communicate a group vision, and foster a team building (Klaic, Burtscher, & Jonas, 2020). Furthermore, a team-centric leader create a workplace culture that focuses on employees and their behaviors first, as well as internal and external aspects. Emphasis is also put on employees' engagement and commitment.

Engaging

Transformational leaders foster work engagement by enabling access to information, opportunities, support, and adequate resources (Armor & Faiňa, 2020). They provide change and movement in their organization, "influence people to buy into a new vision and new possibilities" (Tucker and Russell, 2004, p. 103). This reflects what Jesus demonstrated by engaging disciples to the great mission (Matthew 4: 18-22). Like Jesus, "excellent transformational leaders inspire and motivate people to trust and follow their example" (Tucker and Russell, 2004, p.

103). Serving, ministering and giving as Jesus did (Ken and Matt, 2004) are a demonstration of engaged leadership.

Inspiring

Transformational leaders inspire great loyalty and trust in their followers. They have the ability to inspire people to reach for the improbable and go beyond expectations (Bass, 1985). They inspire and motivate their workforce without micromanaging and to look to the future and find new solutions to old problems. At the most basic level, transformational leadership is used to inspire employees to look ahead. Jesus is a model of inspiration. He captivated people imagination and "motivated them to change" (Denton, 2011, p. 209). This evidence are found in the Bible (Luke 10:41; John 1: 42; 4: 7).

Inclusive

Transformational leadership is inclusive in the sense that it is the engine driving a company's sustainable growth. Transformative leadership is the fuel that makes development actually happen. It takes the lead in to innovate in a period of uncertainty and catalyzes energy to overcome all setbacks or negatives that may come up (Campos, 2016). In addition, an inclusive leader is one that will get his team to reflect society (Campos, 2016).

Emotionally intelligent

"Research indicates that transformational leaders are smart with their feelings and drive the emotions of those they lead in the right direction" (Molly and Gupta, 2015, p. 75). Transformational leaders demonstrate emotional intelligence through followers' development by creating a direction for them the freedom to control their own behavior. As argues Bird (2016), "they can empathize, understand, and communicate with people around them,

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making them more effective as a leader, while also impacting the effectiveness of those they lead" (p. 41).

Collaborative

This refers to the idea that employees should be working together towards a singular, common goal within and organization. It is vital that leaders create a collaborative environment in their workplace to accomplish this (DiFranza, 2019). Transformational leaders are skilled to facilitate organizational collaboration that can help drive a vision forward. Such a leadership style is biblically evident through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas for example (Acts 15: 2). Collaboration between apostles and elders (Acts 15: 6) is also an inspiring model.

Transformational leaders are unique individuals with real, honest personal skills that allow them to get the job done far better than anyone else. They "foster higher moral maturity in followers and use authentic, consistent means" (Craig, 2018, p. 248). They are also able to create a positive work culture for their employees. They assemble the right persons on a team and create a collaborative environment in which individuals are free to work together, express their thoughts and opinions, and feel safe to share any creative and innovative ideas that might benefit the organization. They always focused on the marketing of the organization the best that it can be. Specifically, transformational leaders ask opinions, gather ideas, and make sure that every person on the team feels included heard and valued. Transformational leader demonstrates distinctive qualities through four mechanisms that are changing the way followers work, presenting positive and enthusiastic future, promoting a strong collective identity among their followers, and promoting individual and collective self-efficacy (Gomes, 2016).

Sayyad (2019) adds that transformational leadership is easy to understand, easy to implement, and more realistic than some of the other leadership forms. Transformational leadership focuses on the critical human assets, such as commitment, and help followers to implement effectively organizational changes with both efficiency and effectiveness. Sayyad (2019) continues saying that this kind of leadership sheds light on the strategic role of follower attitudes and values to accomplish a higher degree of effectiveness and highlights the importance of employees in implementing changes at the organizational level.

Pivotal Role of Transformational Leadership Components in Followers' Development

There are factors identified transformational leadership approach that are necessary to observe for effectiveness in leadership. These factors enable the leader to help followers to improve and achieve their potential performance (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990). These factors include; Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, and Individualized consideration (Northouse, 2019). These components of transformational leadership are key, invaluable, and recommended for leaders that have a desire to develop followers and leaders. Yammarino (1994) states that transformational leaders, regardless of their organizational position, can use these factors for organizational leadership and followers' development.

Idealized Influence

The concept of idealized influence, also known as *charisma,* relates to the influence that the leader, as a role model, has

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on the followers. Zdaniuk and Bobocel (2015) mention that, "idealized influence leaders may motivate employees to respond to instances of workplace mistreatment in ways that are beneficial to themselves, others, and the organization" (p. 863). In addition, persuasion and inspiration are components that enhance perceptions on transformational leadership style.

The idealized influence factor has been observed to influence different levels of organizational structure differently. Bruch and Walter (2007) show how "inspirational motivation occurred more frequently among upper rather than middle managers, while there were no differences for intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration" (p. 710). In addition, idealized influence enabled job satisfaction of subordinates upper and middle managers. Leaders can identify how they can effectively influence followers within their context and roles.

