A Conceptual Paper on the Relationship between the Multidimensions of Transformational Leadership and Project Success

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Abstract

The significance of a transformational leader's abilities goes beyond short term guidance, and more importantly to secure long term results and performance. The importance of taking into account multiple dimensional enhancements cannot be overstated as these dimensions allow academics and business professionals to identify the crucial elements of transformational leadership that are accountable for project success and subsequently success in the workplace. As an expansion of theory, it is crucial to understand which characteristics of transformational leadership have an impact on an organization's performance, competitiveness, and project outcomes. Thus, this study will strengthen the conceptual framework by examining the first order construct dimensions of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, employee appreciation, and performance expectation) along with their relationships to the dependent variable (project success). The methodology of this study is based on comprehensive and extensive literature reviews by consolidating various dimensions, while validating the relationship towards the dependant variable, project success. The major finding from this study was the correlation of additional dimensions (performance expectation and employee appreciation) of transformational leadership. Future research may utilize the extended framework from this conceptual paper to execute quantitative research on specific geographical locations or industries to compliment the effectiveness of the variables.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Project Success, Multidimension, Performance Expectation, Employee Appreciation

Introduction

This conceptual research study paper, inclusive of literature reinforced the understanding to comprehend the gap filled by specialized researchers. Similar to this, transformational leadership is a kind of leadership that is becoming more popular in a variety

of enterprises and industries, especially in regard to project success and results. In a single research study, it is difficult to capture all of the characteristics and dimensions of transformational leadership through a meta-analysis study (Hoch et al., 2018).

Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) suggested that the study of a combination of several framework aspects be given more consideration in order to better reflect the expanded nature of the transformational leadership concept. In fact, research that separates out the various transformational leadership behaviours demonstrates that these diverse leadership behaviours have relatively significant associations with outcomes (Vashdi et al., 2019).

Yasin (2019) continued on to point out that a project's success and, ultimately, the success of the business, relied on the leadership style of the project's leader. Literature on leadership concentrated on the impacts on project-based organisations and the styles adopted. When doing their research, Braun et al (2013) discovered that transformational leadership is thought to be the most appropriate. Consequently, a number of studies have argued that leaders and managers have a responsibility to provide a pleasant working environment for the team, consequently, affects the growth of the team (Muller et al., 2018). Given that resources are not sufficient, and projects must be completed on time and on budget, leadership is seen as one of the most crucial factors for project success in project-based organisations (Dwivedula et al., 2016).

The majority of project failures are brought on by ineffective leadership and a lack of leadership development (Eliphaz et al., 2020). Additionally, Robbertse and Amoah (2022) concluded that, among the numerous elements that contribute to project failures, a lack of leadership is frequently the most significant. Holliday (2017) added that there is seldom just one reason why a project fails, but in many cases, a lack of leadership was the key factor.

Egeland (2010) identified the issue as a project manager or leader failing to acknowledge that leadership is a continuous responsibility. Managers often overlook to inspire colleagues and provide ongoing inspiring motivation assistance, especially those in charge of lengthy projects. As a consequence, the leader's leadership qualities start to exhibit a moderate lack of attention and neglect. According to Smith (1999), a project leader has a responsibility to do more than just manage the details and provide updates on the status of a project; they also have a duty to add value by inspiring the team, engaging the team, and encouraging individualised consideration along with motivation and intellectual stimulation.

Managers should prioritise the development of the organization's leadership, the interrelated workers' leadership, and the leader's own development. The capacity to invest in exceptional people is a skill that today's leaders must possess. Grill et al (2018) further added that leaders also need to recognise the firm's talent pool and inspire their workers to seek for methods to grow the business by expanding the talent pipeline. In addition, leaders must be completely receptive to advice and criticism from subordinates.

Literature Review
Theory of Leadership

On the topic of leadership, several specialists have done substantial study. In addition to the Great Man theory, trait theory, behavioural theory, participatory leadership theory, situational leadership theory, contingency theory, transactional theory, and transformational theory have all been created in the field of leadership (Armando et al., 2003). The characteristics theory and the behavioural theory are the two most significant theories. According to the attribute's hypothesis, personality traits, social characteristics, and physical factors set leaders apart from followers (Bass & Bass, 2009). There is a wide range of material

to investigate, from the nineteenth-century Great Man Theory to more recent studies on the genetic factors that underlie leadership behaviour (Johnson et al., 2004). The table below was extracted and adapted to show the development of leadership theories.

