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IMPORTANCE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PROJECT SUCCESS: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The article theoretically supports the fortification of the existing transformational leadership models and their relationship with project success. The study addresses this theoretical gap by discussing different leadership theories because project leadership is sourced from general leadership theories, contributing to better understanding and suggesting implementation of a combination of leadership models.

Keywords: project management; transformational leadership; leadership theories; leadership models.

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ВАЖЛИВІСТЬ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЙНОГО ЛІДЕРСТВА ДЛЯ УСПІХУ ПРОЕКТУ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНИЙ ОГЛЯД

У статті детально проаналізовано існуючі моделі лідерства та їх вплив на успіх проектів. У результаті аналізу виявлено теоретичні прогалини в концепціях лідерства та продемонстровано, що для успіху управління проектами необхідно комбінувати моделі лідерства.

Ключові слова: управління проектами; трансформаційне лідерство; теорії лідерства; моделі лідерства.

Рис. 1. Табл. 3. Літ. 46.

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В статье детально проанализированы существующие модели лидерства и их влияние на успех проектов. В результате анализа обнаружен теоретический пробел в концепциях лидерства и показано, что для успеха управления проектами необходимо комбинировать модели лидерства.

Ключевые слова: управление проектами; трансформационное лидерство; теории лидерства; модели лидерства.

Introduction. Project management has existed since the people started to develop products and services (Brooks, 1995; Yourdon, 2004). Being unaware of the concept of project management, builders of the pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China and Stonehenge managed to construct these classical examples of project management (Frame, 1994). However, organizations and researchers realized the importance of project management in the early 1900s (Haughey, 2011). Project management has now become renowned around the world, with Turner et al. (2009) claiming that 30% of the global economy is project-based. Interestingly, project failures statistics are reported more than successes in project management (Zwikael & Smyrk, 2012). As projects are always unique in their nature, the chances of failure are high (Meredith & Mantel, 2010). Despite having relatively more failures than successes, organizations still tend to invest in new projects (Shenhar & Dvir, 2007;

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Zwikael & Smyrk, 2012). The reason is that projects are considered to be organizations' performance enhancer, and in doing so, they also contribute to national economy (Lewis et al., 2002). In addition, projects have become the major cause of innovation and process change in organizations (Damanpour, 2010).

Success brings significant recognition in projects and project management. Over the last 3 decades, project success has become the most important factor in project management (Ika, 2009). Therefore, much attention is paid in finding those factors that mainly contribute to project success (Alderman & Ivory, 2011; Clarke, 2010; Geoghegan & Dulewicz, 2008). Conversely, Srica (2008) argued that 80% of projects fail because of poor leadership. Moreover, Dey (2009) stated that most projects fail due to operational risk factors such as the lack of effective project leadership skills. In extant literature on management, leadership has been accepted as an influential source for organizational success but in project management, the role of project managers' leadership still needs to be discussed in more detail (Khan, Sang Long & Iqbal, 2014; Turner, Muller & Dulewicz, 2009).

Leadership has been discussed with many theories since its inception. According to Robbins and Coulter (2009) transformational leadership can be considered as a theory of the 21st century. Dulewicz and Higgs (2005) argued that transformational leadership is appropriate for all type of projects. Leadership has also been discussed in many layers; the current study tends to investigate theoretically whether there is a gap in the existing transformational leadership models and what to be done to improve the project success rates.

Literature Review. Despite a significant advance in project management, the majority of projects still fail due to some reasons. In literature, project failures are reported more than project success around the world (Schmidt, Sarangee & Montoya, 2009; Zwikael & Smyrk, 2012). For instance, The Standish Group (2001) conducted a survey on small, medium and large organizations in the USA, especially in the IT sector, with reference to the role of project managers. Their survey showed that less than 25% of projects succeeded and almost 76% were challenged or failed. Moreover, Haughey (2011) argued that there is a need of gradual and continuous rise in project success rates especially in developing countries where situation is worse as compared developed countries.

