

Transformational Leadership Style and Principal Teacher Relationship in Public Universities of Lahore

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ABSTRACT

Leadership at educational institutions has a substantial impact on the learning environment, employee job satisfaction, and institution performance. This study examines the association between principal-teacher relationships and transformative leadership styles at Pakistani public universities in Lahore. It focuses on how trust is affected by transformational leadership traits like intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, personalized attention, inspirational motivation, collaboration, and communication between teachers and principals. The study sought to investigate how such leadership characteristics influence professional interactions within academic environments. A quantitative design was employed, gathering data from 500 teachers from different public universities in Lahore using stratified random sampling. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) measured leadership styles, and a tailored Principal-Teacher Relationship Scale (PTRS) determined relational dynamics. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis were applied using SPSS utilized to test the efficacy and effects of leadership behaviors. The results showed that principal-teacher connections and transformational leadership were significantly positively correlated. The leadership characteristics, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration had the greatest impact on developing trust and effective communication. The research suggests that transformational leadership development should be included in training programs for university administrators to enhance professional relationships and facilitate institutional excellence.

Introduction

Leadership is an interactive system of coordinated actions, processes, and interactions through which individuals and groups act in influence and on behalf of others with a common aim to reach. Transformational leaders are especially at the center of this process by using their vision, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation as well as personalized attention to inspire and improve educators. Such leaders foster trust, promote cooperation, and align individual dreams with institutional goals, promoting a culture of mutual achievement and growth. This method is particularly vital in settings such as public universities, where challenges of resource constraints and bureaucratic processes more often than not impede progress (Wilson, 2021).

The power of transformational leadership is also enhanced when complemented by solid principal-teacher relationships, which are built on mutual respect, open communication, and shared dedication to the success of students. Such relationships build a basis of trust and cooperation, allowing leaders and teachers to collaborate synergistically toward shared objectives. Within public universities, where organizational performance and academic quality are typically pushed to their limits, the synergy between transformational leadership and effective principal-teacher relationships acts as a potent accelerator. They not only resolve systemic issues but also propel meaningful enhancements in both institutional and student outcomes (Leithwood & Sun, 2018).

The process by which leaders inspire and enable their people to go above and beyond their own expectations is known as transformational leadership by having a positive impact on their attitudes, beliefs, and values. Transformational leaders through vision, positive encouragement, and mental stimulation build an atmosphere that encourages personal growth and working towards greater goals. This style not only improves individual performance but also organizational achievement and innovation. This leadership style inspires employees to go beyond expectations by concentrating on their growth and aligning their purpose with the vision of the organization (Avolio & Yammarino, 2017).

Transformational leadership is a process that involves working with other people in order to build a connection that enhances motivation and morality between the follower and the leader. Leithwood and Sun (2018) stress the importance of trust building, collaboration, and empowering people to work toward common goals through transformational leadership. Such leadership combines intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration in order to encourage creativity and commitment (Northouse, 2018).

Literature Review

Conceptualizing Leadership in Educational Settings

Leadership is a system of interactive coordinated activity, processes, and interactions that allow individuals and groups to operate in influence and on behalf of others with a shared purpose to achieve. Transformational leaders are particularly at the forefront of this process through their vision, intellectual stimulation, personal attention, and inspirational motivation for motivating and developing teachers. Such leaders build trust, encourage cooperation, and find alignment between individual aspiration and institutional objectives, leading to a culture of shared success and development. This approach is most critical in institutions like public universities, where the issue of resource shortages and bureaucratic processes more frequently than not hinders development (Wilson, 2021; Ng & Chan, 2022).

Transformational Leadership's Function in Higher Education

The process transformational leadership involves leaders favorably changing their followers' mindsets in order to empower and inspire them to go above and beyond their own expectations, beliefs, and values. Transformational leaders with vision, positive encouragement, and intellectual stimulation create an environment that fosters personal development and working towards larger goals. It not only enhances individual performance but also organizational performance and innovation as well. This type of leadership motivates workers to perform beyond expectations by focusing on their development and establishing their purpose in accordance with the organization's vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2017; Bass, 2019).