Table 1
History Timeline of Leadership Theories

Great Man Theories	Established on the idea that remarkable people with inherent leadership abilities are born leaders. The word "man" was intentionally used since, up until the late 20th century, leadership was seen as being predominantly masculine and military. The subsequent school of trait theories was born out of this.
Trait Leadership Theory	Lists of characteristics or qualities associated with leadership exist and are constantly being produced; this generation relies on almost every term in the dictionary that denotes some positive or virtuous human quality, from ambition to enthusiasm for life.
Behaviour Leadership Theory	The behaviour leadership hypothesis places more emphasis on the actions of leaders than on their personal traits. Different behavioural patterns are identified and categorised as "leadership styles." Practising managers have probably paid the greatest attention to this issue.
Situational Leadership	Situational leadership functions in a way that is particular to the situation in which it is used. For instance, although some circumstances may call for an authoritarian approach, others may call for a more democratic one. Additionally, it implies that several leadership philosophies can be needed at various organisational levels.
Contingency Theory	This is a more refined version of the situational leadership perspective that focuses on identifying the situational traits that most accurately predict the most suitable or effective leadership to handle the particular circumstances.
Transactional Leadership	This strategy highlights the value of the relationship between the leader and the followers by focusing on the gains that both parties make from a kind of "contract" where the leader offers rewards or recognition in exchange for the followers' loyalty.
Transformational Leadership	The main subject of concern is change, and the role that leadership plays in conceptualising and implementing transformational leadership of organisational performance.

Source: Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Marturano, A., & Dennison, P. (2003) A review of leadership theory and competency frameworks. (Unpublished PhD thesis). University of Exeter.

Transformational Leadership

The industry has had to alter its viewpoints on leadership in order to promote more reliable theories and varied types of successful leadership. Despite the fact that transformational and collaborative leadership styles are supported by contemporary leadership theories (Chin, 2011). By giving their employees meaningful and demanding work,

transformational leaders aim to raise their consciousness, uphold their ideals, and develop their talents. These leaders give an optimistic and persuasive view of the future.

Transformational leadership is distinguished further by its emphasis on previously mentioned leadership theories and ethical aspects of leadership. According to Burns (2004), transformational leaders are judged on their capacity to recognise the need for change, win the support and commitment of others, create a vision that directs the change, and integrate the change. Although transformational leadership should be seen as a trait theory, the findings indicate that a variety of personality traits can predict certain actions (Derue et al., 2011).

Idealized Influence

Idealized influence was defined by Munyai and Were's (2017) as a leader that acts as an example by displaying qualities like trust, honesty, and enthusiasm. Potter et al. (2018) added that idealized influence is one of the elements that enables leaders to gain the respect, admiration, and trust of each and every one of their followers. After then, the follower starts to internalise the leader's values and develops the belief in the right action.

Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational motivation is a leader's drive, vigour, and optimism. Through the provision of a purpose and a challenge, followers are included in the formulation and accomplishment of goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006). When the work is assigned to the leader's followers and the assignment normally gives a vision or target, an inspired motivated leader tends to create purpose. A leader with inspirational motivation may be identified by their capacity to exude confidence, respond favourably to the thoughts and ideas of their followers, and excite them (De Jong & Bruch, 2013). An inspirational leader may achieve this by outlining a captivating vision for future plans and objectives in order to motivate followers to go above and beyond the call of duty (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation as defined by Bass and Riggio (2006) is the act of challenging the status quo and considering new and innovative ways to solve challenges in order to inspire followers to be creative. Open-minded leaders have an inclination to influence people intellectually (Mwesigwa & Namiyingo, 2014). By encouraging individuals to use their imagination and creativity by questioning assumptions, reinterpreting failures, and coming at well-known issues from novel angles, intellectual stimulation promotes transformational leaders. Zaman et al. (2020) added that the idea of intellectual stimulation rests around tackling problems from unexpected viewpoints, challenging the status quo, and taking risks in order to foster creativity and innovation among followers.

