Article

Translating Transformational Leadership to Transformative Education in the Lens of Philippine Basic Education: An Analysis of Current and Emerging Literature

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Abstract

Numerous studies have been done to elaborate on the importance and necessity of transformational leadership in achieving the success of an organization. The diversity of subordinates and/or followers within the organization requires the qualities and characteristics of transformation leaders who can create an atmosphere where everybody is empowered to do each assigned task for the competitive advantage of the organization. Despite the fact that every organization experience failure, a transformational leader remains proactive in motivating the subordinates to be engaged while sustaining efficiency to achieve the desired organizational performance. Due to various issues and challenges, most notably in the delivery of instruction, wherein the learners are expected to be immersed in diverse activities in order to promote awareness and later achieve the ultimate goal of transformative education, it has been a challenge for the entire education community in the context of the schools to achieve transformational or transformative education especially that the demand is on promoting Global Citizenship Education in the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. This paper intends to provide an analysis of the current and emerging concepts of leadership and transformational leadership and the existence of transformative education in view of transformational leadership practices. Moreover, the paper provides discussions on the attributes and characteristics of transformational leaders, which are necessary for transformative education, wherein everyone in the school is empowered, engaged, and acts as stewards of ensuring the quality of education to the advantage of the learners, who are the primary clientele of the school.

Keywords

Philippine Basic Education, Transformative Education, Transformational Leadership

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Introduction

Being a leader is both a fascinating and challenging role to play. To exercise effective leadership within an organization, a leader must navigate several challenges. It might be tough for a leader to show greater compassion and patience, especially when dealing with difficult people. Conversely, it is rewarding and worthwhile for leaders to see their followers inspired and motivated as demonstrated by their behaviors and activities. The notions and definitions of leadership are broad due to various organizations and situational circumstances. When leaders perceive risks and challenges, particularly global risks, and challenges, it is crucial that they can transform these risks into opportunities. To mitigate these concerns, leaders develop and implement techniques that successfully demonstrate possible leadership roles to their followers.

The work of authentic 21st-century school leaders is not easy and requires high expectations from the school personnel, community stakeholders, and particularly the learners who will benefit from their actions and decisions. School heads are the ones who bring change to the school in response to the demands of 21st-century teaching and learning. It is indispensable that school heads have the competencies necessary in the 21st century to strengthen and sustain the processes of an educational institution in delivering its mandates. An educational organization needs innovative and transformational school leaders who can bring positive change to the school and are committed to shared goals. This can be achieved when school heads have employed transformational leadership practices.

Views on Leadership and Transformational Leadership Concepts

Leadership is a vocation that requires the ability to influence and inspire others toward the achievement of organizational goals. Leaders play an essential role in helping individuals and organizations prosper or survive (Gomes, 2014). He added that the vision of leaders for the organization influenced his leadership characteristics, traits, and values at different levels. Among the various significant purposes of leaders are the following: leaders create organizations that turn strategic aspirations into sustained actions; leaders define and create the proper organization capabilities for future success; and leaders can inspire others to see and interpret reality differently and can motivate followers to make extra efforts to achieve organizational goals and build the confidence of their followers, either by sending out motivational messages or by creating a positive emotional atmosphere (Northouse, 2013; Yukl, 2012). The following principles of effective leadership are discussed by Ulrich (n.d.) in his paper: start with the results, nail the fundamentals, build leadership more than leaders by cultivating a leadership brand, and assure leadership sustainability.

Many leaders believe that, through experience, they can improve and stabilize their leadership skills. However, as society changes relative to the global perspective, there is still a need for them to enhance their leadership potential and attributes. In relation to leadership development, Garza and Salcedo (2013) proposed five characteristics that need to be developed in the next generation: self-awareness, a clear purpose (life's mission and vision), social awareness, critical thinking, and teamwork skills. Leadership development activities should concentrate on practical skills so that leaders can implement meaningful actions in their organizations.

