

Transformational Leadership (TL) in Classroom – An Analysis of TL with Respect to Intellectual Stimulation

ASHA RACHEL CHERIAN

Research Scholar (Lincoln University, Malaysia)

Assistant Professor (St. Josephs Degree & PG College, Hyderabad)

Ph – 9440850009

Email – rachelasha4@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to analyze the concept of Transformational leadership among college teachers, its influence in enhancing student participation leading to better student learning, and student's perception of teachers' credibility. Transformational leadership impact is analyzed based on one of the four components named Intellectual stimulation. Teachers foster a multitude of relationships with their students and perform duties ranging from advisors to mentors, to instructors (Walumbwa, Wu, & Ojode, 2004). Although college teachers enact many roles in the classroom, of interest to this study is their position as leaders. Teacher leadership is an important concept and reflects the behaviors instructors use to facilitate the attainment of students' personal and group goals (Treslan, 2006). Several researchers support the notion that teachers function as leaders in their classrooms (e.g., Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009; Pounder, 2003, 2006, 2008) The earlier researches clearly shows that transformational leadership among college teachers has a positive influence on the student community.

KEYWORDS

Transformational Leadership (TL), Individualised consideration, Intellectual Stimulation, Inspirational motivation, Idealised Influence.

INTRODUCTION

Every teacher must be an expert in their discipline and also specialised with various social dynamics in classroom teaching. A teacher to be successful, requires good leadership quality, effective communication skills and lots of patience. This will initiate student participation, development and teachers' personal growth too. Though teaching being a challenging task, there are many resources at their disposal to present their material, effectively manage the classrooms, facilitate maximum student involvement and ultimately enhance student learning.

One of the major resources that help teachers to be efficient is leadership skills. Many scholars have pointed out that organizational theories can be implemented in classrooms (Babe & Ace, 1989; Cheng, 1994; Harvey, Royal & Stout, 2003;

Pounder, 2003; 2008; Walumbwa, Wu & Ojode, 2004). These studies also highlighted that TL among teachers can positively influence student participation and behaviors. According to Pounder (2008) teachers who perceived TL quality has influenced different variables like the extra effort from students, an increase in student participation, and better student satisfaction with their teachers. This paper attempts to outline the various types of research done on transformational leadership among college teachers and its impacts on student participation, and teachers' credibility. This paper will highlight the Intellectual Stimulation in students because of the implementation of transformational leadership in classrooms.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

TL is a leadership style in which leader encourage, inspire and motivate employees to

innovate and create changes that will help to grow and shape the future of an organisation. Transactional Leadership is defined as an instrumental approach to organisational leadership and is generally associated with a task orientation towards management (Conger, 1999). Manager using transactional leadership motivates their employees by providing extrinsic rewards (Conger, 1999). TL on the other hand is "transforming the existing order of things as well as directly addressing the needs of the employees, thereby helping in their development" (Conger, 1999, p.149). Transformational leaders will give importance for empowerment of employees. In this study TL among teachers in classroom is considered. The term TL was first coined by Burns (1978) and then it was extended by Bass (1985). TL displays integrity and fairness, set clear goals, have high expectations, provide support and recognition, stir the emotion and passion of people to look beyond their self interest to reach for the impossible (Pierce and Newstorm, 2008; Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012, p.187). According to (Bass, 1999) TL synthesis of four components -

1. Individualized Consideration – the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs. The leader gives empathy and support, keeps communication open and places challenges before the followers. This also encompasses the need for respect and celebrates the individual contribution that each follower can make to the team. The followers have a will and aspirations for self-development and have intrinsic motivation for their tasks.

2. Intellectual Stimulation – The degree, to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks and solicits followers' ideas. Leaders with this style stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers. They nurture and develop people who think independently. For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities to learn. The followers ask questions, think deeply about things and figure out better ways to execute their tasks.

3. Inspirational Motivation – the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers. Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act. Purpose and meaning provide the energy that drives a group forward. The visionary aspects of leadership are supported by communication skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful and engaging. The followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities.

4. Idealized Influence – Provides a role model for high ethical behaviour, instills pride, gains respect and trust. As a development tool, transformational leadership has spread already in all sectors of western societies, including governmental organizations.

