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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT OF TEACHERS TO CHANGE: A CASE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (SSTS) IN SOUTHERN PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of transformational leadership style on commitment of teachers to change and impact of different teachers' and organizational factors on perception of teachers about transformational school leadership among secondary schools of Southern Punjab. For this purpose quantitative methods were used to explore the relationships among different constructs. The findings based on multiple regression analysis revealed that transformational leadership in schools has been moderate when teachers' commitment to change and the transformational school leadership are treated as individual variables. Four different aspects of transformational leadership practices in school have explained moderate impact on four different aspects of commitment of teachers to change while the impact of managing instructional program was dominant. The results of multiple regressions also identified strategy, culture, teachers' age and environment as factors with significant relationship with perception of teachers regarding transformational school leadership. Finally, these four

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factors have moderate impact on various aspects related to the teachers' perception regarding transformation school leadership.

Key Words: Transformational, School Leadership, Secondary School Teachers (SSTs), Commitment to Change

Introduction

Reforms in educational sector specifically at secondary and higher secondary schools in West are pervasive and same is the case in East (Liu, 2013). Carnoy et. al. (2003) mentioned that the significance and importance of the role of secondary schools, as compared with other sectors of education, in helping the students to enter in society has been well recognized (Liu, 2013), specifically in case of developing countries like Pakistan. The context of Pakistan is every interesting as reforms and policy movements have caused serious dilemma for higher secondary and secondary schools between preparation of students for entering in higher levels of education and realizing the education quality (Walker et. al., 2012).

Leadership is a process of social influence, facilitating the management to get things done through people while the transformational leadership, in education sector of Pakistan is providing appropriate model to analyze leadership. Different studies like Walker et. al, (2012); Liu, (2013) and others identified that the transformational leadership provides most effective model for engaging teachers in change process, facilitating them to have effective teaching practices and new vision. Very few studies have been conducted in Pakistan, examining effect of transformational leadership on commitment of teachers to change. This paper is therefore aimed to showcase extensive quantitative analysis, exploring its effects on education sector.

Transformational leadership theory for school management is based, to develop the theoretical framework, and perception of teachers regarding transformational leadership, which was developed in American Context. The purpose of this paper is threefold including firstly, to identify the impact of transformational leadership in schools on commitment of teachers to change, secondly, to provide insight to transferability of theories across the cultures and finally to identify the effect of teachers' and organizational factors on perception of teachers about transformational school leadership.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Leadership as mentioned is the process of social influence, playing important role in change process in schools and educational institutions (Achua & Lussier, 2013) while the transformational leadership resulted into commitment among members of organization to new ways of thinking and vision (Huang et. al., 2014), significant for the success of any institution and organization. Followers and leaders facilitate each other, enhancing the motivation and morality, acting as important aspect of transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). Studies identified that motivating teachers and changing conditions of schools are mediating the relationship between student's achievement and transformational school leadership, significantly (Blasé et. al., 2000; Robinson, 1994; Mulford, 2013).

Leithwood (2002) identified different dimensions to understand changing process and transformational leadership in details, including developing people, setting directions, restructuring organization, management of instructional programs and others. The context of Pakistan secondary schools in this regards is unclear, the study therefore mainly investigated the relationship between commitment of teachers to change and transformational

school leadership in secondary school in Southern Punjab, Pakistan.

Transformational Leadership

The research on transformational leadership was first initiated by the Burns (1978), was on the belief that transformational leadership concerns with advancement of motivational and morality by the leaders and subordinates to higher levels by facilitating each other.

The Bass (1985), based on the theory of Burn's (1978) identify and mentioned that common interest between followers and leaders is important for effective leading. The motivation, attitudes and values of followers will be at their highest of maturity and arousal, resulted into extra effects on the followers and subordinates (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1989).

Mulford & Silins, (2002) mentioned that transformational leadership is characterized with focusing on the shared leadership, organizational learning and abilities to solve the problems (Blasé & Bjork, 2009).