Leadership literature sheds further light on transformational leadership. Transformational leadership focuses on the growth and development of the group as a whole, where everybody works together as a team and is involved, empowered, and motivated—creating innovation and change for the success of the organization. Both leaders and followers are working toward a common goal or purpose and supporting one another to achieve it. The transformational leader would provide opportunities for employees to develop sustainably. Consider the transformational leader's ability to motivate their followers to transcend their self-interest for the greater good. This is a skill that transformational leaders must cultivate because they must unite their followers regardless of their differences (Lee, 2014). Transformational leaders attempt to link the leader and subordinates together, thus creating a cooperative and transformational atmosphere, all of which is beneficial to relational sustainability and performance (Jiang, 2017).

Professional Attributes & Qualities of a Transformational Leader
Numerous leadership theories that emphasize the traits and actions people can adopt or adapt to boost and improve their leadership potential and skills are highlighted by the research. From an emphasis on attributes to behaviors to contingency theories to more modern approaches like servant leadership theory to transactional and transformational theories that emphasize skills and talents, leadership theories have developed (Hannay, 2013). The difference between the skills approach and the attributes approach is that skills and abilities can be learned, whereas traits cannot. Various theories have been put out to explain the phenomenon of leadership and to aid leaders in influencing their followers to accomplish corporate goals (Sajjadi, 2014).

Transformational leadership differs from the rest of the previous and contemporary theories by entailing the involvement of followers in processes or activities related to their factors towards the organization and a course that will yield a specific superior social dividend. With an emphasis on the previously defined leadership theories, the ethical extents of leadership further differentiate transformational leadership. The characteristics of a transformational leader can be observed in various ways. Followers can explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn (intellectual stimulation). To foster supportive relationships, leaders consider and recognize the unique contributions of each follower and keep lines of communication open so that followers feel free to share ideas (individualized consideration). Leaders also have a clear vision of how to articulate their message to followers. They are able to help followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfill their goals (inspirational motivation). Some leaders believe that they should be role models for their followers (idealized influence).

Although charismatic, transformational leaders are not as narcissistic as pure charismatic leaders, who achieve success by placing more faith in themselves than in others. Employees would have the opportunity to develop sustainably under the transformative leader. Transformational leaders may inspire their followers to put aside their interests in favor of the greater good. The underlying promise to followers that they, too, will undergo some transformation, possibly to become more like this extraordinary leader, exists with the overt desire of the transformational leader to reform the organization. Transformational leaders often have large amounts of enthusiasm, which, if relentlessly applied, can wear out their followers. Transformational leaders also tend to see the big picture but not the details, where the devil often lurks. If they do not have people to take care of this level of information, then they are usually doomed to fail. Finally, transformational leaders, by definition, seek to

transform. When the organization does not need transformation and people are as happy as they are, a leader like this will be frustrated. Like wartime leaders, however, given the right situation, they come into their own and can be personally responsible for saving entire organizations. According to Northouse (2013), transformational leaders have a clear and realistic vision, shape social identities, build trust by being reliable and predictable, and focus on their strengths instead of their weaknesses, which then shows in their motivation and effectiveness.

Importance of Transformational Leadership Practices in an Organization

Transformational leadership practices result in a positive influence on organizational performance (Noruzy et al., 2013), a positive influence on innovation (Rosing, Frese, & Bausch, 2011), and also practical if employees feel that their work environment supports innovation (Khalili, 2016); increase job satisfaction and job performance by being experts at sharing leadership (Masal, 2015) and by building solid relationships with their subordinates (Ng, 2016). Moreover, findings reveal that employee sustainable performance is positively influenced by transformational leadership (Jiang et al., 2017).

The followers are the product of transformation. The leadership practices of transformational leaders are comparable with emerging and current leadership practices. In transformational leadership, the transformational leader inspires and encourages the subordinate to maintain a positive attitude and to perform tasks given to him or her to the best of his or her ability (Buenvinida & Ramos, 2019). The leader seeks to bring change to the organization and to uplift those that they lead through his or her attitude, passion, and persuasion. This leadership model creates an atmosphere in which the subordinates feel accepted and cared for. It also creates a type of relationship that enables the followers to feel the need to give more and thus feel successful. A transformational leader plays a vital role in increasing the effectiveness of school leadership (Tengi, Mansor, & Hashim (2017). Gomes (2014) concluded that transformational leadership examines individuals who can change situations and influence their followers using a challenging and appealing vision.