ANALYSIS OF PAST RESEARCHES

Many researches have been conducted on TL and its impact on job performance, employee satisfaction etc (Niehoff, 1990; Berson & Linton, 2005; Dubinsky, 1998; Tracy & Hinkin, 1994; Gill, Fleaschner & Shachar, 2006). But the researches of TL among teachers and its impact on student participation and teachers' credibility are comparatively less. In the organisational literature, studies shows that TL is associated with different outcomes when compared to non-transformational leadership. Subordinates of Transformational Leaders are having high satisfaction, high performance, no role confusion or conflict when compared to subordinated of non-transformational leaders. Subordinates of Transformational Leaders are having strong sense of collective identity and higher perceptions of task performance.

Although a variety of models may be used to examine leadership style (Zorn & Violanti, 1993), effective classroom leadership behaviors may be generally subsumed under the rubric of transformational leadership (Pounder, 2006). Transformational leadership is a combination of

leadership qualities including charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders motivate their followers through inspirational leadership (charisma), work with employees on an individual level to meet their developmental needs (individualized consideration), and stimulate employees to take new approaches and expend more effort when problem solving (intellectual stimulation) (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership is unique compared to other leadership approaches insofar as it focuses on: aligning followers' self-interest with those of the group, elevating followers' concerns for achievement and self actualization, and fostering autonomy and challenging work (Bass, 1999).

There is a dearth in literature review in relation to the present study. But still there are many researches done (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Pounder, 2003; 2008). Ponder (2008) examined Transformational leadership among teachers in Hongkong university to check whether it increases student participation, extra effort from students and increased student satisfaction with teachers.

Harvey et al. (2003) examined the effect of teachers' transformational leadership on university students. The research was constructed based on the 4 main pillars of TL. The results clearly indicated that Idealised Influence and Intellectual Stimulation were two main factors to decide on student's perceptions on teachers' performance. The three pillars Individualised Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation and Inspirational Motivation predicted student participation.

A study by Walumbwa et al. (2004) discovered that teacher's transformational leadership were associated with increase in student ratings of their willingness to take extra effort, their perception of teacher's effectiveness and their satisfaction with the teacher. Another research by (Bolkan.S & Goodboy.A, (2009) explained the impact of Transformational Leadership with respect to cognitive learning, affective learning, state motivation and student communication satisfaction.

- Cognitive learning explains the stages from simple retention of information to the complex synthesis of material (Bloom, Hastings & Madaus, 1971).
- Affective learning involves student feelings, emotions and degrees of acceptance towards the subject matter (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964).
- State motivation to learn means student attempts to obtain academic knowledge or skills from the classroom activities meaningful (Brophy, 1987).
- Student communication satisfaction refers to an effective response to the accomplishment of communication, goals and expectation (Hecht, 1978).

Teachers who employ TL in their classrooms are considered as effective teachers (Walumbwa et al., 2004) and students are willing to exert extra effort for such teachers and are satisfied (Ponder, 2008). All these will improve the student participation in the classroom and helps in better student learning. Teachers who are using TL are rated as more credible (Beann, Edwards & Myers, 2005). There is no doubt that TL among teachers are very much required.

ANALYSIS METHODOOLOGY

In an effort to analyze and remedy problems associated with the measure of transformational leadership and to study the concept, students' perceptions regarding the behaviors of college instructors were examined which seem to be transformational. Among all the four components Intellectual Stimulation was examined from student-solicited narratives to reveal what instructors actually did to promote transformational leadership in the classroom. Participants in that study were 80 students from final year graduation who gave examples of what their teachers did to demonstrate the Intellectual stimulation dimension of transformational leadership operationalized with reference to Bass's (1985) original conceptualization of the terms.

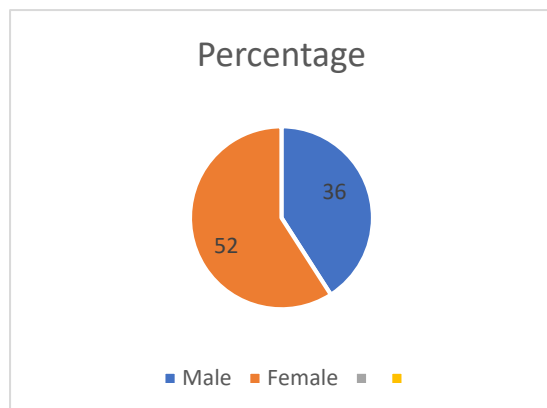
Intellectual stimulation is defined as the ability to stimulate thought and imagination, problem awareness, and problem-solving and is

considered to be a function of a person's technical expertise and intellectual power (as opposed to interpersonal competencies) (Bass, 1985). Based on this, intellectual stimulation seems particularly important in college environments insofar as teachers who are experts and who facilitate problem-solving attitudes for better learning (e.g., Richmond, 1990). Because we know that transformational leadership positively influences students' outcomes in the classroom (e.g., Pounder, 2006), a study was initiated to analyze its impact.