According to Korrapati and Rapaka (2009) most projects succeed due to managerial skills and leadership styles of project managers. Researchers and organizations have been studying leadership for more than last 4 decades struggling to deconstruct leadership into a universal set of measures (Goffee & Jones, 2000; Higgs, 2003). Transformational leadership theories can be found among them. In addition, transformational leadership behaviors has long been considered as an important factor for performance in various general organizations (Keegan & Den Hartog, 2004; Yang et al., 2010; Scott-Young and Danny, 2008), very few in project management (Kissi et al., 2009). Likewise, Clarke (2010) argued that within literature on project management, project leaders have not received due importance, especially within project team.

Current study contributes theoretically to better understanding of transformational leadership behaviors by combining two distinct transformational leadership models of Kouzes and Posner (2007) and Bass and Avolio (1995). By doing so it will contribute to knowledge in both theoretical and practical terms, and in both fields of

project management and leadership. Next sections will discuss the importance of transformational leadership among other general leadership theories and then extend to transformational leadership model to reach the conclusion.

General Leadership Theories. From the history of leadership many theories have been developed. The basic theories of general leadership are: traits theories, behavioral theories, contingencies theories, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, decision theory of leadership, transactional and transformational leadership theories.

Traits Theories. The theories that are used to differentiate leaders from non-leaders on the basis of their personal characteristics and qualities are called trait leadership theories. These theories basically belong to the earliest stages of leadership when leaders and non-leaders were differentiated by their social, personality, intellectual or physical attributes. The research efforts to isolate leadership traits in a number of cases came to dead ends (Robbins, Judge & Seema, 2009). During the 1990s numerous studies were conducted and the best thing that could be stated was "leaders are not like other people", but the traits used to isolate leaders from non-leaders varied from review to review in a great deal (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991).

Behavioral Theories. After the failures of early trait theories, the research started moving in a different direction. It was the era of late 1940s through the 1960s when researchers began looking at different behaviors of specific leaders (Robbins et al., 2009). The behavioral theories of leadership stated that leaders are not inborn; rather great leaders can also be produced through different behaviors and trainings. Similarly, the advocates of behavioral theories argued there were some specific identified behaviors of leaders, they can be trained through different programs to learn and practice those particular behaviors to become effective leaders. In behavioral theories Ohio State University and University of Michigan we the pioneers (Judge, Piccolo & Ilies, 2004; Kahn & Katz, 1960; Robbins et al., 2009).

Contingency Theories. Contingencies theories are also called situational leadership theories. There are three well known contingencies theories: the Fiedler models, path-goal theory and Hersey and Blanchard's theory (Robbins et al., 2009). Fiedler (1967) developed a comprehensive contingency leadership model. He concludes that better leader-member relations leads to highly structured jobs, and a stronger position power of leader to control situations. After that Fiedler refined his original theory and named it cognitive resource theory (Fiedler & Garcia, 1987). Under this reconceptualization he focused on the role of stress that how a leader uses his/her intelligence and experience in reaction to stress. The essence of this new theory is that stress is the enemy of rationality.

Path-goal theory was developed by R. House. He developed this theory from the Ohio State studies on leadership such as consideration, initiating structure and expectancy theory of motivation (House, 1996). The essence of path-goal theory is that leader's job is to provide followers with support, information or any other resources needed for the achievement of goals (Robbins et al., 2009).

Another contingent theory is named as situational leadership theory (SLT), developed by P. Hersey and K. Blanchard. It has also got strong research support of management (Hersey, Blachard & Johnson, 2001). They concluded that regardless of what leaders do, effectiveness of successful leadership depends on followers' actions that either they accept or reject leaders in different situations.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory. Leader-Member Exchange theory (LMX) was proposed by Graeri and colleagues (Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975; Graen, 1976). LMX is different from other theories of leadership because it focuses on the dyadic relationship between a member and a leader.

