

# Effectiveness of Transformational Leadership in the Classroom

Dr. Careen E. G. Marbaniang

Assistant Teacher, Mawkhar Christian Higher Secondary School, Shillong - 793001, Meghalaya, India

**Abstract:** *Transformational Leadership is an effective leadership style that enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms and strategies. In school, the teacher's leadership role is crucial as teachers are the main individuals in disseminating knowledge and information to the learners. The effect of a teacher's transformational leadership inside and outside the school can promote not only student's motivation to learn but also the productivity and development of the school. Teachers must be aware that to become a transformational leader to influence the learners, certain qualities and training are required. This paper highlights the theoretical background of Transformational leadership, the qualities of a transformational leader and key aspects of transformational teaching.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Transformational Teaching

## 1. Introduction

One of the reasons for the success of any organisation is the result of sound leadership. Leadership is a prerequisite in every work of life be it in the family, workplace, religion, community, politics etc. We may have come across a person at home or at the workplace who took control of the situation by conveying a clear vision of the group's goal and an ability to make the rest of the group feel recharged and energized. This individual just might be what is called a transformational leader. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that can inspire positively those who follow them. With such a leadership style, the leader is passionate, energetic, enthusiastic, and always able to help the members of the group experience success.

## 2. Theoretical Background

The concept of transformational leadership was first introduced by James MacGregor Burns, who emphasised that transformational leadership can be seen when 'Leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of moral and motivation' (Cherry, 2018). According to Burns, defined a transformational leader as one who "looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (Denmark, 2012). The transformational leadership theory of James MacGregor Burns was developed for political leaders, but it also influenced other researchers to further conceptualize and make the model applicable to business and education. For example, Bernard M. Bass developed the transformational leadership model for education, with a primary focus on school principals.

As the word "transformation" suggests, Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory is one of a set of various Transformational Leadership Theories. Burns originally said that leaders can transform the lives of followers by altering their perceptions, aspirations, expectations, values, and so forth. Qualities within the leader are behind the changes. The leader demonstrates, communicates, and does whatever it takes to get the audience to see a vision and exhort them to do things. Bass's

main contribution in 1985 to Burns' original theory was describing psychological mechanisms and setting forth ways of measuring the efficacy of the Bass Transformational Leadership Theory.

### Bass Transformational Leadership Theory

Bass was interested in the extent to which a leader influences follower. Followers go after a leader because of trust, honesty, and other qualities and the stronger these are, the greater loyalty they have for the leader. The leader transforms the followers because of her or his qualities. Not only is the leader a role model but she or he exhorts the following to challenge the existing order, the revolutionary being a stark example of this. While the leader may have democratic motives in mind, s/he can assume a Transaction Leadership style at the same time, directing the followers to do things. Bass (1985) saw the following aspects of transformational leadership:

- 1) **Individual consideration:** Transformational leadership involves offering support and encouragement to individual followers. The leader acts as a role model, mentor, facilitator, or teacher to bring a follower into the group and motivate them to do tasks. The focus is on developing and supporting each follower through coaching, mentoring, and consulting (Deng, Gulseren, Isola, Grocutt, & Turner, 2022).
- 2) **Intellectual stimulation:** Transformational leaders not only challenge the status quo; they encourage creativity among followers allowing them to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn (Cherry, 2018). The leader seeks ideas from the group and encourages them to contribute, learn, explore and be independent in their way of doing things. The leader also brings non-conforming, unique perspectives to problems that inspire followers thinking (Deng, Gulseren, Isola, Grocutt, & Turner, 2022).
- 3) **Inspirational motivation:** Inspiration by a leader means providing a vision or goal. The group is given a reason or purpose to do a task or even be in the organization. The leader will resort to charismatic approaches in exhorting the group to go forward.
- 4) **Idealized Influence:** Idealized influence refers to the leader becoming a full-fledged role model and leading

Volume 12 Issue 9, September 2023

[www.ijsr.net](http://www.ijsr.net)

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY

by example (Deng, Gulseren, Isola, Grocutt, & Turner, 2022) to gain follower's loyalty and respect through moral and ethical behaviour. Because followers trust and respect the leader, they emulate this individual and internalize his or her ideals (Cherry, 2018).

The Bass Transformational Leadership Theory assumes that the leader has a decent set of ethics, but if the theory is applied in a situation where a leader does not, the results could be disastrous. The advantage of Transformational Leadership is that the leader can make a positive difference in a person's life and Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory may be a solution in various cases. An additional practical advantage of focusing on transformational leadership is the potential for improving efficiency in assessing the transfer of knowledge in workplace (Deng, Gulseren, Isola, Grocutt, & Turner, 2022). "Research evidence clearly shows that groups led by transformational leaders have higher levels of performance and satisfaction than groups led by other types of leaders," explained psychologist and leadership expert Ronald E. Riggio in an article for Psychology Today. Researchers have found that this style of leadership can have a positive effect on the group.

