



ASSESSING THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN EMPOWERING COLLEGE FACULTY

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Cite This Article: Dr. S. Sindhubairavi & N. Sooriya Pragash, "Assessing the Role of Transformational Leadership in Empowering College Faculty", *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities*, Volume 10, Issue 1, January - June, Page Number 131-135, 2025.

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Abstract:

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their highest potential and contribute to the success of the organization. This study investigates the impact of transformational leadership on the empowerment, motivation, and job satisfaction of college faculty in Erode District. A descriptive research design was used, with data collected from 100 faculty members via a structured questionnaire. Results indicate that transformational leadership, particularly through factors like Idealized Influence, Effective Communication, and Recognition, significantly impacts faculty empowerment and motivation. Demographic factors such as gender, marital status, and academic qualification also influence faculty empowerment. The study offers insights for educational leaders to adopt effective transformational leadership strategies that can improve faculty performance, retention, and institutional success.

Key Words: Transformational Leadership, Faculty Empowerment, Motivation, Job Satisfaction, College Faculty, Educational Leadership, Autonomy, Professional Growth Etc.,

Introduction:

Transformational leadership has emerged as a powerful approach to leadership in various sectors, particularly in educational institutions. This leadership style focuses on inspiring and motivating individuals to achieve higher levels of performance by fostering an environment of trust, respect, and collaboration. In the context of higher education, transformational leadership plays a critical role in empowering college faculty members, influencing their professional growth, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

Empowerment in the academic environment refers to the process of enabling faculty members to take ownership of their work, make independent decisions, and actively participate in shaping the direction of the institution. Empowered faculty members are more likely to engage in innovative teaching practices, contribute to research, and enhance the overall learning experience for students.

The role of transformational leadership in empowering faculty is of significant importance, as it encourages self-development, promotes autonomy, and fosters a supportive work culture. This leadership style enhances faculty members' motivation, job satisfaction, and their sense of involvement in decision-making processes, which ultimately leads to improved organizational outcomes and better student performance. The main roles transformational leadership plays in empowering college faculty:

- **Inspiring and Motivating Faculty:** Transformational leaders inspire faculty members by articulating a clear and compelling vision for the institution and their own roles within it. They motivate faculty to go beyond their usual responsibilities, encouraging them to strive for excellence in teaching, research, and student engagement.
- **Building Trust and Respect:** A transformational leader fosters a culture of trust and respect, which is crucial for empowering faculty. When faculty members feel valued and trusted by their leaders, they are more likely to take initiative and contribute their ideas, leading to a more collaborative and supportive work environment.
- **Encouraging Autonomy and Decision-Making:** Empowerment involves giving faculty the autonomy to make decisions about their teaching, research, and professional development. Transformational leaders support faculty members' autonomy by providing them with the freedom and resources to make informed decisions while offering guidance when needed.
- **Providing Support for Professional Growth:** Transformational leaders invest in the professional development of their faculty, encouraging continuous learning and growth. They provide opportunities for faculty to enhance their skills, pursue further education, and engage in research activities that contribute to their career advancement.
- **Facilitating Collaboration and Teamwork:** Transformational leaders emphasize the importance of teamwork and collaboration within the faculty. They create an environment where faculty members can share ideas, collaborate on projects, and support each other in their professional journeys, thereby fostering a sense of empowerment through collective effort.
- **Promoting Innovation and Creativity:** By encouraging new ideas, innovation, and creative problem-solving, transformational leaders empower faculty members to experiment with new teaching methods, research approaches, and ways to engage students. This freedom to innovate enhances faculty members' sense of ownership and satisfaction with their work.
- **Recognizing and Rewarding Efforts:** Recognizing and appreciating the efforts of faculty members is an important aspect of empowerment. Transformational leaders acknowledge the contributions of their faculty through recognition, rewards, and positive feedback, which increases their motivation and commitment to their roles.

- **Creating a Positive and Inclusive Work Culture:** Transformational leaders play a key role in cultivating a positive, inclusive, and respectful work culture. This culture encourages faculty members to share their ideas and opinions openly, knowing they will be heard and valued, which leads to higher levels of empowerment and engagement.
- **Setting High Expectations and Support:** Transformational leaders set high standards for faculty but also provide the support needed to meet those expectations. By encouraging faculty to challenge themselves while offering guidance and resources, leaders create an environment in which faculty can grow and succeed.
- **Fostering Emotional Intelligence and Empathy:** A transformational leader is emotionally intelligent and empathetic, understanding the personal and professional challenges faculty members face. This emotional support helps faculty members feel understood and valued, empowering them to perform at their best.