A questionnaire was given to the students for analyzing the existence of the component named intellectual stimulation and thereby stating that a part of transformational leadership is undertaken by the teachers

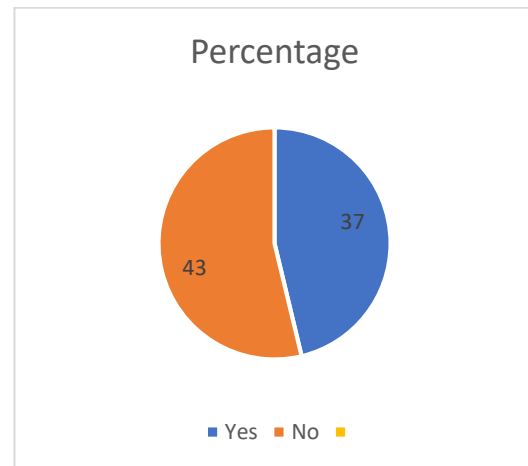
DATA ANALYSIS

1) Gender



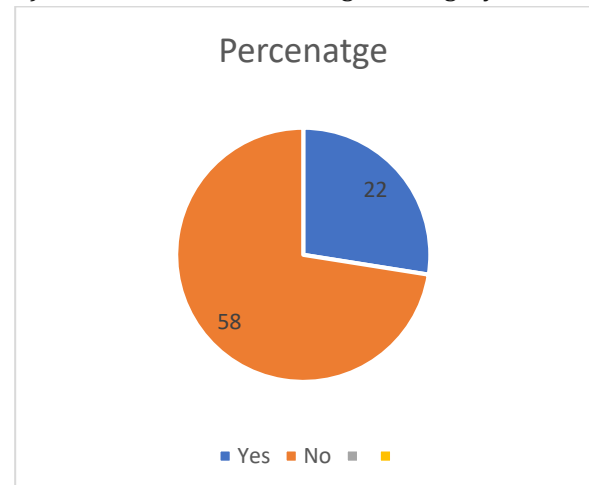
Among the respondents 52% were females and 36% were males

2) The teacher uses unique activities to get the class involved with the course material



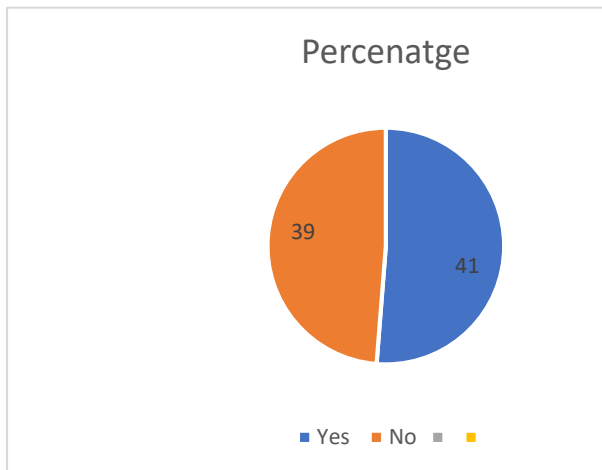
43% of students agreed that no many of unique activities were conducted

3) Teacher has a boring teaching style



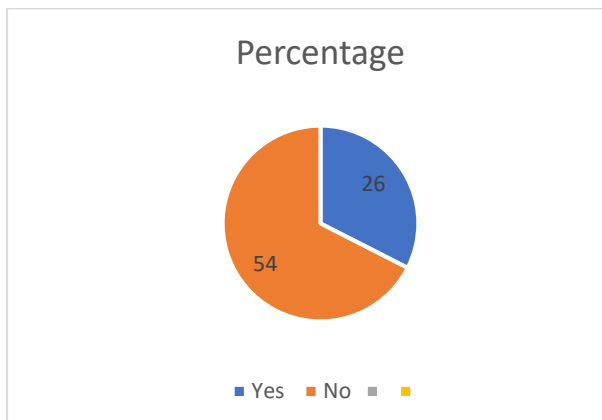
58% of respondents agreed that the teaching style was not boring