### Qualities of Transformational Leadership

Research studies revealed that transformational leadership style can also have a positive influence on employee's well-being. A transformational leader is a person who motivates and inspires others by giving proper attention to the needs and interests of his followers. According to Odumeru & Ogbonna (2013), Transactional leaders use rewards and punishments to gain compliance from their followers. They are extrinsic motivators that bring minimal compliance from followers. They accept the goals, structure, and culture of the existing organization. Transactional leaders tend to be directive and action oriented. Some qualities of a transformational leader are:

- 1) Transactional leaders are willing to work within existing systems and negotiate to attain the goals of the organization.
- 2) They tend to think inside the box when solving problems.
- 3) Transactional leadership is primarily passive. The behaviours most associated with this type of leadership are establishing the criteria for rewarding followers and maintaining the status quo.
- 4) Within transactional leadership, there are two factors, contingent reward, and management-by-exception. Contingent reward provides rewards for effort and recognizes good performance. Management-by-exception maintains the status quo, intervenes when subordinates do not meet acceptable performance levels, and initiates corrective action to improve performance.

### Transformational teaching

The term "transformational teaching" was first introduced by George M. Slavich to describe the belief that instructors can promote meaningful change in students' lives if they view courses as stages upon which life-changing experiences can occur (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012). Slavich and Zimbardo explored and found that a transformational

teacher is one who not only achieves transformation in his/her students but also models a willingness to be transformed by learning himself or herself (Lohe, 2013). They also developed six core methods of transformational teaching:

- 1) Establishing a shared vision for a course.
- 2) Providing modelling and mastery experiences.
- 3) Intellectually challenging and encouraging students.
- 4) Personalizing attention and feedback.
- 5) Creating experiential lessons.
- 6) Promoting reflection.

In contrast with traditional lecturing, which is content-focused, transformational teaching involves conceptualizing teachers as change agents who lead students in the process of collaborating with their instructor to develop as learners and as people. Transformational teachers help students become meta-critical participants in the learning process and well-practices at critical thinking and reflection (Fulgei, 2014). Although transformational teaching could be considered a method of classroom instruction in so far as it suggests some specific activities that can be used to achieve transformational teaching goals, it is more aptly described as a broad framework for understanding the overall instructional environment and how key players in that environment can interact to maximize students' intellectual and personal growth. The approach thus involves examining the roles that teachers may play in transforming students' attitudes, values, and beliefs, as well as the responsibility that students have for shaping their own and their peers' learning experiences. Transformational leadership behaviour was found to relate to lower levels of follower stress and burnout (Harms, Crede, Tynan, Leon, & Jeung, 2017).

### Key Aspects of Transformational Teaching

According to (Fulgei, 2014), some of the key aspects of transformational teaching are active learning, collaboration, and persistence. Transformational teachers, in an active classroom require collaboration to address some of the content that makes transformative teaching most successful. In the classroom, the learners are not merely passive listeners they play an active role in the learning process by being engaged in tasks. In transformational teaching, the learners are also encouraged to embrace struggle and failure as part of the learning process. They are excited to come to class and engage with the teachers, and the result of their effort can be world changing.

### 3. Conclusion

Transformational Leadership goes beyond managing day-to-day operations. In the classroom, it should focus on team building, motivation, and collaboration with the learners at different levels. Such leaders set goals and incentives to push learners to a higher performance level by providing opportunities for holistic growth. The transformational leadership role of the teacher is crucial in the classroom. The transformational teacher can influence the learners to learn as well as the wellbeing of the learning. In a study by Montano, Reeske, Franke, & Huffneier (2017) recently found positive relationships between transformational leadership and overall follower well-being.

## References

- [1] Bass, B. M. (1985). *Bass Transformational Leadership Theory*. Retrieved from <https://www.leadership-central.com/bass-transformational-leadership-theory.html>.
- [2] Cherry, K. (2018, November). *A Closer Look at the Effect of Transformational Leadership*. Retrieved from [www.verywellmind.com](http://www.verywellmind.com).
- [3] Deng, C., Gulseren, D., Isola, C., Grocutt, K., & Turner, N. (2022, October 13). Transformational Leadership effectiveness: an evidence-based primer. *Human Resource Development International, Routledge*, 1 - 15. doi: doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2022.135938
- [4] Denmark, V. (2012). *Transformational Leadership - A Matter of Perspective*. Retrieved from SOURCE.
- [5] Fulgei, M. (2014, September 10). *Resilient Educator*. Retrieved from [resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/learning-revolution-transformation-teaching/](http://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/learning-revolution-transformation-teaching/).
- [6] Harms, P. D., Crede, M., Tynan, M., Leon, M., & Jeung, W. (2017). Leadership and Stress - A Meta-Analytical Review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 8 (1), 178 - 194. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.10.
- [7] Lohe, D. (2013). *What is Transformational Teaching, and How Do I Do It?* Retrieved from WORDPRESS.COM.
- [8] Montano, D., Reeske, A., Franke, F., & Huffneier, J. (2017). Leadership, Followers' Mental Health and Job Performance in Organization - A Comprehensive Meta-Analysis from an Occupational Health Perspective. *Journal Of Organizational Behaviour*, 14 (2), 327 - 350. doi: 10.1002/job.2124.
- [9] Odumeru, J. A., & Ogbonna, I. G. (2013). Transformational Vs. Transactional Leadership Theories: Evidence in Literature. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 2 (2).
- [10] Slavich, G. M., & Zimbardo, P. G. (2012, July 24). Transformational Teaching: Theoretical Underpinnings, Basic Principles, and Core Methods. *Educational Psychology Review*. doi: 10.1007/s10648-012-9199-6