Components and Characteristics of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership incorporates four essential mechanisms:

Inspirational Motivation (expressing a compelling vision),

Idealized Influence (acting as role models),

Individualized Consideration, which offers mentorship and personal support;

Intellectual Stimulation, which promotes creativity and invention. Together, these aspects encourage dedication and career advancement by influencing followers in significant and long-lasting ways (Northouse, 2018; Zhao et al., 2023).

Relationships between Principals and Teachers as a Mediating Factor

The strength of transformational leadership is further amplified when combined with firm principal-teacher relations, founded upon mutual respect, trust, open communication, and a shared commitment toward the success of the students. These relations establish a foundation of cooperation and trust that enables leaders and teachers to synergistically work together toward common goals. At public universities, where organizational performance and academic quality are often stretched to the maximum, collaboration between transformational leadership and strong principal-teacher relationships is a powerful catalyst. They not only solve systemic problems but also drive real improvements in both institutional and student outcomes (Leithwood & Sun, 2018; Heck & Hallinger, 2021).

Transformational Leadership and Institutional Culture

Transformational leadership also contributes significantly to the development of public universities' institutional cultures. Leaders who focus on empowering staff and building collective efficacy influence not only the morale of educators but also the academic climate and student engagement. The combination of shared vision and collaborative practices leads to a sustainable model of academic excellence and responsive governance in higher education institutions (Leithwood & Sun, 2018).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Examine the perceptions of teachers regarding their heads' transformational leadership style in public universities of Lahore.
- Determine the relationship between transformational leadership style and the principal–teacher relationship in public universities of Lahore.

Research Question

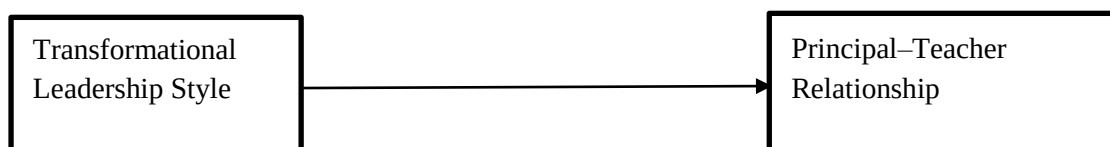
1. What are the perceptions of teachers regarding their heads' transformational leadership style in public universities of Lahore?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and the principal–teacher relationship in public universities of Lahore.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework* Illustrating the Connection between the Principal-Teacher Relationship and Transformational Leadership Style



Methodology

This research aimed at utilizing a quantitative correlational design for investigating the association between the principal-teacher relationship and transformational leadership style in the public universities of Lahore. 4,195 teachers who work at 14 public general universities make up the study's population. A total of 500 teachers were randomly selected from five universities through a multistage random sampling method consisting of cluster sampling for the selection of universities by faculty, selection of 10 common departments, and random selection of 10 teachers per department. Two tools were employed: The Principal-Teacher Relationship Scale (PTRS) contains 10 items of relationship dimensions such as closeness, conflict, and dependency ($\alpha = 0.85\text{--}0.92$), which were developed from Pianta (2001), and Avolio and Bass's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has 20 transformational leadership items with strong reliability ($\alpha = 0.931$). The analysis was carried out using SPSS software version 26 and was based on descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (evaluating the correlation between the variables using Pearson's correlation).

Results and Discussion

The association between transformational leadership style and the principal-teacher relationship was investigated using statistical analysis using SPSS, which included descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 1: Sample Description by Demographics

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	250	50
Female	250	50
Age		
25-30 years	150	30
31-35 years	180	36

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
36-40 years	170	34
Teaching Experience		
1-5 years	120	24
6-10 years	180	36
11+ years	200	40

The sample consisted of 500 teachers evenly split between male and female participants. The age range of 31 to 35 was the greatest (36%), followed by 36-40 years (34%). Regarding teaching experience, 40% had over 11 years of experience.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership Style