4) Uses an innovative teaching style to get students excited about learning



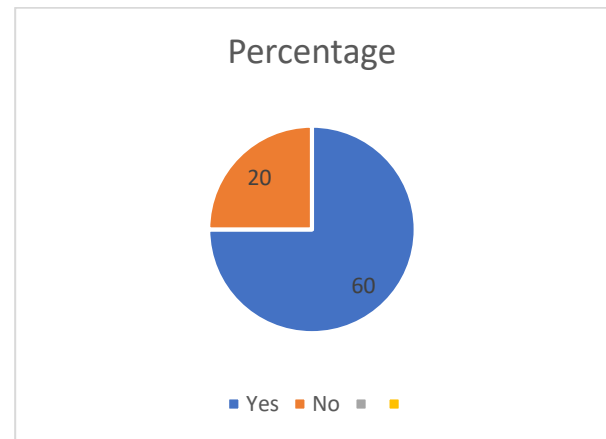
39% of the respondents said that no innovative teaching styles were used

5) Plays games in class to help students learn



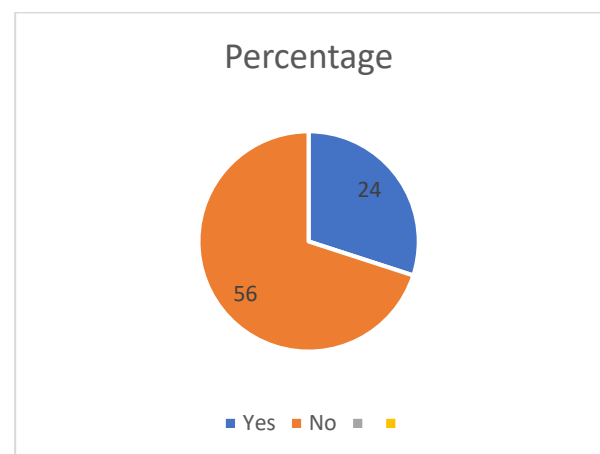
54% of the respondents agreed that no games are conducted for better learning

6) Teachers are using the same sort of activities for student learning



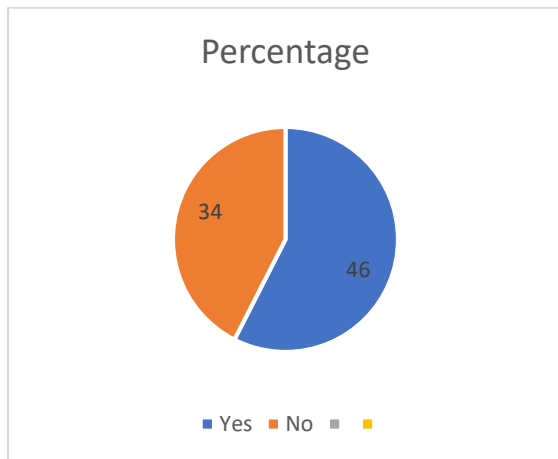
60% of the respondents agreed that no activities were conducted for student learning

7) Stimulates students to help us get involved in the learning process in a variety of ways.



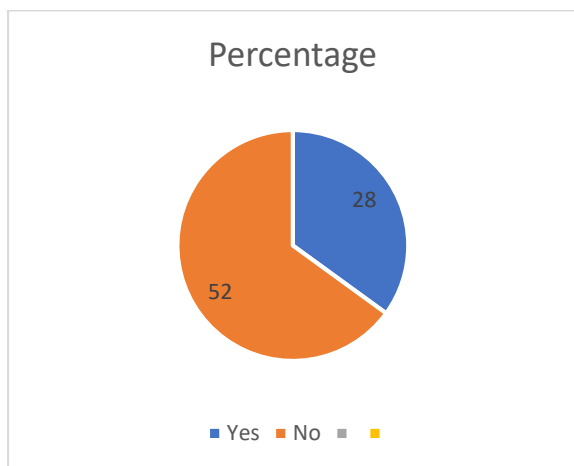
56% of the respondents agreed that no methodology was adopted for stimulating the students for better learning

