

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Transformational Leadership Impacts on Worker Motivating Behaviors

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

By

Gladys Gonzalez

August 2020

Copyright by Gladys Gonzalez 2020

The graduate project of Gladys Gonzalez is approved:

Dr. Rhonda Franklin

Date

Dr. Eric Schockman

Date

Dr. Henrik Minassians, Chair

Date

California State University, Northridge

Table of Contents

Copyright Page	ii
Signature Page	iii
Abstract	vi
Introduction	1
Literature Review	4
Leadership	4
Transformational Leadership	5
Transforming Culture	6
Transforming Roles	7
Transforming Emotion	8
Transforming Trust	9
Transforming Empowerment	10
Transforming Vision	10
Transforming Motivation	11
Motivation and Transformational Leadership in Social Services	12
Previous Research Studies	15
Literature Research Gap	16
Summary	17
Methodology	19
Research Question	19

Research Design	19
Population and Sample	19
Data Collection	20
Conclusion	22
References	23
Appendix	29

Abstract

Transformational Leadership Impacts on Worker Motivating Behaviors

By

Gladys Gonzalez

Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

The public sector often bears the reputation for lacking motivation, and the current body of literature examining leadership and motivation showcase the power a leader has on improving worker performance. Studies show leaders have the potential to shape and transform work culture, particularly influential leadership styles. Since transformational leadership qualities are grounded in transformation and influence, this paper examines the importance of leadership on worker behavior and motivation with the focus on transformational leadership. The research study aims to apply literature findings to examine if targeted transformational leadership behaviors impact public sector workers' attitudes and performance. The proposed research design is a Likert-type questionnaire with work performance reports that evaluate if a transformational leader improves worker motivation in the Department of Public Social Services. The results could indicate if targeted transformational leadership can be concretized in public administration to produce predictable motivational behaviors in workers to improve organizational management.

Introduction

This research paper examines the motivational influence transformational leadership has on worker behaviors to address the public sector unmotivated worker stereotype. The public sector often suffers from the reputation that it is a bureaucratic system with unmotivated, lazy civil servants (Peirce, 1981). The reputation has grown because of the bureaucratic nature of public services which are often restrained by socially complex and legislatively connected issues (Peirce, 1981). Since the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, those involved in the political policy-making process have been calling for public service reform (Perry et al., 2010). However, change is complex since public organizations are tied to varied social interconnections and have no market profit or incentives, but deal with budget constraints while balancing the politics of society to meet standard performances that subject them to the lazy worker stereotype (Wright, 2001). The public sector does not operate in a flexible sphere but rather is based on mechanistic structures that produce traditional cultural perspectives and values which in time hinders an environment less effective and less adaptable (Spreitzer et al., 2005). This is particularly problematic for organizations and leaders trying to inspire motivation. This builds a traditional environment that reinforces the mechanistic nature of the public sector which makes its workers less receptive to organizational motivational efforts (Dust et al., 2014). Ultimately, there is a constraint of motivation and performance in public sector employees, so understanding what mediators can improve performance is essential to move beyond the stereotype to better understand the possibilities of motivation in public sector environments (Wright, 2001).

A review of the public sector motivation and leadership literature recognizes the importance a leader has on motivating public employees (Wright, 2001). Studies are linking leadership styles to worker motivation by showcasing how leaders have influence as role models

and how their leadership styles can be associated with better job performance (Schwarz et al., 2020). As for the focus on leadership study, Fairholm (2004) has defined leadership as way to understand and adapt appropriately in relation to the changing work, societies, and organizations. Leadership, motivation and commitment are connected through organizational contexts and goals (Moon, 2000). As a leader commits to a mission or goal, the mission and efforts need to be seen as related to the motivations of the individual, management, and the organizational culture (Moon, 2000). Therefore, since scholarship has shown leadership mission and behaviors have an impact on public sector motivation, this paper examines the effects of leadership through the lens of transformational leadership because transformational leadership is grounded on mission leadership and showcases the capacity to influence workers to increase motivation (Pandey et al., 2012).

Better understanding of how public administration leadership practices can manage and even transform the public sector motivation is crucial. The research design proposed looks at transformational leadership in the context of a typical bureaucratic system that is bound to complex social needs, politics, and mechanistic structures. Due to the transformational leadership style focus on mission-centered adaptive qualities compatible with public sector structures, the research proposed examines how transformational leadership inspires motivation and improves work performance in the public sector. The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) will be selected as representative of a typical grand bureaucratic system that bears the traditional contexts of public sector mechanistic restrictions. DPSS serves the county of Los Angeles where 20% of its population receives public assistance (Department of Public Social Services [DPSS], 2020). It is the country's largest social services agency with over 40 offices and 14,000 employees (DPSS, 2020). Since DPSS is representative of a typical public sector setting and

because not much public administration or social services literature is documented in this department, this organization is used to further expand the research into transformational leadership and motivation. The likely outcomes of the study could contribute to the growing literature that aims to concretized public administration practices to improve motivational behaviors and performance.