In field of education, transformational leadership model was developed gradually by the Leithwood and his colleagues (1994), defined the transformational leadership as model for collective problem solving abilities and improvement of individuals during school change process (Leithwood, 1992; Liu, 2013; Geijsel et. al., 2003).

The definition of transformational leadership given by the Leithwood et. al. (1994) is adopted under this study, also were on the belief that transformational leadership has significant impact on school change process. Mascall, (2003) mentioned that the

establishment of organizational capacity and the capacity of its members is a significantly important point, focused on transformational leadership research, specifically in field of education.

Empirical theories and studies by the Burns & Bass, Kantzi & Leithwood, have identified three major dimensions related to the aspects and practices of transformational school leadership including developing peoples, setting up directions and redesigning the organization. Recently conducted, relatively comprehensive and summarized meta-analysis on impact of transformational school leadership by the Leithwood et. al. (2012) identified that these three transformational leadership practices have moderate positive impact on organizational or school conditions, have strong positive effect on internal status of teachers and moderate effect on collective internal status and behavior of teachers.

Criticism on the transformational leadership has focused on two major aspects and areas including the lack of attention given to the organizational diversity (Blackmore, 2011) and lacking multiple leadership source (Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Northouse, 2007; Ball, 1987). The criticism exist on the transformational leadership is considered as important factor, having influence on building up organizational capacity in order to maintain sustainable changes and setting up new vision for the organization (Liu, 2013).

In this study, the transformational leadership model is adopted in context of curriculum reforms in secondary schools of Pakistan and this model has potential to give rise to the degree of performance and commitment among individuals (Heck & Hallinger, 1999; Liu, 2013).

Leadership Perception

As mentioned, the leadership is the process of social influence, means that the perception of individuals regarding leadership is strongly influenced by the social aspects and factors. In most of the leadership perception researches, the assumption that leadership has ability of social influence is the most important precondition (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1996). Greenfield (1995) identified and mentioned that the most important basis in order to exercise the normative influence depends on different qualities that others are attaching with leaders for instance perception of others that leaders can influence them by relying on their personal abilities and qualities. This concept was termed by Greenfield, (1995) as the Leadership-as-Consent. Additionally, this consent is temporary, must be earned and can be taken away or given to others by the leaders.

The Lard & Mather (1993) identified and developed the approach of cognitive attribution in order link the leadership's perceptual process and the performance. In order to explain the information processing, two different processes including inference based process and recognition based process were developed, taken place in minds of individuals regarding their perception about leaders.

Various leaders' demographic characteristics for instance including the age and gender are likely to influence the teaching development among the teachers. Similarly, the length of service at school may also influence the opportunities that teachers have hand in order to take a part in inference based processes, shaping their leadership perceptions of leaders/principles. Some other in-school variables like school conditions, mission and goals of school, schools' structure and culture, instruction policies and programs, and other resources also have influence in this regards.

Out-of- the School Variables

Different out of the school variables, having influence on perception of teachers about leaders mainly associated with the school district, MoE (Ministry of Education), as well as the local school community. Different studies identified that these organizational and teacher factors can influence the perception of teachers regarding school's transformational leadership. Specifically, the teachers' perception of transformational school leadership among teachers in Pakistan are formed has not been investigated yet. It is therefore necessary and useful to investigate and explore above mentioned factors in new context, facilitating to understand the ways that can be used to motivate the teachers effectively in change context.

Commitment of Teachers to Change

The concept of teachers' commitment to change was first described by the Leithwood et. al. (1993b) and results revealed that teachers' commitment to change is closely associated with the organizational capacity building specifically in the change process in schools. Similarly, based on the motivational theories developed by the Bandura (1986); Ford (1992) and others, the Leithwood et. al. (1999) identified and mentioned that the commitment of teachers to the change is most important and core factor, influencing the change process in schools. Motivational theory of Bandura (1986) mentioned that the environmental events affect functioning of human by the interaction between cognitive and personal factors, personal behaviors and environmental events.