8) Teacher Challenges students to be the best in all that they do



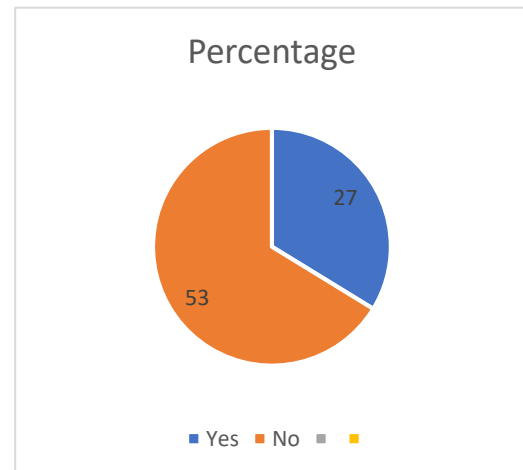
46% of the respondents agreed that teachers challenged the students in all ways to improve their performance

9) Teacher helps the students to see things that they learn from new perspectives.



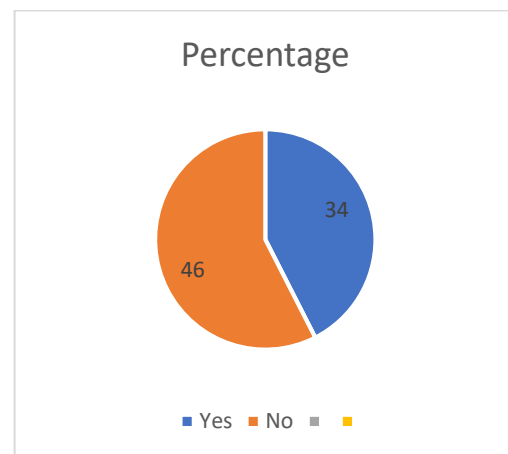
52% of the respondents said that the teachers are not helping the students much to see things from different perspectives

10) Teacher challenges students to support their ideas in class with evidence and examples.



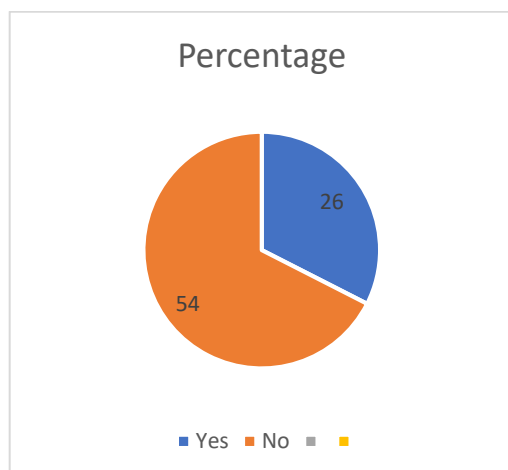
53% of the respondents mentioned that teachers are not challenging the students to support their ideas with examples and evidence

11) Makes me work hard to ensure that I really know the material well.



46% of the respondents agreed that teachers don't ensure that students know the material well

12) Helps me think critically about course concepts.



54% of the respondents agreed that teachers help students to think critically

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS and CONCLUSION

From the above study, the main inferences were that

- 43% of students agreed that not many of unique activities were conducted by the teachers
- 58% of respondents agreed that the teaching style was not boring
- 39% of the respondents said that no innovative teaching styles were used
- 54% of the respondents agreed that no games are conducted for better learning
- 60% of the respondents agreed that no activities were conducted for student learning
- 56% of the respondents agreed that no methodology was adopted for stimulating the students to better learning
- 46% of the respondents agreed that teachers challenged the students in all ways to improve their performance
- 52% of the respondents said that the teachers are not helping the students much to see things from different perspectives
- 53% of the respondents mentioned that teachers are not challenging the students to support their ideas with examples and evidence
- 46% of the respondents agreed that teachers don't ensure that students know the material well

- 54% of the respondents agreed that teachers help students to think critically

These findings clearly communicate that the efforts taken from the teacher's side for intellectual stimulation are very less. Therefore, the effectiveness of student learning and their cognitive thinking is very low.

Teachers in the classrooms must initiate a better student learning environment by including innovative methods of teaching, teaching through games, challenging the students to do their work by themselves, and challenging them to think critically. This will help for better intellectual stimulation among the students. Thus, to conclude, it's clearly evident that still transformational leadership has to be inculcated among the teachers which will help better student development.

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