Individualized Consideration

According to Mittal (2016), individualised consideration is the capacity to pay attention to each follower and their particular needs, as well as the ability to support, encourage, and coach employees (Avolio et al., 2004; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009). Such leaders pay close attention to what others are saying because they understand that doing so will help them discover new ideas and promote their own and their followers' intellectual growth. Transformational leaders focus on the requirements of each and every follower for success and growth by adopting the position of a coach or mentor. Individualized consideration also

enables coworkers and followers to progressively attain greater potential levels (Long et al., 2014).

Employee Appreciation

Employee appreciation focuses on leaders appreciating followers upon work execution. According to Bass (1985), praises for outstanding performance, suggestions for wage raises and promotions, and applause for well-done work are all instances of dependent appreciation behaviours. According to empirical data, appreciation and recognition exhibit a similar pattern of correlations to outcomes as the transformational sub dimensions and are substantially positively connected with transformational leadership (Den Hartog et al., 1997; Tepper & Percy, 1994).

Performance Expectation

Performance expectation can be interpreted when leaders openly show the necessary performance standards, where leaders may instil discipline in their teams (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). By placing a strong focus on performance expectations, leaders remind their team members that they must never stop learning in order to meet their performance objectives. Employee contributions to knowledge sharing and cross-functional cooperation may increase if the employees are aware that certain performance targets have been met. In turn, performance expectation will improve organisational learning across the supply chain (Ojha et al., 2018).

Table 2
Transformational Leadership Dimension for Current Research

Transformational Leadership Dimension	Leader Characteristics
1) Idealized Influence: Adapted Leadership, Respect, Trust, and Faith	• *Consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.* • *Instil pride in others for being connected with them.* • *Go beyond self-interests for the welfare of the group.* • *Demonstrate a sense of authority and competence.* • *Make personal sacrifices for the benefit of others*
2) Inspirational Motivation: Compelling Vision	• **Speak positively about the future.** • **Speak enthusiastically about what needs to be done.** • **Articulate a compelling vision of the future.** • **Express confidence that goals will be met.** • **Create an appealing image of what is important to consider**
3) Intellectual Stimulation: Alternative Methods	• **Consistently develop, innovate, and advance employees.** • **Embrace the difficulties and initiate fresh concepts and procedures.** • **Considers the problem objectively from multiple perspectives.** • **Promote innovation and provide non-traditional solutions to challenges that are commonly encountered.**
4) Individualized Consideration: Development and Coaching.	• **Invest time in teaching and coaching others.** • **Treat individuals rather than generalizing the group.** • **Recognize that individuals have different needs, abilities, and aspirations than others.** • **Assist others in developing their strengths.** • **Listen attentively to employee's concerns**
5) Employee Appreciation Recognition and Acknowledgement.	• **Express gratitude for employee's contributions** • **Encourage commemoration of success accomplishment** • **Provide the public with positive perception of successful employees**
6) Performance Expectation Result Oriented	• **Ensure employees consistently pursue high degree of achievement.** • **Inspire knowledge exchange and cross-functional collaboration.** • **Guide employees to improve work habits and work goals.** • **Provide verbal and external feedback towards expectation of employee goals**

Despite the empirical support, it is debatable if transformational leadership is a trait or a theory of leadership behaviour (Conger & Kanungo, 1994). Even if the foundations of the

behaviours are unknown, transformational leadership is seen as a behavioural theory (Pusiran & King, 2013). According to Bono & Judge (2004), transformational leaders "aim to appeal to the better nature of their followers and guide them towards higher and more universal demands and goals." A compiled summary that takes into account every connected conduct of the dimension is retrieved and displayed in the table below.
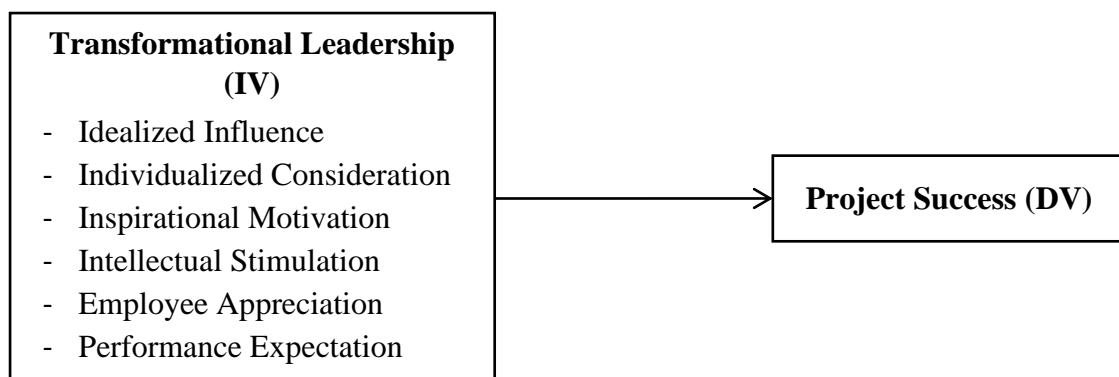
Project Success

