



Transformational Leadership as a Tool to Improve Organizational Performance at The Polytechnic University of Tulancingo, Hidalgo

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Published Online: 22 May 2025	Leadership is vitally important in organizations because it allows us to direct, inspire, and motivate work teams toward the achievement of goals, fostering a collaborative environment. However, there are many types of leadership. The purpose of this research was to identify the factors that influence transformational leadership at the Polytechnic University of Tulancingo. The research used a mixed-method, non-experimental, correlational approach and cross-sectional design. The survey included a total of 40 members, comprised of full-time professors, course professors, teaching support staff, and administrative staff. The findings will allow for the development of strategies to support the organizational performance of the institution under study.
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I. INTRODUCTION

For an organization to function, it is important to have people capable of leading human capital in such a way that the organization's objectives are achieved. A leader is a person who dedicates their efforts to achieving established goals [1]. In turn, the type of leadership influences the performance of the work team and the company's vision [2].

But it is not enough to be a leader, but to apply transformational leadership [3], which implies the combination of formal and natural leadership in the same person, being this one who motivates to do more than what they themselves expect, producing changes in groups, organizations and society. This type of leadership stimulates the awareness of workers, who accept and commit to achieving the mission of the organization. When followers generate a strong emotional bond with the leader, and are motivated by a shared vision accompanied by self-esteem and personal security, they respond positively to the requirements of the leader to achieve collective objectives, which explains why transformational leadership can achieve high performance of workers [4].

Leaders with transformational characteristics provoke changes in their followers after completing assigned tasks. Transformational leadership can positively impact employees' emotional well-being and prevent mental health conditions such as stress, hence the importance for some

business leaders to promote this leadership style in their organizations [5].

The purpose of this article is to identify the factors that influence transformational leadership to improve organizational performance at the Polytechnic University of Tulancingo.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

II. Leader

A leader is an individual capable of influencing others, that is, he can guide a group of people, like a guide, to direct them towards a common objective so that everyone feels involved throughout the process and can complete a specific project [6].

II.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders have the ability to drive changes in those who follow them, raising awareness about the importance and value of the results that will be obtained after completing the assigned tasks, thus inspiring them to meet common goals [7]. It is a combination of formal and natural leadership in the same person, being this who motivates to do more than what they themselves expect, producing changes in groups, organizations and society. Stimulates the awareness of workers, who accept and commit to achieving the mission of the organization, generating emotional bonds

with the leader, which explains why transformational leadership can achieve high performance of workers, as shown in Figure 1.

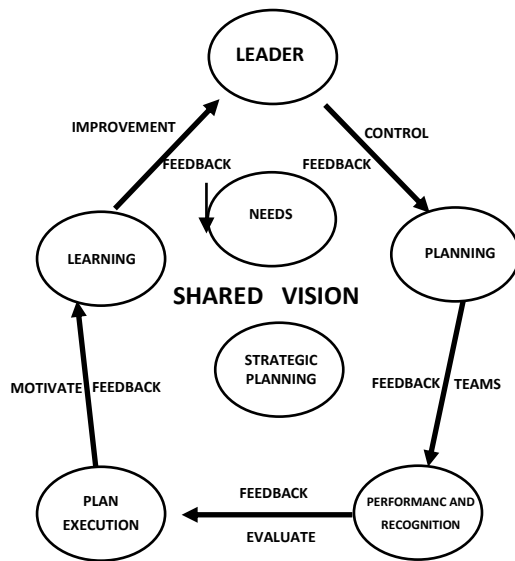


Figure. 1. Prepared by the authors, adapted from Howell & Costley, 2001

II.2 Motivation

Motivation is the engine capable of moving human behavior when performing an activity for its inherent satisfaction [8]. Similarly, other authors conceive it as an internal impulse that makes individuals perform tasks voluntarily and desired, occupying physical and mental resources [9].

II.3 Teamwork

Teamwork is where all members are responsible for the goals or objectives of the organization, in addition to allowing the development of leadership of each team member [10].