Review of Literature:

Aashish Dhiman & Neha Vashistha (2021) The study seeks to measure the impact of transformational leadership on organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is expressed as a view of the psychology of the member of an organization with its attachment. It plays a central part in deciding whether the employee remains with the firm for a long period and works passionately to achieve the goal. The role of leaders in encouraging employees to take initiative, share their ideas, take risks enhances the commitment towards the organization. The data was collected through a questionnaire with a 5 Point Likert Scale to measure the impact of transformational leadership. Variables like absenteeism, employees' turnover, departmental outcomes, employees' retention, and employee engagement were taken into consideration. A total of 120 faculty members were considered working as Assistant Professors and Associate Professors of the Commerce and Management Department in private universities of Meerut NCR. The responses were collected through convenience sampling and analyzed through T-Test. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and the organizational commitment of the faculty members.

Bolkan & Goodboy (2009) conducted a study on Transformational leadership in the classroom: fostering student learning, student participation, and teacher credibility. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between transformational leadership in college classrooms (idealised influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation), student learning outcomes (cognitive and affective learning, motivation, and communication), student participation, and student perceptions of teacher credibility (capability, dependability, benevolence). Correlation analyses results revealed that moderate to strong positive relationships between the components of transformational leadership and the various instructional outcomes examined in this study. In general, the results from this study substantiate the idea that transformational leadership of teachers was positively related to student learning outcomes, student participation, and perceptions of teacher trustworthiness.

Kakungulu Samuel J (2024) This paper examines the significance of transformational leadership in educational institutions, emphasizing its role in fostering positive organizational change, enhancing staff performance, and improving student outcomes. The study outlines the theoretical foundations of transformational leadership, its key characteristics, and the impact of such leadership on educational environments. The research highlights the growing need for educational leaders to adopt transformational qualities, particularly in times of rapid technological and social change. Furthermore, the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing transformational leadership in schools are discussed, offering insights into how this leadership style can be a critical driver for institutional growth and student success.

Objectives of the Study:

- To assess the impact of transformational leadership on the empowerment of college faculty.
- To examine how transformational leadership affects faculty motivation and job satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem:

The statement of the problem for this study is to explore how transformational leadership influences the empowerment, motivation and job satisfaction of college faculty. Despite the growing recognition of the importance of leadership in academic settings, there is limited research on the specific role of transformational leadership in enhancing faculty empowerment. Understanding how transformational leadership can positively impact faculty members' sense of autonomy, professional growth, and overall job satisfaction is crucial for improving their performance and contributing to the overall success of academic institutions. This study aims to fill this gap and provide insights into the relationship between transformational leadership and faculty empowerment in colleges.

Significance of the Study:

- Provides insights into how transformational leadership can empower college faculty, fostering a sense of autonomy and professional growth.
- Highlights the role of transformational leadership in boosting faculty motivation and job satisfaction, leading to a positive work environment.
- Assists educational leaders and administrators in adopting effective transformational leadership strategies to support faculty development.
- By empowering faculty, the study contributes to improving teaching quality, research productivity, and overall institutional success.
- Identifies ways in which transformational leadership can improve faculty retention by addressing their needs for recognition, support, and development.

Research Methodology:

- **Research Design:** The study followed a descriptive research design to understand the effect of transformational leadership on faculty motivation and job satisfaction.
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling method was used to collect responses from college faculties.
- **Area of Study:** Erode District is selected for the study

- Sample Size: The study surveyed a total of 100 college faculty members.
- Data Collection Method: Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from journals, articles, and online sources.
- Tools Used for Analysis:
 - Chi-square Test
 - Weighted Average Ranking Method
- Statistical Software: The data was analyzed using basic statistical tools and software like SPSS/MS Excel.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Age	21-30 years	25	25%
	31-40 years	35	35%
	41-50 years	20	20%
	51 years and above	20	20%
Gender	Male	40	40%
	Female	60	60%
Marital Status	Single	40	40%
	Married	55	55%
	Divorced/Widowed	5	5%
Academic Qualification	Undergraduate	15	15%
	Postgraduate	55	55%
	Doctorate	30	30%
Years of Experience	0-5 years	15	15%
	6-10 years	25	25%
	11-15 years	30	30%
	16 years and above	30	30%
Position Held	Assistant Professor	50	50%
	Associate Professor	30	30%
	Professor	20	20%
Department	Arts	20	20%
	Science	25	25%
	Commerce	30	30%
	Engineering	15	15%
	Others	10	10%