Literature Review

This literature review examines the significance of leadership in public administration through the lens of transformational leadership influence on motivation and performance. It presents a theoretical grounding of transformational leadership and a review of previous study findings in relation to organizational culture, social behaviors, and employee empowerment to reveal the collective patterns of transformational leadership motivational mediators. It also reviews the social services organizational context of motivation and transformational leadership in social work literature. The research findings show how transformative or charismatic leadership changes an organizational culture; a worker's sense of self and their emotional aptitudes; and creates change that empowers to foster trust. Also, the review looks at the pattern studies have taken when examining transformational leadership to showcase where the body of literature is going, what it is missing, and how it informs the literature gaps and research questions for future studies.

Leadership

Public administration is grounded in the study of management and leadership. Fairholm (2004) explored the different perspectives of leadership practice to summarize that public administration studies legitimize leadership activities and leadership is a crucial part of public administration. The leadership findings offer public managers the chance to improve leadership activities. Fairholm (2004) stated that as contemporary literature continues to explore, analyze, and redefine management and leadership, the way to differentiate them is to see if organizational work can be quantified or controlled, it requires management, and if not, then it calls for leadership skills. There is the continuous effort to understand what makes a great and successful leader so as to obtain the formula to understand leadership skills and control outcomes

(Fairholm, 2004). Moreover, since transformational leadership style is one of the more established leadership theories in public administration study, the findings on its influence and potential to transform organizations grounds this literature review on transformational leadership and its motivating outcomes.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that presents a leader as an agent of change who leads a transformation in the work culture and workforce. Transformational leadership style has four characteristics: idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 2007; Bass & Avolio, 1993). A transformational leader will instill an energized awareness of organizational mission and values while strategically employing behaviors to inspire attitudes to transcend basic employee exchanges and expectations (Pandey et al., 2012). These leaders transform employee performances and motivation by reminding their followers to see their work beyond their own desires to address higher mission needs for their organization and the people they serve (Pandey et al., 2012). Transformational leaders take their roles further to become influential to their environment; inspirational so as to motivate performance; intellectually stimulating for growth; and tuned to individualized consideration for strategic approaches (Bass, 2007).

Transformational leaders are seen as charismatic because they add to their organizational culture by providing a sense of organizational purpose to their missions to influence pride, respect, and trust; they inspire workers through their clear communication skills that use key imagery to produce understanding; they stimulate intellectual activity in their workforce by promoting rationality and problem solving; and consider the individual worker to give tailored guidance (Bass, 2007).

Transformational leadership is part of a theory model known as the Full Range Leadership Model which is comprised of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire (Rubin et al., 2005). A transactional leader, in comparison, will perform their essential job in exchange for their workers to perform theirs. A basic exchange and reward interaction where workers show up to do their job for pay and nothing more is expected or produced (Bass, 2007). It is important to note that a transformational leader has transactional qualities that get the basic job requirements done, but a transformational leader's defining leadership characteristics broaden their transactional management expectations and outcomes. As Van Wart (2013) explained, "transformational leadership rarely interferes with transactional leadership; it supplements it and, generally, proves difficult if transactional leadership does not precede it" (p. 558). The model leadership styles are seen as a continuum where transformational is the most promising, to transactional as the neutral expectation of work, to laissez-faire as uninvolved leadership (Bass, 2007).

The following leadership and transformational subsections are grouped to highlight thematic study findings that support defining characteristics of a transformative leader. All of these outcomes serve as moderating factors for motivation. However, it is important to note that many of these qualities can interchange or reinforce one another.

Transforming Culture

The transformational leadership style transcends basic expectations to become organizational agents of change. Their presence transforms the work culture to create a feeling of familial comradery and purpose with long term commitment (Bass & Avolio, 1993). These kinds of charismatic leaders create connection with followers, share interests, and end goals. It becomes about strategic thinking to build interconnection with a vision for the future (Bass &

Avolio, 1993). A study observing managerial perceptions through transformational leadership showcased that leadership style impacts the managers' perceptions of their workers and in turn these leaders create a climate that facilitates involvement (Richardson & Vendenberg, 2005). This study suggested that having the right personnel is key in creating a desired organizational culture. Moreover, transformational leaders are essential in environments to cultivate a sense of comradery, especially in environments where groups are dispersed (Joshi et al., 2009). They found behaviors that are inspirational provide a roadmap for the skill set needed to manage teams not situated in a traditional work space (Joshi et al., 2009). Transformational leader qualities are important in many contexts nonetheless and environment structure is crucial for a transformation leader. Dust et al. (2014) found that the reach of influence and impact on empowering attitudes a transformational leader had depended on the physical and structural context of the organization. If organizational structures are more open and flexible, they reap greater effects from the leadership while mechanistic organizations were restricted which meant fewer empowering attitudes in the organizational culture (Dust et al., 2014). Therefore, all these findings suggest that if an organization has inspirational leaders and the environment is dynamic, a transformational leader will have more impact as an agent of change.