According to Murali's research (2021), a project is deemed unsuccessful when it falls short of expectations while staying within the allocated budget and time limit. However, in the majority of cases, the stakeholders evaluate the project's outcome and level of satisfaction to decide if it was successful or unsuccessful. A project is also judged unsuccessful if the financial forecast or return on investment (ROI) goal are not met. Project success is an essential attribute in project management; it may be measured in terms of goals like quality, cost, and time. The "iron triangle" is a term that often refers to these dimensions (Aga et al., 2016).

In addition, the study by Gruber et al (2009) indicated that other factors, such as service or product quality and/or stakeholder satisfaction, had been assessed to decide if a project was successful. However, Turner and Zolin (2012); Ika (2009) further argued that over the last several decades, the meaning of the word "project success" has evolved and that it is now progressively becoming apparent that a broader and more comprehensive definition is required.

Pinto and Slevin (1988) identified the four fundamental elements of every project— budget, schedule, performance, and customer satisfaction—as the cornerstones of its success. Among these factors are the budget, the timetable, the client's satisfaction, and the performance. These four requirements must be completed or satisfied in order to judge the project successful. According to Ali et al (2021), project completion within scope, costs, time, quality, stakeholder, and customer satisfaction, as well as the accomplishment of the project organization's goals and objectives, were all important components of project success.

Theoretical Framework

In general, this study examined the effects of transformational leadership — specifically, idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation, employee appreciation and performance expectation – on project success. The conceptual framework illustrated in **Figure 1** was proposed using the results of the academic review as a guide, as well as pre-existing ideas and literature.

Notes: IV = Independent Variable, DV = Dependent Variable
Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of Study

Findings

Transformational leadership strategies are necessary to get a competitive edge in project success (Nemanich and Keller, 2007). Anantatmula (2010) consolidated from a number of scholars in a publication, clearly demonstrating the significant impact of transformational leadership on project success. Transformational leadership in the project might manifest itself in a number of ways from the perspective of a permanent organisation (Haq et al., 2020).

Furthermore, transformational leadership needs to be looked at in terms initiatives in project-based organisations are really started (Weller et al., 2020). According to Mulievi et al. (2021); Oladipo et al (2013), those who exhibited transformative leadership frequently used ineffective methods and lacked the necessary skills to inspire their team members. This indicates a lack of research into the relationship between transformative leadership and project success.

Subsequently, despite the literature's evidence of the influence of leadership on project success and management, there is a lack of knowledge of project-based organisations (Albert et al., 2017). According to Huemann and Silvius (2017), the lack of study on leadership and project success is a result of the environment's constant change, which presents both challenges and opportunities for successfully finishing the project and assuring long-term growth. Transformational leadership in project-based organisations is correlated with how each individual views their leader. According to Tse and Chiu (2014), this perspective encourages project success and helps achieve desired objectives.

Conclusion

In project-based organisations, where resources are few and projects must be completed on time and under budget, leadership is seen as one of the most crucial factors for project success (Dwivedula et al., 2016). According to research (Geoghegan & Dulewicz, 2008; Muller & Turner, 2007), the type of leadership used affects the extent of project success. Yasin (2019) added that the success of a project and ultimately the business has been greatly influenced by the leadership style of the project's leader. Project-based organisations were the subject of most of the leadership literature. Similar to this, transformational leadership is a kind of leadership that is gaining popularity in a variety of industries and business sectors, especially in terms of project success.

The Bass (1985) model identified four dimensions of transformational leadership that researchers generally agreed upon: idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualised consideration. Additionally, this conceptual paper included dimensions such as employee appreciation (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004) and performance expectations (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Maqbool et al (2017) emphasized that the leader's flaws also have an impact on the project's success or failure. There is a definite connection between transformational leadership and project success, according to different researchers (Aga et al., 2016; Gundersen et al., 2012; Yang et al., 2011).

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