Leithwood et. al. (1999) identified that the commitment to the students and organizational commitment as the part of commitment of teachers to the change. Additionally, four different

elements that are involved in the motivational process of teachers including beliefs regarding one's capacities, personal goals, emotional arousal processes and beliefs regarding one's context. In terms of characteristics regarding organizational goals, different elements that are important include difference between personal goals and organizational existing goals should be significant, goals and aims should be clear to the teachers, goals must be realistic i.e. must be achievable and it is more important to have short term goals instead long term.

Capacity beliefs of the individual mainly include the self-confidence, self-efficacy, different aspects of self-esteem and academic self-concept Yu et. al., (2002); Geijsel et. al., (2003). It is therefore important for the teachers to have positive perception regarding capacity to conduct the teaching effectively, as the modes used to manage the classrooms are decided by the level of efficacy beliefs.

On the other hand the context beliefs are strongly affected by the different diverse features of school for instance including the size of school, community sense, feedback from the leaders and colleagues, teaching assignments and others, having direct affect on motivation level of teachers and their efforts to be the part of change process (Beatty, 2008; Leithwood et. al., 2008).

Different studies conducted in Canada have identified and confirmed that different teacher factors like gender, grade taught, tenure, experience, age and different internal school factors like mission and goals of school, school's culture, structure of school, instructions and programs, resources and policies, size and resources etc. have strong relations with the perception of teachers about transformational leadership in context of Canada.

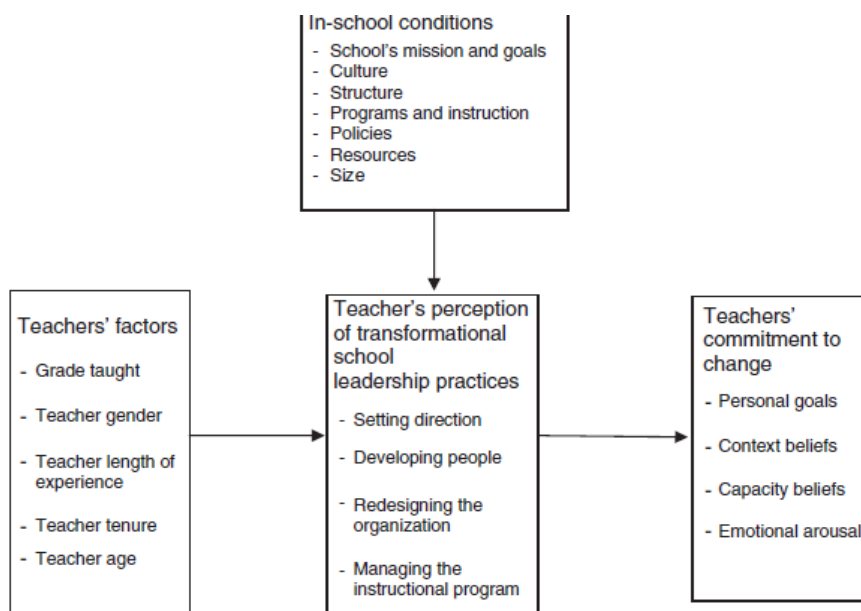
Research Methodology

Instrument

In this study, three different questionnaires and instruments were used including firstly the self-administered Transformational School Leadership instrument, secondly the teachers' commitment to the changes and thirdly an organizational characteristics questionnaires developed and used by the Leithwood et. al. (1993a, b) were used for data collection.

The principle component analysis for second and third questionnaires was conducted in order to ensure the construct validity of the questionnaires. The factor loadings for all the items except item # 01 ranged from 0.781 to 0.913 i.e. except item # 01, all the items are representing the meanings for variable.

The reliability and validity of teachers' commitment to the changes and organizational characteristics questionnaire was determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha, showing value of 0.893 for organizational characteristics questionnaire while it was 0.954 for teachers' commitment to change questionnaire.



Source: Based on Leithwood *et al.* (1994)

Sample

Two different research questions were investigated during course of this study including i.e. the extent to which the transformational leadership practices in schools is explaining variations in level of commitment among the teachers to change and secondly the extent to which different teachers' factors and organizational factors influence the perception of teachers regarding transformational school leadership.