Transforming Roles

Transformational leaders are role models who motivate and enhance employee association with organization mission. Studies that look at leader motivation through social identity in the collective organizational goals saw more follower identification which led to greater motivation manifesting in employee creativity (Hurst et al., 2009). When transformational leaders have individual consideration, show respect, model emotional regulation, and provide the resources to develop the skills of their workers, they instill a sense of

reciprocity where their workers will begin to mimic these behaviors (Paarlberg & Lavigna, 2010). One study examined leaders with strong ethical commitments and found those who modeled ethical behavior influenced employee motivation, motivation defined as “willingness to exert effort” (Piccolo et al., 2010, p. 259). This link then produced better work performance in addition to a sense of belonging in the organization. Ethical leaders led by example to encourage employees to speak up and impacted their likelihood of incorporating more modeled ethical behaviors in their own work (Piccolo et al., 2010). This research builds on the leader as role model approach that produces motivation to complete tasks that mirror the leadership. Moreover, Spreitzer et al. (2005) posited that as transformational leaders articulate a vision, serve as role models, and bolster up expectations and intellectual stimulation, the transformational leaders are still effective regardless of culture. However, the positive relationships vary depending on traditional values, those with more traditional values see less of a link between transformational leadership and effectiveness (Spreitzer et al., 2005).

Transforming Emotion

Transformational leaders are found to exhibit emotional understanding that not only enables them to encourage better performance from workers but their emotional intelligence can be a predictor for transformational leadership potential. In a study that looked at transformational characteristics in managers’ emotional recognition, agreeableness and extraversion showcased as the strongest predictors of them possessing transformational leadership (Rubin et al., 2005). The study then suggested that looking at emotion recognition would be an attribute to further explore to predict transformational behavior. Further exploring public sector motivation, Hsieh et al. (2012) saw that people who exhibit emotional perspective, like compassion, produce better quality work which continues a cycle of emotional regulation and perspective for those they

serve or are around. This type of behavior in the work place increases public sector motivation with peer and consumer understanding.

Transforming Trust

Trust, like emotional intelligence, is found to be a key trait in transformational leadership behavior. Goodwin et al. (2011) looked at the role of trust, defined as an expectancy to see someone as reliable in transformational leadership, and found trust was an important mediator between followers' attitudes and performance while allowing leaders to carry on their transformative behaviors. Even the role of trust was crucial when work groups are physically distanced. Joshi et al. (2009) found that trust and commitment in teams were linked to inspirational leaders and more so when teams were physically distant and relied on the leader for guidance. Transformational leaders act like a social glue of trust that create prosocial safe spaces. Zhu and Akhtar (2014) found that trust grounded in prosocial motivation in an organization produces helping behavior in the workforce. They highlight the need to consider aspects of trust in relation to transformation leader and coworker interactions while suggesting that knowing this could be advantageous for organizations wanting to develop helpful leadership programs (Zhu & Akhtar, 2014). Furthermore, in Detert and Burris's (2007) research into leadership behavior and employee' freedom to speak up, they found openness and transformational leadership were related to employee's sense of freedom to voice their opinions. They noted trust, defined as psychological safety where employees felt they would not be harmed for speaking up, cultivated transformational behaviors to continue in leaders and generated support in the best performing employees in the workforce. They concluded that openness was the strongest signal, but their results showcase that specific leadership behaviors, like trust, encourage employees to speak up rather than generic approaches (Detert & Burris, 2007).

Transforming Empowerment

When it comes to motivation, psychological empowerment is the link between transformational leadership and motivation manifested as improved task performance and citizenship employee attitudes (Dust et al., 2014). Studies saw a strong innovative behavior in transformational leadership when psychological empowerment is incorporated. The higher the psychological empowerment the greater the innovative behavior in the workforce (Pieterse et al., 2010). The implications from these findings are that a more successful transformational leadership means targeting certain behaviors, like psychological empowerment, rather than generalizing transformational leadership. Since transformational leadership champions skills development through the four characteristics transformational leaders practice, the leadership style has psychological empowerment elements that tap into worker motivations and identities. This growth mindset is a leader self-structure that has shown to add to the generalized understanding of the internal processes of follower identities in the workplace (Woolfolk & Lord, 2009). This illustrates the interconnectedness of leadership, sense of self, and motivation. Psychological empowerment is continuously linked to motivation and creative engagement, particularly in the context of empowering leadership like transformational leadership (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Transforming Vision