Decision Theory. The way leader makes decisions is as important as what and how he/she decides in different situations (Robbins et al., 2009). A leader participation model was developed by V. Vroom and P. Yetton relating leaders' behavior with decision making participation (Vroom & Jago, 2007). These researchers argued that leader behavior must adjust to reflect the task structure because task structures demands vary from routine to non-routine activities.

Transactional Leadership Theory. Robbins and Coulter (2009) discussed that transactional leaders provide clear guidelines to their followers, define everyone's role evidently and therefore, this model is suitable for static environment. However, this type of leadership is mainly based on contingent reinforcement (Muenjohn, 2008). Bass (1985) differentiated transformational leadership from transactional leadership for the first time in the history of leadership studies. He closely observed leadership and developed different sets of characteristics of leaders. In addition, he explored different types of leadership behaviors suitable in different organizations that forced other researchers to divert their attentions towards transactional and transformational leadership theories, and still these types of personalities are practiced in various organizations.

Transformational Leadership Theory. Robbins and Coulter (2007) discussed that transformational leaders have the ability to arise the interest of followers by defining goals, and task requirements clearly. In addition, these leaders possess charisma and can get extraordinary results with and through their followers. Furthermore, Ergeneli, Gohar and Temirbekova (2007) emphasized that the theories of transformational leadership are considered to be the most advanced theories in the sense that they have widened the scope of leadership theory by recognizing the importance of emotional, symbolic and highly motivating behaviors that they appeal directly to follower's minds and hearts. After this comprehensive discussion, a comparison has been made to differentiate transformational leadership from other theories.

Transformational Leadership Models. Transformational leadership theories have long been the central point of various researchers and practitioners. The curiosity to fully understand the characteristics of transformational leadership persuaded researchers identify different features of this particular type of leadership and apply in different organizations and cultures (Posner & Kouzes, 1988; Bass & Avolio, 1995; Bradford & Cohen, 1984). Current research is also one of them. Majority of researchers have reached consensus on the effectiveness of transformational leadership in general organizations as well as in project management (Turner et al., 2009; Lo, 2011). Table 2 highlights familiarities and differences among the existing transformational leadership models.

Proposition 1: Combined transformational leadership models can be helpful in enhancing project success.

Bass and Avolio (1995) operationalized the model of transformational leaders to assess the behaviors of different leaders in a series of studies, and concluded that transformational leaders play a more important role in organizational performance as

Table 1. **Comparison of Transformational Leadership with other Leadership Theories,** *authors' summary*

Dimensions	Transformational leadership	Trait theories	Behavioral theories	Contingency theories	LMX theories	Decision theory	Transactional
Main focus	It involves charismatic, emotional, symbolic and highly motivating behaviors of leaders towards goal attainment.	Leaders are born with inherited qualities and characteristics.	Effective leaders can be trained and particular behaviors can be learned.	Leaders have to act accordingly in different situations and have to provide a clear path toward goal attainment.	Leaders develop particular two types of groups for work.	The ability of a leader to take right decision according to a given situation and problem at hand.	Leaders can survive in a static and clearly defined hierarchal system.
Relationship	Build positive and long term relations with followers along with focusing on desired outcomes.	Leaders are recognized with their social, personality, intellectual or physical, attributes.	Certain behaviors can be learned. Leaders may be task- or people-oriented	Leaders maintain relations according to situation	Good relations are maintained in group, while out group relations are not much suitable.	Leader behavior reflects the task structure and do not focus on relations.	These type of leaders do not focus on relationships
Motivation	Transformational leaders possess charisma and can motivate people up to their desired level	Leaders can motivate people only if they are blessed with natural quality.	These behaviors do not primarily focus on motivation.	Do not mainly focus on motivation of employees	Can motivate only focused groups	Is not focused on motivation of employees	Is not focused on motivation at all, instead believe on reward for performance.
Suitability	Suitable for all types of environments and cultures	Not suitable for all cultures and environments	Only suitable for cultures where they get training	Only suitable for required situations	Not suitable for all employees at the same time	Suitable for rational decision-making situations	Suitable only for low complex environments
Prevalence	These theories are considered as the theories of the 21st century	These theories are not so much in practice	Provided basis for transformational leadership	Not considered as an emerging theory of leadership, especially in project management	Not considered effective for particular projects' management	In literature is not reported in project management.	Sometimes these leaders are considered as non-leaders