Furthermore, some people are more accustomed to displaying these behaviors or may have an easier time developing them because of their leaders. The merits of transformational leadership include such characteristics as irresistible charisma and vision, as well as the ability to drive change and persuade followers to transcend their self-interest for the greater good (Lee, 2014). However, if transformational leaders carry their strengths to excess, their strengths may become weaknesses. However, if transformational leaders motivate others to sacrifice their self-interest excessively, they become antidemocratic and solitary. From those mentioned above and cited literature, there are so many ways to show leadership in various styles and contexts. As part of the thrust of organizational development, leaders should pay close attention to transformational leadership to cultivate organizational citizenship behavior, and thereby eventually improve employees' sustainable performance

An organization needs to innovate to succeed. Being a transformational leader, the status quo has no place in the organization where change is needed to achieve progress, and not by convenience alone or bounded within the comfort zone. It is also even more necessary that a leader influence his or her followers to enable them to perform well and thus achieve the goals of the organization.

However, influencing subordinates is not just an assurance that the whole organization is on the path to progress and development. As a result, change as a description of innovation combined with an innovative leader result in positive organizational outcomes that lead to productivity and highly effective people. An organization needs to embrace innovation as well as change proactively and effectively. Every individual needs to know the direction of all activities inside the organization. It is the concern of the followers, and it is their responsibility to be involved. However, at some point, leaders find it challenging to reach out and involve followers, mainly because the latter need direction in their efforts. Giving direction in an organization is sharing every leader's vision to act. It is also the responsibility and mandate of the leader to support all plans of action to make them possible and workable. Considering the strengths and weaknesses of the elements of the organization as well as the limitations, the leader could decide what was best for the whole organization. The moment that the leader shows transformational leadership, accompanied by innovative success, is the moment that this leader shows the change. He is not only an influential leader but also a change agent. It is pretty challenging at first for people to adapt to change, but the impact will become more realized when they see positive change in the whole organization and feel as if they are also part of the success because they work for it. The time will come when individuals will not just go to work because of how influential their leader is but also because they are looking for the right direction and working towards the vision of the whole organization.

The Role of a Transformational Leader in Transformative Education
The ability of transformational leaders in the context of education to see the need for change, secure the support and commitment of others, develop a vision that directs change, and embed the change is what makes them effective. Transformational leaders focus their energies on vision, long-term goals, aligning and changing systems, and developing and training others. Transformational leadership focuses on bringing change (Akitunde, 2013). Education can only be transformative when students feel valued, acknowledged, safe, and included as full and active members of the learning community. This starts by preventing and addressing school violence and bullying, gender-based violence, and health and gender-related discrimination toward learners and educators (oneplanetnetwork.org., 2022). High quality of education means that education is transformative.

As an acknowledged necessity, transformative education in line with the Global Citizenship Education as part of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal, promotes students to be knowledgeable about global issues and transmits fundamental principles, attitudes, and abilities that support respect for human rights, justice, diversity, equality, and a sustainable future. The goal of transformative education is to promote both individual and societal development (Salman, 2022). In addition to equipping students to contribute to a more just, inclusive, diverse, equitable, secure, and sustainable future for all, transformative education provides students with the fundamental knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills necessary to address urgent local and global concerns.