The literature review finds that transformational leaders have an advantage in garnering public service motivation due to the social and public needs of their workforce and consumers that can enable a leader to encourage more for the greater good for the sake of their organizational missions (Pandey et al., 2012). There is rising evidence that there is a different kind of motivation in the public sector that calls for a desire to do the work associated with

public organizations. Public sector motivation research expands to showcase that public sector employees are not just motivated by complacency or self-interest (Brewer et al., 2000). The organizational missions presented to public employees are crucial that transformational leaders can use communication to illustrate visions that boost the nature of their work to benefit their mission and those they serve (Pandey et al., 2012). Moreover, public and private managers employ different leadership styles that are similar in decision-making but their behaviors are different based on the context of the enterprise (Andersen, 2010). When it comes to public sector leadership behavior and the context of the environment leaders work in, it is imperative to not forget how interconnected politics is to the organization structure and services offered. In comparing public and private managers, Andersen (2010) noted that politics are fundamental to the engine of the organization that probably drives the public and private differences. Additionally, Buelens and Van den Broeck (2007) compared data between public and private sector employees to find that the public sector employees prefer to lead a less competitive life that is focused on security with a family-work balance. Since transformational leader hinges on the leader knowing and understanding the nature of their work environment and mission, studies like these showed structural factors drive the workforce.

Transforming Motivation

Transformational leadership or leadership that simply encourages or builds the worker has shown to motivate or bring out greater interest in their work beyond their sense of self. Public sector motivation is defined by Perry and Wise (2010) as a predisposition for a worker to respond to motives through the lens of public sector organizations and generally attached to several concerns that are believed to motivate human behavior, like self-concern or interest. In relation to transformational leadership outcomes related to motivation, Oberfield (2014)

conducted a longitudinal analysis of transformational leadership in the workplace and found that transformational and transactional models are positive predictors in worker cooperation, satisfaction, and their views on their quality of work. Transformational leadership characteristics encourage learning and through that learning creativity is usually a byproduct of energized production. It has been found that transformational leadership encourages employee self-confidence and efficacy which increases job performance (Gong et al., 2009). As the motivational research grows, there seems to be a need to question what other factors influence motivation, like need for security or contextual environment (Perry & Wise, 2010).

Motivation and Transformational Leadership in Social Services

Due to the bureaucratic nature and structural set up of the public sector, there are many issues that plague social services (Green, 1966). Green stated that there is conflict between social work and the bureaucratic philosophy underlying a welfare organization, noting that social workers are likely to see themselves as victims of a bureaucracy due to a notion of having no control (1966). Attitudes like this are evident in Munyeka's (2014) study that conducted a quantitative survey measuring the levels of motivation among 30 employees and managers from a public service department in the Limpopo Province. It was found that multiple factors influence motivation but that job satisfaction and involvement were most prominent. They concluded that the public service employees were "demotivated and demoralized and lastly, management [was] lacking in motivation skills" (Munyeka, 2014, p. 968-969). Their data showcased the majority of workers saw their work as unchallenging and dissatisfying. They recommended education to be incorporated in policy and for the public service department to identify leader motivating skills to improve the sector. Leadership is then posed as a problem but

also as a solution. Thus, in large organizations like these the greater the size calls for more of a leadership presence (Green, 1966).

Studies of transformational leadership in social services has been limited, but the collective research points to transformational leadership having a positive influence on social workers' involvement in work activities, collaboration, and perceived effectiveness in leadership (Fisher, 2009). Fisher pointed out that the principles of transformational leadership are harmonious with social service principles because transformational leadership recognizes leaders are part of an organizational system that is interdependent on various factors (2009). This aligns with findings in a study by Mary (2005) that looked into transformational leadership by surveying individuals in The National Network for Social Work Managers and the Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA). The findings illustrated leaders had transformational approaches and their leadership style was linked to effectiveness and approval. Furthermore, Tafvelin et al. (2014) saw that empirical studies are moving the social work literature to see a leader not as a controlling figure but as a visionary figure who inspires to help endure the social service challenges of the future. In their own study they looked at front line managers in a Swedish social service organization to evaluate the role of transformational leadership on job clarity and commitment. The outcomes show that transformational leadership does contribute to their job purpose and commitment (Tafvelin et al., 2014). However, studies are complex with contradicting findings. In a later study by Tafvelin et al. (2018) it was found that because of the formal structure and guidelines in public organizations, this set up can cancel the transformational leader effect. In their study that interviewed Swedish social service managers throughout their first year in their position, they saw hindering leadership factors that were associated with the nature of their environment

pointing to financial limits, heavy workloads, and a disconnection to workers. Tafvelin et al. (2018) concluded the significance of this study suggests management can target the hindering factors to allow transformational leadership to create a better environment.