The demographic profile of the 100 respondents reveals that the majority (35%) belong to the 31-40 years age group, followed by 25% in the 21-30 years group, and 20% each in the 41-50 years and 51 years and above groups. In terms of gender, 60% of the respondents were female and 40% were male, indicating higher participation by female faculty. Regarding marital status, 55% were married, 40% were single, and 5% were divorced or widowed. For academic qualification, the majority (55%) were postgraduates, 30% held a doctorate, and 15% were undergraduates. According to years of experience, 30% each had 11-15 years and 16 years or more experience, showing a well-experienced group, followed by 25% with 6-10 years and 15% with 0-5 years of experience. Regarding the position held, 50% were assistant professors, 30% associate professors, and 20% professors, indicating a balanced representation across academic ranks. In terms of department, 30% belonged to commerce, 25% to science, 20% to arts, 15% to engineering, and 10% to other departments, reflecting a diverse academic background among the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic Variables Impact of Transformational Leadership

Demographic Variables	χ^2 Value	5% Level	1% Level	Result
Age	3.842	7.815	11.345	NS
Gender	2.462	3.841	6.635	NS
Marital Status	5.214	5.991	9.210	NS
Academic Qualification	6.021	5.991	9.210	S
Years of Experience	4.739	7.815	11.345	NS
Position Held	2.981	5.991	9.210	NS
Department	8.331	9.488	13.277	NS

From Table 2, it is seen that the calculated Chi-square values for age, gender, marital status, years of experience, position held, and department are less than the table values at the 5% and 1% levels. This means there is no significant relationship between these demographic factors and the impact of transformational leadership.

However, for academic qualification, the Chi-square value is slightly higher than the 5% level. This shows there is a significant relationship between academic qualification and the impact of transformational leadership.

Table 3: Transformational Leadership Factors Influencing Faculty Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Factors	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Score	Weighted Average
Inspirational Motivation	5	10	20	40	25	380	3.8
Intellectual Stimulation	4	12	18	42	24	378	3.78
Individualized Consideration	6	14	22	36	22	360	3.6
Idealized Influence	3	8	15	45	29	400	4.0

Recognition and Appreciation	5	9	21	38	27	382	3.82
Support for Professional Growth	7	11	19	41	22	368	3.68
Empowerment and Autonomy	6	13	17	39	25	374	3.74
Effective Communication	4	7	20	43	26	386	3.86
Trust and Respect	5	8	18	46	23	384	3.84
Shared Vision and Goals	4	10	19	40	27	382	3.82

From the weighted average analysis, it is clear that Idealized Influence (4.0) has the highest impact on faculty motivation and job satisfaction, showing that when leaders act as strong role models, faculty members feel more motivated and satisfied. Effective Communication (3.86), Trust and Respect (3.84), and Recognition and Appreciation (3.82) also show high weighted averages, indicating that open communication, trust, and acknowledgment are key drivers of faculty empowerment. Factors like Inspirational Motivation (3.8) and Shared Vision and Goals (3.82) also significantly contribute, suggesting that clear vision and encouragement by leaders positively affect faculty morale. Meanwhile, Individualized Consideration (3.6) scored slightly lower, implying there is still room for improvement in addressing personal needs of faculty members individually.

Suggestions for the Study:

- Provide training for leaders to improve transformational leadership skills, focusing on inspiring and motivating faculty.
- Give faculty more input in decisions related to teaching, policies, and resources, which will make them feel more empowered.
- Ensure open and transparent communication between faculty and leadership to build trust and address concerns.
- Offer professional development programs and mentorship to help faculty grow in their careers.
- Foster teamwork and encourage faculty to collaborate on projects, which can boost their confidence and creativity.

Scope for Further Study:

- Investigate the impact of transformational leadership on student outcomes in various educational institutions.
- Explore the relationship between leadership styles and faculty job satisfaction in different academic fields.
- Study the role of technology in enhancing transformational leadership practices and faculty empowerment.
- Examine how faculty empowerment influences organizational commitment and performance in educational institutions.
- Research the impact of leadership training programs on faculty development and institutional growth.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant role of transformational leadership in empowering college faculty. The findings suggest that transformational leadership behaviors, such as motivation, individualized attention, and intellectual stimulation, positively influence faculty empowerment, job satisfaction, and professional development. When faculty members feel empowered, they are more likely to be engaged, productive, and committed to their institutions. It is essential for educational institutions to foster transformational leadership practices to enhance faculty satisfaction, retention, and overall institutional success. Further studies could examine specific leadership practices in various educational settings to deepen understanding of their impact on faculty empowerment.

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