II.4 Communication

Communication has been considered as the exchange of information and ideas between two or more individuals [11]. Likewise, Contreras-Espinosa (2020) points out that communication is a symbolic and impersonal language. Its work focuses on achieving understanding between individuals, who constitute the fundamental basis of culture. In this way, communication operates as a whole, maintaining understanding between the members of a society, promoting their integration [12].

III. METHODOLOGY

For this research, a mixed-methods approach was used [13]. A Likert-scale survey was used as the quantitative methodology. The qualitative approach involved document analysis and in-depth life history interviews, based on the appreciative inquiry technique. The use of both methodologies required triangulation during the results development phase. The research had a descriptive scope, as

it allowed for the details of the factors that impact Transformational Leadership at the Polytechnic University of Tulancingo, analyzing the relationship between variables. It also had a correlational scope, as it required an evaluation of the relationship between the selected variables. The hypothesis proposed was correlational, which posits a relationship between variables. This hypothesis is described below.

H_{A1}: Motivation, teamwork, and communication are factors that limit Transformational Leadership at the Polytechnic University of Tulancingo.

The type of design used in this research was cross-sectional, where data were collected at a single moment, in a single time [13]; and it allowed to describe the factors of Transformational Leadership, as well as its analysis. At the same time, descriptive and correlational cross-sectional research was used, which served to present the state of the variable and the correlations at a given time.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

This research was conducted using the Tulancingo Polytechnic University (UPT) as the target organization. The sample was stratified and systematically selected, grouping individuals by homogeneous characteristics. The selection was random, and the surveys were administered through personalized visits. Interviews and observations were also used to obtain additional information for the research. The research population consisted of 40 individuals, comprising 10 full-time academics (FTAs), 15 part-time professors (PTPs), 8 administrative staff, and 7 teaching support staff.

V. RESULTS

Regarding teamwork, 48.9% of respondents recognize themselves as capable of freely sharing ideas with their coworkers. 83.2% collaborate proactively with their team, while 16.8% do not. This is reflected in the fact that employees do not always exchange ideas for problem-solving, and in turn, they do not provide organizational information to their coworkers. In addition, communication for the exchange of opinions is 79.7%, and contributions made for the benefit of the organization and work teams are 72.9%. This analysis concludes that people lack sufficient communication within the team; that is, not all participants exchange opinions. In organizations, communication is vital for team learning. Therefore, it is necessary for members to express their contributions and foster better intergroup communication.

This will benefit members from faster growth and faster exchange of ideas based on shared mental models, through which individuals will learn and contribute new ideas that will be beneficial to the organization. Subject teachers report

greater collaboration among full-time faculty members due to their greater time away from the institution. Teaching support staff mention the need to implement strategies to engage all faculty and achieve the organization's mission. Seventy percent of administrative staff report that the work they do within the institution is carried out appropriately.

Regarding motivation, 41.8% of those surveyed mention that their boss does not take them into account when making decisions. 62.9% of the institution's members perceive that they are not encouraged by the leader to achieve the organization's mission, and 23.1% lack motivation. 62.9% of staff consider that they receive training, but 69.13% consider that training is adequate. This analysis reveals that some people are not motivated by their leaders, primarily subject teachers. They comment that there is an opportunity to improve communication with members of the organization and their immediate supervisor, in order to create an excellent work environment. This means applying transformational leadership, encouraging employees to achieve the organization's mission. This will benefit organizational members, resulting in changes within groups and the organization, and generating strong emotional bonds with the leader to achieve high employee performance. Teaching support staff mention the importance of providing ongoing training tailored to the activities they perform within their work area. Administrative and support staff mention that leadership is recognized by all staff. However, it is necessary to reinforce the information conveyed to subordinates so that all members of the organization participate in decision-making.