Moreover, targeting and learning from the study nuances is central to the varied findings in the social work literature. For instance, Boehm & Yoels (2009) looked at welfare organizations and found that to deliver the appropriate service to the public, empowering social workers is essential. Empowering is seen as giving autonomy to complete organizational goals through elements like awareness, identification, connectedness, and authority for decision-making (Boehm & Yoels, 2009). They also found that perhaps because social worker's commitment to management is not as strong as their commitment to clients, leadership influence was not as effective as other studies show in other organizations. Also, they also found that social cohesiveness connects with effectiveness (Boehm & Yoels, 2009). This contradicts the transformational leadership findings on psychological empowerment, but as Tafvelin et al. (2018) concluded that targeting hindering factors is important, the understanding the mediators like social cohesiveness in the environment and the work tasks are central in the development of the literature. Also, Tafvelin et al. (2014) points out that transformational leadership takes time to incorporate into the work space due to the relationship building, which presents a setback in terms of long-term studies. Furthermore, this awareness of the varied factors relates to the Kjeldsen study that highlighted public sector motivation is not just about a worker being attracted to the environment of social service work but that actual work itself that informs the public vs private sector motivational difference (2014).

The social work literature recognizes the study of motivation is important but the literature has not been sufficiently developed to offer practical findings for application (Gold,

1990). Despite Gold stating this in the 1990s, studies that followed have echoed that social service motivation and leadership research is underdeveloped in social work literature (Fisher, 2009). Researchers are calling for more motivation and leadership studies in social work and emphasize social work administrators should cultivate growth, knowledge, and test their practices to share the findings. As the studies highlighted have illustrated, the social service organizations studied are limited. For the purpose of this research proposal, DPSS was chosen as the typical representative of a social services organization that falls under Green's (1966) definition of a bureaucratic structure, but it also bears no comprehensive research studies through social service or public administration literature.

Previous Research Studies

The findings and studies reviewed showcase a pattern that examines the relationships between the leadership behaviors and the outcomes they produce in workers. They breakdown leadership theory to find practical indicators to move beyond the theoretical realm. Paarlberg & Lavigna (2010) employed this approach in their study that examined how leaders can utilize positive behaviors known to the literature to generate practices for management. They pointed out how studies have shifted from understanding what motivates public servants to how inherent public sector motives impacts their performance. These researchers looked at the interrelated connections that inform leadership style and behavior. For instance, Spreitzer et al. (2005) study looked at transformational leadership in the context of cultural values, particularly how a traditional environment moderates the effectiveness of transformational leadership while Dust et al. (2014) and Pieterse et al. (2010) focused on the psychological empowerment link in transformational leadership. Similarly, Brown and Moshavi (2005) as well as Rubin et al. (2005) factored in the relationship between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence in the

effort to expand the collective social understanding of leadership. Further building on this social understanding are studies like Goodwin et al. (2011) which examined the presence of trust as a key moderator to the transformational leadership and Gong et al. (2009) that looked at how transformational leadership impacted worker creativity in relation to learning style and how these studies are building a practical framework to leadership management that emphasizes the different social and environmental dimensions. This is vital information for management to tie into organizational missions and job descriptions when setting up leadership positions. This ties into Pandey et al. (2012) study that examined how leaders can amplify motivation by drawing focus to the organizational mission. These studies are informing management that mission statements are vital to organizational success, and the implications are that management reconsider leadership job descriptions to include these moderating factors to elevate the organizational job performance.

Literature Research Gap

A research gap in the literature can be found in needing more replicated studies that take practical combinations of the proven characteristics and behaviors that transformational leaders have in varied settings for verification (Pieterse et al., 2010; Pandey et al., 2012). It is not just about knowing how transformational leadership operates in varied work cultures, but also when and why the leadership style works in relation to context (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Also, Oberfield (2014) suggested that more temporally centered studies need to be conducted so many variables are accounted in the long run. Researchers need build on public service values by observing transformational leadership effects on individual workers as well as organizational motivations and practices (Paarlberg & Lavigna, 2010). Furthermore, just as the researchers have pointed out that replication and further exploration is needed on transformational leadership and the public

sector, the organizations sampled in these studies are so vast, mixed, and not often replicated. They were vaguely grouped in sample sizes referred to as general government agencies (Goodwin et al., 2011; Pandey et al., 2012). Research into the literature studies in public administration show a gap where there is no specific or extensive body of work focusing on a particular organization in the public sector. This demonstrates the research remains academic and removed from the day-to-day mechanistic operations of the public sector. Additionally, a reason for this limitation is due to the confidentiality government agencies and bureaucracies are bound to. For instance, social services error rates and employee performance records are often confidential, so it is difficult to obtain public statistics on sensitive government services. Because not much literature is specifically documenting motivation or performance in specific organizations like DPSS, much of public administration studies revert to a general public sector significance.