In the context of the school setting, there is a gradual change when it comes to the support and interest of the individuals. Everyone is expected to perform at their best in the delivery of instruction to achieve quality education. Empowering teachers by giving technical assistance and showing a sound system and organized daily routine in the school contributes to achieving the mission and vision of the school for the students. The marks of transformative

education can be contextualized in terms of teaching and learning practices, which promote learner-centered teaching and aim to inspire and equip joyful, healthy students to make wise decisions and contribute to their communities and the world in positive ways. Hence, constructive alignment in the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and assessment are necessary so that indicators and dimensions of transformative education are visible in the view of transformative learning. The learner-centered approach replaces the teacher-led method in the classroom thanks to the transformative approach (Espiritu & Budhrani, 2014). Instructional and assessment strategies and activities such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, design thinking, and authentic assessments can promote transformative education in the learner-centered classroom.

Teachers could be more comfortable with leaders who give the impression that they know how they are feeling and why they have that feeling. School principals are expected to become more sensitive to what is happening inside the school pertaining to teachers' concerns and issues. They should have the ears to listen and respond to their difficulties and challenges. They are not afraid to be future-focused, which helps create a feeling of job satisfaction among teachers. This only means that teachers feel satisfied in an environment where the principal is not afraid to make a mistake and will take delight in learning from the experiences gained. A school principal thinks of the right solution for the mistake committed and does not blame others when a problem arises. A school climate and culture of opportunity and growth for teachers in the school show the principal's self-expression. They shared their success with the teachers and students instead of keeping it for themselves. The school principal should be able to manage his or her emotions professionally. This encourages teachers to participate and makes them less afraid to express their emotions. Finally, an optimistic school principal enables teachers to show proactive thinking and support the plans for the school. The feeling of positivity and optimism must be contagious, as if they work together. When the school principal shows negative attitudes and words, it will only encourage negative attitudes and words from the teachers. Teachers feel secure with, and therefore follow, a school principal who has a positive outlook and who views the future as a set of positive challenges and untapped opportunities that will be met with energy and vibrancy. The leader's sense of optimism is a source of inspiration for those around them, and it sets the tone for the way that employees feel about their place of work.

Conclusion and Implications

Transformational leadership is indeed an effective way to lead organizations and their people when it comes to creativity and innovation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation. However, transformational leadership can be enhanced by group-based leadership training or counseling based on subordinate feedback (Chaimongkonrojna & Steane, 2015). Although successful change is one of the biggest problems in modern organizations, effective transformational leadership needs three Cs:

1. Communicate, where leaders should explain the purpose of the change and connect it to the mission and vision of the whole organization.

2. Collaborate, where transformational leaders bring people together to plan and execute change by strengthening their commitment and engaging the followers often in the change process and

3. Commit, where leaders devote more of their time to the change effort and focus on the big picture.

All these characteristics must include positive traits like positivity, patience, and openness to adapting to challenges.

In the context of transformational leadership in schools, school heads are expected to effectively deliver the whole educational service through systematic and organized processes. School heads need help to work alone. Every position in the school requires someone. Proper communication and delegation are necessary when the school heads have already established rapport with their people. The role of the school head also deals fundamentally with harnessing, utilizing, and optimizing interpersonal relationships in an organization. School heads also enhance the school's understanding of the challenges encountered. The leader communicates effectively. Transformational leaders can effectively involve their subordinates in the strategies and approaches that contribute to academic institutions' success. They are reflections of their actions. Hence, every decision made by a transformational leader influences the situation that their subordinates may experience by fully engaging their people to become more responsible stewards of the educational organization. Authenticity, which fosters synergy and trust, is at the heart of effective transformational leadership translation in transformative education.

This paper recommends that there is a need to strengthen transformative education in schools through effective, transformative leadership. It has been a challenge for everyone, especially school leaders and instructional leaders, to guide teachers in transforming the traditional classroom into a learning environment that promotes transformative education. Amidst the school closures due to the pandemic, the schools were able to develop their learning recovery plans to address the issues and concerns relative to learning losses, learning gaps, and learning deficiencies. However, a transformational leader's mindset is active; it continues to think of possible ways and better opportunities for the future of education while the school is recovering. It can be done when everyone is empowered, especially the teachers who implement the curriculum and can engage the learners to be involved in the promotion of transformative education anchored on the global citizenship education of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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