Regarding the qualitative analysis, the interview results, following the appreciative inquiry approach, revealed their contributions to the organization based on their personal experiences. As formal leaders and opinion leaders, all are success stories. Regarding the sociocultural characterization, three of the four study subjects come from humble families with limited resources, where they had to break family patterns to embrace the challenge of reaching university. Regarding social mobility, three of the four study subjects had to change their place of residence. Regarding leadership, Full-Time Professors, Support Staff, and Full-Time Professors share similarities regarding their academic background and the people who positively influenced their lives in achieving their goals. These similarities include a love of studying, constant self-improvement, a commitment to their parents, asserting their interests and life goals, the ability to make crucial decisions that put them on the path to success, and the acceptance of professional and personal challenges; honesty, fairness, strong leadership skills, both institutional and academic—an important factor in an educational institution—and, above all, a vocation for service.

Regarding improving organizational performance within the institution by leveraging the best of its people, there are

similarities between empowering people to work as a team, given that they lack the knowledge to do so; having successful leaders who take gender equity into account; fostering a service-oriented attitude among all staff; and encouraging the values of honesty, respect, and institutional commitment.

The research showed that to become an institution of excellence, it is necessary to integrate people and work as a team, involving as many staff members as possible to achieve a shared vision through teamwork, collaborative learning, and transformational leadership, thereby achieving systemic thinking and increasing organizational performance.

VI. DISCUSSION

This analysis reveals a niche opportunity to engage individuals (subject teachers) in institutional events and connect personal and organizational learning, creating a mutual commitment between individuals and organizations. This will benefit members of the organization by developing a high level of personal mastery to achieve their established goals, both personal and professional, which will enhance the performance of the educational organization.

The results show that some people are not motivated by their leaders. There may also be an opportunity to improve communication with members of the organization and their immediate supervisors to create an excellent work environment. This means applying transformational leadership, stimulating employees to achieve the organization's mission. This will benefit members of the organization, which will produce changes within groups and the organization, and will generate strong emotional bonds with the leader to achieve high employee performance.

Regarding teamwork, this analysis concludes that people lack sufficient communication within the team; that is, not all participants exchange opinions. In organizations, communication is vital for team learning. Therefore, it is necessary for team members to express their contributions and foster better intergroup communication. This will benefit team members from faster growth and the exchange of ideas, allowing them to learn and contribute new ideas that will benefit the organization.

Based on the findings and the surveys conducted, the subjects of the study mention that their leader has inspired and motivated them, creating a positive work environment that fosters individual growth. This is vitally important because when followers develop a strong emotional bond with the leader, they respond positively to the achievement of organizational objectives, which explains why transformational leadership can achieve high employee performance. Transformational leadership stimulates employee awareness, which leads them to accept and commit to achieving the organization's mission. This type of leadership is crucial for driving organizational change and

growth because it fosters employee motivation, commitment, and creativity, generating a positive impact on productivity and business success.

There are leaders trained in values who share their best experiences with the organization and, for this reason, are recognized by their employees. Unlike leadership found in manufacturing companies, leadership in an educational institution has a strong component of prestige and academic authority, an aspect closely related to the identified variables of transformational leadership, especially with regard to the ability of educational institution leaders to work in teams and transmit explicit and tacit knowledge. These are indeed elements with the potential to energize organizational learning.

VII. CONCLUSION

The most significant results of the quantitative phase of this research focus on the strengths of the educational organization, with the greatest strength being the performance of the administrative staff. This is important due to the internal work carried out between the different departments, adequate communication, teamwork, and attention to the university community, which encourages the achievement of the institutional vision and, at the same time, increases the work of the transformational leader.

Next comes the performance of full-time professors. This is significant since they are responsible for the main academic activities, including the development of materials, advising, tutoring, supporting students' training, participating in academic bodies, technological development projects, and collaborating with the productive sector. Next are the subject teachers, whose role is fundamental to the teaching-learning process of the different educational programs. Like full-time professors, they provide advising and monitor students' academic progress. Next comes the teaching support staff, who carry out various activities to support academic work. These include cultural and sports workshops, psychologists, dentists, doctors, school services, administrative procedures, library, and maintenance, among others.

It is advisable to raise awareness among staff so they are able to recognize their mistakes, whether personal or professional, and identify their weaknesses. Work more on the motivational aspect so that the entire university community becomes interested in all aspects related to the organization. Consistent work should be done with all staff, as there are opportunities in the communication variable, a factor that limits transformational leadership.

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