Summary

The leadership and motivation literature explored relate transformational leadership as possessing key practical behaviors that produce transformation through model behavior, emotional intelligence, trust, empowerment, and mission vision to produce motivational outcomes in the workforce. The charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are present in many of these mediating characteristics and outcomes. This review helps see that, “leadership not just as interaction, but more holistically, as a function of capabilities possessed and deployed by the individual leader” (Brown & Moshavi, 2005, p. 868). These key practical behaviors that generate more studies help ground transformational leadership as opposed to becoming an abstract leadership theory. Also, the review saw that motivation and transformational leadership is less developed in the social services sector and researchers in that

field are calling for more studies (Fisher, 2009). Moreover, Mumford & Fried (2014) warned against other forms of leaderships that ground themselves in abstract or ambiguous concepts, like ethical, spiritual, or servant leadership styles which can place distance between the everyday reality of organizational management. The more direct we can obtain traits that are linked to outcomes the less likely the model of leadership is susceptible to manipulation. Van Wart (2013) cautioned about the dangers of transformational leadership when leader passionate efforts become egotistical. To potentially avoid these issues, the theory of transformational leadership could be further explored to ground in practicality with a clear roadmap of traits and outcomes to avoid vagueness and cement itself as the predominant leadership style.

Methodology

The proposed research focuses on transformational leadership behaviors that are found to produce motivational attitudes manifesting as trust, empowerment, and improved workforce performance. The methodology aims to evaluate if transformational leadership produces motivational behaviors and improves work performance in DPSS public sector workers. The results could indicate if transformational leadership can be targeted and concretized in a public sector organization to produce predictable motivational behaviors in workers to improve organizational performance.

Research Question

Does having a transformational leader improve worker motivation and performance in DPSS? It is hypothesized that transformational leadership will improve motivation and performance.

Research Design

The research design will be a quasi-experimental design with a six-month timeline. A pre-test and post-test questionnaire will be given to eligibility workers to examine attitude statements on trust, empowerment, and work performance through a Likert-scale measurement system. In addition to the pre-test and post-test, organization reports on worker case production will be generated for work performance comparison. This research method is used due to organizational limitations related to unit stability, time constraints, cost-effectiveness, worker accessibility, and work-site confidentiality.

Population and Sample

With organizational permission, DPSS will allow research into one department office and survey four units who will be presented with supervisors who will purposely exhibit

transformational leadership to see if the supervisors' transformational leadership style improves workers' motivation. Due to HR restrictions, convenience sampling will be used. HR and researcher will select the four eligibility supervisors that exhibit transformational leadership qualities defined as showcasing charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration behaviors when leading and interacting with the unit (Bass, 2007). The supervisors will each be assigned to a unit made up of 10 eligibility workers. The total number of sample participants will be 40 eligibility workers being surveyed.

Data Collection

The timeline for this research study will be six months. On the first day of transformational eligibility supervisor assignment, the 40 eligibility workers will be administered a pre-test by HR through email to ensure privacy and confidentiality for worker and organization. Then a post-test will be administered after six months from initial pre-test date. The instrument will be a Likert-type 5-point scale questionnaire with 10 questions administered as a pre-test and post-test to measure worker motivation attitudes in relation to leadership style (see Appendix). The scale range measurement is 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree. Motivation in the questions will be defined as showcasing attitudes that reflect trust (defined as perceiving social safety and commitment from supervisor); empowerment (defined as feeling purpose and important in the organization); and work performance (defined as total number cases processed). DPSS HR survey software and Leader Replacement System (LRS) software will be used to calculate questionnaire findings and shared with researcher. Also, an LRS software report will be generated on the average number of cases processed by each worker by the eligibility supervisors and given to the researcher on the

same day as pre-test and again on the same day as the post-test. Survey data and number of average cases processed will be used to evaluate worker unit attitude and performance.

The questionnaire findings and work data numbers will be compared to find a correlation between worker attitudes and work performance in the relation to the presence of the transformational leader. The researcher will analyze if the questionnaire answers varied from pre-test to post-test and if the average of cases processed changed. Limitations to keep in mind are that since this is a smaller non-random sample of workers, findings cannot predict the overall organizational population results. Questionnaire does not measure personal demographics, but focuses on worker attitudes to reflect mediating behaviors like trust, empowerment, and work performance in relation to general organizational cultural expectations rather than account for extraneous variables.