compared to transactional leaders. Bass (1985) asserted that transformational leadership is a process in which leaders motivate their followers, develop trust among groups, increase awareness on what is right and enable followers to perform "beyond expectation". Similarly, Posner and Kouzes (1988) discussed that transformational leadership is most suitable for dynamic environments. As compared to Bass and Avolio (1995) research, Kouzes and Posner (2007) developed a transformational leadership model with 5 dimensions as opposed to previous four. These models have similarities and difference (Table 3).

Table 2. **Comparison of Different Transformational Leadership Models**

Leadership dimensions of Posner and Kouzes (1988)	Dimensions of Bass and Avolio (1995) similar to Posner and Kouzes (1988)	Dimensions of Bradford and Cohen (1984) similar with other models	Dimensions of Conger and Kanungo (1987) similar with other models	Dimensions of Bennis and Nanus (I985) Similar to other models
1) Model the way (MW)	Idealized influence and inspirational motivation		Take a high personal risk to support the vision	
2) Inspire a shared vision (ISV)	Inspirational motivation	Determine and build a common vision	Advocate an appealing yet unconventional vision	Management of attention through vision
3) Challenge the process (CP)	Intellectual stimulation			
4) Enable others to act (EOA)		Build a shared responsibility team		Work to develop commitment and trust
Encourage the heart (EH)			Behave with confidence and enthusiasm	
	Individualized consideration	Continuously develop the skills of individuals	Be sensitive to the needs of the followers	

Source: extended and adapted from (Podsakoff et al., 1990).

Theoretical Framework. Project managers' transformational leadership is an important element in project success. We have overviewed the available transformational leadership models and found two widely accepted and used ones (i.e. Kouzes and Posner (2007) and Bass and Avolio (1995)). Accordingly, the authors compared these two models with each other and found that both models have some similarities and differences (Table 3). Both models are combined then to propose a view model of transformational leadership consisting of 5 dimensions from Posner and Kouzes (2007) and one dimension by Bass and Avolio (1995), i.e., individual consideration. After the extensive literature review the researchers believe that if these two models are combined to produce better results.

Discussions and Conclusions. After analyzing the literature on leadership, the authors realized that out of different models on leadership, transformational leadership models are considered as the most advanced as they have widened the scope of leadership (Robbins and Coulter, 2007). In addition, an attempt has been made to provide theoretical support regarding the existing transformational leadership models. After critical examination of literature from well-known databases on transformational leadership models it was found that different transformational leadership

Table 3. **Transformational Leadership Model:** Kouzes and Posner (2007) vs. Bass and Avolio (1995)

Dimensions (Kouzes & Posner, 2007)	Characteristics	Dimensions (Bass & Avolio, 1995)	Characteristics
1) Model the way (MW)	- Leaders set principles for leading people towards goals' achievement. - Offer themselves as a role model. - Convey complex and challenging goals in a simple way. - Gain respect to lead through direct action and involvement.	1) Idealized Influence	- Leaders discuss most important beliefs and values. - Arise a strong sense of purpose among followers. - Contemplate ethical and moral decisions. - Explore new possibilities of old processes. - Realize the importance of trust among each other. - Offer themselves as a role model.
2) Inspire a shared vision (ISV)	- They believe they can make a difference with their performance. - They have a clear vision. - They can transform the vision into followers to enhance the desired performance. - They can work with others.	2) Inspirational Motivation	- Express the importance of desired objectives of organization. - Motivate followers for high level of expectations. - Discuss future optimistically. - Clearly communicate the compelling vision of their organization.
3) Challenge the process (CP)	- Leaders search for new opportunities to grow, and innovate. - Accept challenges and try to invent new ideas and processes. - Bear the risk of failures in mind due to innovativeness. - In case of disappointments get engaged in continuous learning.	3) Intellectual Stimulation	- Leaders challenge "normal" ideas and present innovative ideas. - Think critically about a given situation. - Consider all possible perspectives to solve problems. - Encourage innovativeness and non-traditional methods to handle traditional problems.
4) Enable others to act (EOA)	- Build trust, foster collaboration and create dignity. - Get people involved in work actively. - Arise self-confidence among followers.	*This dimension of Kouzes and Posner (2007) are different from Bass and Avolio (1995) model*	
5) Encourage the heart (EH)	- Appreciate people for their contribution and create a culture of celebrating victories and values. - Rewards are shared and followers are encouraged publicly. - Represent their successful followers as heroes.	*This dimension of Kouzes and Posner (2007) are different from Bass and Avolio (1995) model*	
This dimension of Bass and Avolio (1995) model are different from Kouzes and Posner (2007) model		4) Individualized Consideration	- Spend more time in coaching and teaching. - Pay attention individually rather than in group. - Help individuals develop their strengths. - They listen others' concerns attentively.