These research questions were answered in two stages i.e. during first stages the reliability and construct validity of instruments used was examined and second stage investigated the impact of transformational school leadership on commitment level of

teachers on their perception regarding transformational school leadership.

The population of subject study was all secondary schools of Southern Punjab and for data collection purpose, 150 secondary schools from three different districts of Southern Punjab including Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur and Multan were selected at random (50 secondary schools from each district) and sample of 750 teachers (5 teachers from each selected secondary school) was selected at random. Table below is showing the procedures adopted for Phase I and Phase II.

Table#1 The Research Process Adopted:

Phases	Sample	Activities Performed
Phase-I (Validating the Survey Questionnaires)	Sample of 150 teachers was selected at random from 30 schools (10 schools from each district)	PCA (Principal Component Analysis) and Calculation of Cronbach’s Alpha
Phase-II (Investigate the Core Research Questions)	Sample of 600 teachers was selected at random from 120 schools (40 schools from each district)	Explore the relationship between teachers’ commitment to change and transformational school leadership. Explore the relationship between teachers and organizational factors and perception of teachers of transformational school leadership.

During first stage of research, 30 schools (10 from each district) were selected at random from main sample of 150 schools (50 from each district) in order to validate the transformational

leadership questionnaire, teachers' commitment to change questionnaire and teachers and organizational characteristics questionnaire. Sample of 150 teachers selected at random (5 from each selected secondary school) was used for validation process. Male teachers and female teachers ratio in sample was 70 percent and 30 percent respectively. The ratio of senior teachers (having experience of 10 years or more) and junior teachers (having experience of less than 10 years) was 40 percent and 60 percent respectively.

Data Analysis and Findings

In order to find and explore the relevant relationships, two different situations were set up. In first situation, transformational school leadership and the commitment of teachers to changes were considered as single factor and identified effect of transformational leadership on the commitment of teachers to change and it was found that this effect was moderate. In other words, the transformational school leadership determines and explains only 41 percent of total variation in commitment of teachers to changes among selected schools of Southern Punjab. Previously conducted study by the Yu et. al. (2002) found 11 percent variation in commitment of teachers to changes due to transformational school leadership. These results are also consistent with the findings of Leithwood et. al. (1993a, b) in which 46 percent of variation in commitment of teachers to changes was determined by the transformational school leadership.

Additionally, the findings are also consistent with the Leithwood et. al. (1994)'s findings that the in-and-out school conditions are also influencing the commitment of teachers to the changes. Similarly, it has also been found that the school district policies among out-of-the school factors is important as influencing the

teachers' motivation since the district government is focusing on quality of education as well as promoting the exams oriented educational system. Similarly, the lack of clarity in roles of teachers, goals of institutions and top-down management system have influence on motivation level of teachers, consistent with the results of different studies for instance including the Zhu et. al. (2011) and Fullan (2007).

Table#2 The Correlation Coefficient among the Four Dimensions of Transformational School Leadership

	Managing Instructional Programs	Developing People	Redesigning Organization	Setting Direction
<i>Managing Instructional Programs</i> Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)				
	1	0.593	0.437	0.556
<i>Developing People</i> Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.593	1	0.495	0.596
	0.000		0.000	0.000
<i>Redesigning Organization</i> Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.437	0.495	1	0.483
	0.000	0.000		0.000
<i>Setting Direction</i> Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.556	0.596	0.483	1
	0.000	0.000	0.000	

Notes: n=600, p < 0.05

In second scenario and situation, four different transformational leadership's dimensions were investigated and found that these four dimensions have moderate effect on four different dimensions of commitment of teachers to change (Leithwood et. al., 1993a). Among these effects, the effect of managing the instructional program was found most prominent. This shown that it is important for the management and school administration to balance the activities performed under instructional management and capacity building, aimed to maximize the effect of transformational leadership.