Conclusion

Examining the role leadership has in transforming a workforce is crucial today's everchanging world. Transformational leadership embodies behaviors that produce positive attitudes and empowering practices that lead to worker identification in organizational mission values to produce tangible transformations in performance. Studies reinforce the potential charismatic, insightful leadership has on different facets of employee thinking and perceiving. This is advantageous for public administration because it needs to employ agents of change to keep up with societal demands. Public administration deals with the fluid nature of social change and need. It is tied with cultural shifts and political policies that demand transformation. The literature review shows public administration needs more specialized research, longitudinal reviews, and targeted contexts. Reviewing and investing more resources on transformational approaches can clarify the boundaries and resources needed for more operationalization of proven practices in the everyday work settings so as to take these leadership theories from abstract ideas or positive psychology tactics to standardize exchanges and expectations. The results and implications of this study are to add to the micro perspective of a mechanistic environment with fluid individualized leadership to reconceptualized the work being performed and how that transforms the context of the mission and its cultural environment.

References

- Andersen, J. (2010). Public versus private managers: How public and private managers differ in leadership behavior. *Public Administration Review*, 70(1), 131-141.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2009.02117.x>
- Bass, B. (2007). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. In R. Vecchio (Ed.), *Leadership: Understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations* (7th ed., pp. 302-317). University of Notre Dame Press.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvpg85tk.29>
- Bass, B., & Avolio, B. (1993). Transformational leadership and organizational culture. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 17(1), 112-121.
- Boehm, A., & Yoels, N. (2009). Effectiveness of welfare organizations: The contribution of leadership styles, staff cohesion, and worker empowerment. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 39(7), 1360-1380. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcn036>
- Brewer, G., Selden, S., & Facer, R. (2000). Individual conceptions of public service motivation. *Public Administration Review*, 60(3), 254-264. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-3352.00085>
- Brown F. W., & Moshavi, D. (2005). Transformational leadership and emotional intelligence: A potential pathway for an increased understanding of interpersonal influence. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(7), 867-871. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.334>
- Buelens, M., & Van den Broeck, H. (2007). An analysis of differences in work motivation between public and private sector organizations. *Public Administration Review*, 67(1), 65-74. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00697.x>

- Detert, J., & Burris, E. (2007). Leadership behavior and employee voice: Is the door really open? *The Academy of Management Journal*, 50(4), 869-884.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2007.26279183>
- Department of Public Social Services (2020). *DPSS history*. DPSS site.
<https://dpss.lacounty.gov/en/about/history.html>
- Dust, S., Resick, C., & Mawritz, M. (2014). Transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, and the moderating role of mechanistic–organic contexts. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(3), 413-433. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1904>
- Fairholm, M. (2004). Different perspectives on the practice of leadership. *Public Administration Review*, 64(5), 577-590. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2004.00405.x>
- Fisher, E. A. (2009). Motivation and leadership in social work management: A review of theories and related studies. *Administration in Social Work*, 33(4), 347-367.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03643100902769160>
- Green, A. (1966). The professional social worker in the bureaucracy. *Social Service Review*, 40(1), 71-83. <https://doi.org/10.1086/641857>
- Gold, N. (1990). Motivation: The crucial but unexplored component of social work practice. *Social Work*, 35(1), 49-56. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/35.1.49>
- Gong, Y., Huang, J., & Farh, J. (2009). Employee learning orientation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity: The mediating role of employee creative self-efficacy. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 52(4), 765-778.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2009.43670890>

- Goodwin, V., Whittington, J., Murray, B., & Nichols, T. (2011). Moderator or mediator? Examining the role of trust in the transformational leadership paradigm. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 23(4), 409-425.
- Hannah, S., Woolfolk, R., & Lord, R. (2009). Leader self-structure: A framework for positive leadership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30(2), 269-290.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.586>
- Hirst, G., Van Dick, R., & Van Knippenberg, D. (2009). A social identity perspective on leadership and employee creativity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30(7), 963-982.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.600>
- Hsieh, C., Yang, K., & Fu, K. (2012). Motivational bases and emotional labor: Assessing the impact of public service motivation. *Public Administration Review*, 72(2), 241-250.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02499.x>
- Joshi, A., Lazarova, M., & Liao, H. (2009). Getting everyone on board: The role of inspirational leadership in geographically dispersed teams. *Organization Science*, 20(1), 240-252.
<https://doi.org/10.1287/Orsc.1080.0383>
- Kjeldsen, A. M. (2014). Dynamics of public service motivation: Attraction-Selection and socialization in the production and regulation of social services. *Public Administration Review*, 74(1), 101-112. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12154>
- Mary, N. L. (2005). Transformational leadership in human service organizations. *Administration in Social Work*, 29(2), 105-118. https://doi.org/10.1300/j147v29n02_07
- Moon, M. (2000). Organizational commitment revisited in new public management: Motivation, organizational culture, sector, and managerial level. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 24(2), 177-194. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3381267>