models have similarities and differences. We proposed these models to be combined into a single leadership model to get the synergic effect. After carefully analyzing transformational leadership models, it was found that different transformational leadership models can be combined to get maximum benefits from leadership. The importance of project leadership behaviors has been felt with severity with increasing failures rates of projects around the world. Researchers and practitioners now has consensus in accepting project leadership as a key factor (Higgs & Dulewicz, 2004; Yang et al., 2011; 2013). The authors think its' time to look beyond the traditional view of leadership models. The literature is practicing different available transformational leadership models in thousands of studies and producing similar results. The combination of these two transformational leadership models can be helpful for practitioners, policy makers and trainers to consider the hybrid relationship of the existing transformational leadership models. The current study contributes to the existing literature by developing a conceptual framework using integrative lens by discussing two well-known models of transformational leadership and accepting the proposition 1. The study is opening a new window of opportunity for further theorizing to complete interrelatedness of the proposed model with the help of empirical studies, especially in developing countries to be benefited from the proposed synergic effect. Finally, this concept got strong theoretical support and is making louder calls for empirical studies to discuss the concept in different project settings.
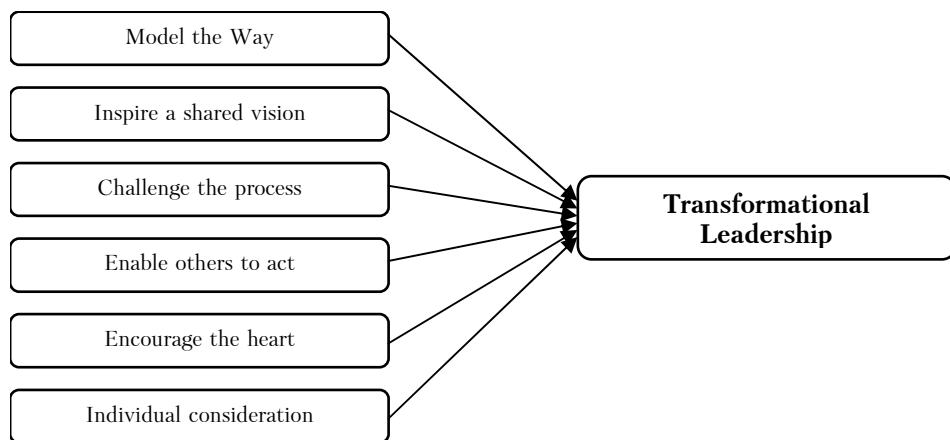

Figure 1. **Proposed model of Transformational leadership,** *authors' development*

Limitations. The researchers noted several limitations in this study. The focus of this study is on presumed and limited variables which literature suggested significantly correlated to project success factors. Moreover, the study faced some limitations for being theoretical in nature. This relationship can be better proved with the help of statistical facts and figures by applying quantitative methods. The proposed concept needs further attention of researchers and practitioners to discuss project managers' transformational leadership in different countries and sectors.

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