Inspirational Motivation

Leaders at times have to motivate followers through communication, and this concept or factor is understood as inspirational motivation. Bono and Judge (2004) indicate that, inspirational motivation refers to leaders with a strong vision for the future based on values and ideals. This suggests that leaders should be intentional in seeking to effectively communicate a vision to enable values and ideals to be achieved, thus maximizing on transformation of followers and participation in organizational success.

Another aspect of inspiration motivation is the enhancement and promotion of team spirit. Shelley, et al. (2004) posit that idealized inspirational motivation could produce intermediate outcomes such as shared vision, team commitment, an empowered team

environment and functional team conflict. The outcomes of these then eventually may positively affect team communication, cohesion and conflict management. Thus, at the workplace, teams' performance is enhanced, possibly result in cohesion with the achievement of organizational goals is seen.

Intellectual Stimulation

The ability of leadership to encourage follower creativity and innovation in dealing with organizational issues is within the third factor of transformational leadership. A study according to Yasin, et al. (2014) show how, "intellectual stimulation may be used as a tool for the development of innovations and higher SMEs performance and this study also found a strong positive relationship of innovations of the SMEs performance" (p. 74). The ability for transformational leaders to empower followers through this factor will result in new ideas and discoveries not thought of or imagined.

Leaders who create an environment where followers can think and solve problems are participating in intellectual stimulation. Followers present intellectual stimulation in response to leader's intentionality in allowing participation rather than directing or instructing (Kara and Loughlin, 2013). An example is seen teachers influence students' intrinsic motivation using intellectually stimulating behaviors; students approach their learning in deep and strategic ways (Bolkan, et al., 2011). Transformational leaders experience success in empowering followers when they allow the followers to participate and give input.

Individualized Consideration

This factor describes transformational leadership as it focuses on

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the leaders' concern and consideration for follower's development and maturity. According to Alois and Geyer (1998), individualized consideration "gives personal attention to all individuals, making each individual feel valued" (p. 397). Aga et al. (2016) adds that transformational leaders who consider followers' needs would promote positive interpersonal relations between the leader and the follower. There are techniques that leaders can employ to ensure they achieve transformation and actualization of each followers, such as; delegation, empowerment, encouragement, and caring about the individual followers (Northouse, 2019). This behavior is biblically supported by the ministry of Jesus who made transformational calling to fishermen (Matthew 4: 18-22), tax collectors (Matthew 9: 9-13), farmers, etc. They followed him and their lives were forever changed (Bell, 2014).

Transformational Leadership: A Key to Leadership Development

Transformational leadership plays a key role in leadership building in two ways. According to Yammarino (1994), the intended outcomes of transformational leadership are the development of others, the creation of new leaders, and the fostering of performance beyond expectations. Bass and Avolio (1993) state that the organization's culture develops in large part from its leadership while the culture of an organization can also affect the development of its leadership. Thus, leaders also grow in the process of participating in organizational leadership. When a leader intentionally works on developing others, they in turn grow in their leadership. Therefore, transformational leadership benefits, not only the followers but also the leaders themselves. As states Nongard (2014), "this is the heart of transformational leadership: to transform others while transforming one's self" (p. 1).

The key transformational leadership is based upon satisfying basic needs and meeting higher desires by inspiring followers to provide newer solutions and create a better workplace. Transformational leadership builds leaders by employing charismatic behaviors and motivates subordinates to provide better outcomes, more profitability, and more careers that are satisfying (Sayyad, 2019). Transformational leadership is also viewed as the positive leadership style when considering employees' motivation and the elevating effects of followers (Krishnan, 2012). Jesus is a model of transformational leader. He came promoting servant leadership style and was about developing leaders. He "took followers and transformed them into leaders" (Bell, 2014, p. 361).

Discussion

This paper reviewed qualitative literatures from several researchers to establish the relationship between transformational leadership and followers' development. They found that transformational leaders are role models for followers, motivators, stimulators of innovation and creativity, and they pay special attention to each of their followers' need for achievement and growth. In reviewing the authors focused on the four components that are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, this paper found that transformational leadership develops high qualities and performance in followers to go beyond expectations. Ultimately, transformational leadership requires leaders to demonstrate specific skills focus on followers'' development. Furthermore, the key role that plays transformational leadership is focused on satisfying basic needs and meeting higher desires through inspiring followers to provide innovative solutions and create a better workplace.

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Conclusion

After analyzing and browsing through literature on transformational leadership, this study reaches the conclusion that transformational leadership is the pivotal in followers' development. It lies at the very heart of understanding what the future of an organization is. Transformational leaders invest in their followers to make them better leaders to achieve more. Transformational leaders used four key factors to develop individuals: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. A transformational leader is also visionary, team-centric, engaging, inspiring, inclusive, emotionally intelligent, collaborative, etc. Transformational leadership builds leaders by employing charismatic behaviors and motivates subordinates to provide better outcomes, more profitability, and more careers that are satisfying. This to achieve organizational goals and better life. Biblical model of transformational, servant and authentic leadership demonstrated by Jesus is key to change and develop followers.

Recommendations

This paper did not explore all the aspects of transformational leadership theory. Future research can go in depth to explore other important domains where this theory is implementable. However, this study recommends transformational leadership theory to leaders who bear high responsibilities, managers and followers within organizations, to develop future leaders and to invest in their growth to achieve more. In addition, transformational leadership theory is highly recommended to any organizations whether public or private that need to build a bright future through leadership development.

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