- Mumford, M., & Fried, Y. (2014). Give them what they want or give them what they need? Ideology in the study of leadership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(5), 622-634. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1921>
- Munyeka, W. (2014). The levels of motivation among employees in a selected public service department. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2014-09-01. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n20p960>
- Oberfield, Z. (2014). Public management in time: A longitudinal examination of the full range of leadership theory. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, 24(2), 407-429. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mus060>
- Paarlberg, L., & Lavigna, B. (2010). Transformational leadership and public service motivation: Driving individual and organizational performance. *Public Administration Review*, 70(5), 710-718. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02199.x>
- Pandey, S., Wright, B., & Moynihan, D. (2012). Pulling the levers: Transformational leadership, public service motivation, and mission valence. *Public Administration Review*, 72(2), 206-215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02496.x>
- Peirce, W. (1981). Bureaucratic politics and the labor market. *Public Choice*, 37(2), 307-320. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00138249>
- Perry, J., Hondeghem, A., & Wise, L. (2010). Revisiting the motivational bases of public service: Twenty years of research and an agenda for the future. *Public Administration Review*, 70(5), 681-690. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02196.x>
- Piccolo, R., Greenbaum, R., Den Hartog, D., & Folger, R. (2010). The relationship between ethical leadership and core job characteristics. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(2/3), 259-278. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.627>

- Pieterse A., Van Knippenberg, D., Schippers, M., & Stam, D. (2010). Transformational and transactional leadership and innovative behavior: The moderating role of psychological empowerment. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(4), 609-623.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.650>
- Perry, J.L, Hondeghem, A., & Wise, L.R. (2010). Revisiting the motivational bases of public service: Twenty years of research and an agenda for the future. *Public Administration Review*, 70(5), 681-690. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02196.x>
- Richardson, H. A., & Vandenberg, R. (2005). Integrating managerial perceptions and transformational leadership into a work-unit level model of employee involvement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(5), 561-589. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.329>
- Rubin, R., Munz, D., & Bommer, W. (2005). Leading from within: The effects of emotion recognition and personality on transformational leadership behavior. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 48(5), 845-858. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.18803926>
- Schwarz, G., Eva, N., & Newman, A. (2020). Can public leadership increase public service motivation and job performance? *Public Administration Review*, 80(4), 543-554.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13182>
- Spreitzer, G. M., Hopkins Perttula, K., & Xin, K. (2005). Traditionality matters: An examination of the effectiveness of transformational leadership in the United States and Taiwan. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(3), 205-227. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.315>
- Tafvelin, S., Hyvönen, U., & Westerberg, K. (2014). Transformational leadership in the social work context: The importance of leader continuity and co-worker support. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 44(4), 886-904. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcs174>

- Tafvelin, S, Isaksson, K., & Westerberg, K. (2018). The first year of service: A longitudinal study of organisational antecedents of transformational leadership in the social service organisations. *British Journal of Social Work*, 48(2), 430-448
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcx038>
- Van Wart, M. (2013). Lessons from leadership theory and the contemporary challenges of leaders. *Public Administration Review*, 73(4), 553-565.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12069>
- Wright, B. E. (2001). Public-Sector work motivation: A review of the current literature and a revised conceptual model. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 11(4), 559-586. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a003515>
- Zhang, X., & Bartol, K. (2010). Linking empowering leadership and employee creativity: The influence of psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creative process engagement. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 53(1), 107-128.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2010.48037118>
- Zhu, Y., & Akhtar, S. (2014). How transformational leadership influences follower helping behavior: The role of trust and prosocial motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(3), 373-392. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1884>

Appendix

Employee Survey on Work Culture

Please complete the following questionnaire about your current attitudes about your position by rating the degree of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

Statements:

1. I feel social safety in my work environment where I can speak up freely.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

2. I feel committed with a sense of duty to my job.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

3. I see great models of leadership around me.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

4. I often feel inspired to do my work.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

5. There is continuous skill development in my work.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

6. I need better leadership in this organization.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree

7. I do not trust those around me.
 - a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree

- e. 5 = strongly agree
8. I feel disconnected from the work culture.
- a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree
9. I do not need to improve my work performance.
- a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree
10. I feel limited with the work I do.
- a. 1 = strongly disagree
 - b. 2 = disagree
 - c. 3 = neither agree nor disagree
 - d. 4 = agree
 - e. 5 = strongly agree