Item No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	“Instills pride in me for being associated with him/her”	3.82	0.79
2	“Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group”	3.90	0.72
3	“Acts in ways that build my respect”	3.85	0.76
4	“Displays a sense of power and confidence”	3.75	0.81
5	“Talks about their most important values and beliefs”	3.70	0.84
6	“Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose”	3.95	0.68
7	“Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions”	3.85	0.74
8	“Emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission”	3.91	0.70

Teachers showed strong agreement with transformational leadership qualities exhibited by their principals, especially on emphasizing a strong sense of purpose (M=3.95).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Principal-Teacher Relationship

Item No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	“I share an affectionate, warm relationship with my principal”	3.60	0.85
2	“I feel that my principal treats me unfairly”	2.30	1.02
3	“My principal values his/her relationship with me”	3.80	0.78
4	“Dealing with my principal drains my energy”	2.15	1.05
5	“My principal tries to please me”	3.65	0.88
6	“My principal’s feelings toward me can be unpredictable”	2.40	1.02
7	“I can openly share my feelings and experiences with my principal”	3.75	0.80

Overall, teachers perceived their relationships with principals as generally positive, particularly in terms of warmth and feeling valued. However, some aspects such as feeling drained by interactions suggest room for improvement.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Between Transformational Leadership Style and Principal-Teacher Relationship

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Correlation (r)
Transformational Leadership Style	500	3.85	0.75	0.725**
Principal-Teacher Relationship	500	3.63	0.80	1

p < 0.01

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.725$, $p < 0.01$) indicates a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership style and principal-teacher relationship.

Hypothesis Testing

The null hypothesis stating that "There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and principal-teacher relationship in public universities of Lahore" is rejected based on the strong positive correlation.

Discussion

Teachers view their principals as transformational leaders who inspire a strong sense of purpose and ethical responsibility, according to the research. Principal-teacher interactions that are cordial, courteous, and cooperative are favourably correlated with these leadership qualities. The noteworthy association is consistent with previous studies that highlight the critical role transformational leadership plays in enhancing interpersonal relationships and institutional efficacy.

The results of this study show that faculty consider their school principals to be transformational leaders who exhibit key behaviors of providing motivation to transcend self-interest, exhibiting purpose, and showing ethical and moral appreciation towards their staff. These behaviors align with positive relations with teachers that are warm, respectful, trusting, and cooperative. These findings corroborate earlier findings noted with Transformational leadership's significance in educational settings (Leithwood & Sun 2018, Avolio & Yammarino 2017).

A positive link between transformational leadership and the relationships among teachers and principals highlights the critical role leadership plays in shaping the social and professional environment of higher education institutions. By offering intellectual stimulation and personalized support, transformational leaders enhance teacher morale, making educators feel valued and encouraged. Such leadership fosters collaboration and transparent communication, which are fundamental to effective organizational leadership (Northouse, 2018).

Conclusion

The study concludes that transformational leadership significantly influences the quality of principal-teacher relationships in public universities in Lahore. By fostering trust, collaboration, and clear communication, transformational leaders help create a positive academic environment that drives institutional excellence. Findings reveal that principals in these universities hold favorable views of transformational leadership. Teachers also acknowledge the importance of transformational behaviors—such as ethical conduct, inspirational motivation, and a strong sense of purpose—in shaping positive interactions. The strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and principal-teacher relationships highlights the importance of this leadership style in promoting mutual trust, teamwork, and open communication within academic settings. Ultimately, these relationships contribute to greater institutional effectiveness and an enhanced learning atmosphere.

Recommendations

In light of the results, it is advised that Lahore's public universities fund leadership development initiatives that teach administrators transformational leadership techniques. To further improve principal-teacher interactions, training should stress ethical leadership, personalised attention, and

inspirational motivation. Better student outcomes, institutional performance, and employee satisfaction can result from principals encouraging open communication and trust with instructors.

Future Research

Future research might examine how transformative leadership affects a range of educational outcomes over the long run, including faculty retention, student performance, and institutional growth. Deeper understanding would be gained by examining the interactions between transformational leadership and other leadership philosophies as well as organisational elements in various educational settings. Furthermore, when leadership methods change over time, longitudinal research could evaluate how principal-teacher interactions have changed, providing important insights for higher education management policy and practice.

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