Comparing the results to the findings of Leithwood et. al. (1993a, b), discussed earlier in literature review, the goal setting practices of transformational leadership are relatively less effective in context of this study as compared with the leadership practices relevant to the management of instructional programs. It also highlighted the importance of having effective activities for goal setting for instance including the communication among teachers and management. Additionally, some schools selected under this study were found, facing the dilemma of paying attentions to the academic records of students or on overall school development and achievement of consistency between their reform goals and other goals of their institution. These findings of study are in line with the findings of Guan & Meng, (2007).

Table#3 The Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Commitment of Teachers to Changes

	Consta nts	Managing Instructio nal Programs	Develo ping People	Redesigning Organization	Setting Direction	R ²
Commitme nt of Teachers to Change	0.4	0.171	0.267	0.345	0.176	0.381
Context Beliefs	0.651	0.245	0.094	0.153	0.154	0.289
Personal Goals	0.405	0.341	0.321	0.169	0.186	0.367
Emotional Arousal	0.306	0.327	0.0349	0.215	0.192	0.409
Capacity Beliefs	0.173	0.391	0.412	0.326	0.175	0.219

Notes: P < 0.05

The results of investigations through multiple regression for second research question under this study insisted on the facts that different factors like the culture, environment, strategies and age are significantly correlated with the transformational school leadership specifically when are treated as a single factor or variable. These findings are in line with the results of Yu et. al. (2002), Geijsel et. al., (2003) and Leithwood et. al. (1993a, b). Results of this study speculate on the unique cultural aspects in Pakistani context in general while specifically where teachers selected in this study were working.

The transformational school leadership, during course of analysis was treated as individual and single variable (dependent), aimed to explore the impact of different organizational and teacher factors like current position, gender, last academic degree, gender, experiences, structure and culture of school, environment at institution and school strategy. The significance level was 5% (0.05). Results of analysis showed that the strategy, culture, age and environment had significant impact and relationship with the TSL (Transformational School leadership). Additionally, 52 percent of variation in TSL is explained by these four factors as summarized in table IV above.

The findings of analysis are also showing that the perception of teachers regarding transformational school leadership is mainly influenced by the change strategies of school, culture of school and school environment. The age of teacher has strong influence on perception of teachers regarding transformational school leadership. Similarly, when four dimensions of teachers' transformational school leadership are taken as single variable, aimed to explore the effects of teacher factors and organizational characteristics on them.

This analysis was aimed to understand underlying aspects and variables influencing the perception of teachers regarding transformational school leadership and in order to identify how much these factors can be controlled by the school administration.

Results of multiple regression analysis shown that:

1. Age, Culture and Environment are explaining 35 percent of variation in setting direction dimension, showing that school environment, culture and age are moderately affecting the formation of teachers' perception of setting direction.

2. Grade, strategy and culture collectively explained 43 percent of variation in developing people dimension, indicating that reform strategy, school culture and grade have strong influence on forming teachers' perception of developing people.
3. Grade, environment, structure and culture are explaining 35 percent of variation in redesigning organization dimension and shown that school structure, culture, grade and environment can influence the formation of teachers' perception, moderately regarding redesigning organization.
4. Strategy and culture are explaining 40 percent of variation in management instructional programs dimension, indicating that the culture of school and strategies have moderate impact on forming the teachers' perception regarding instructional programs.

Table#4 The Relationship between Organizational and Teachers' factors on Teachers' Perception of Transformational School Leadership

	Structure	Constant	Environment	Culture	Age	Strategy	Grade	R^2
Setting Direction		1.865	0.197	0.451	-0.156			0.351
Redesigning Organization	0.141	1.653	0.103	0.321			- 0.174	0.331
Developing People		1.562		0.432		0.15	- 0.174	0.402
Transformational School Leadership		2.134		0.291	-0.056	0.782		0.482
Managing Instructional Program		2.751		0.256		0.109		0.382

Conclusion

Subject study is aimed to explore the relationship between transformational school leadership and commitment of teachers to change along with the effect of teachers and organizational factors on perception of teachers regarding transformation school leadership practices. The results of study revealed that the effects transformational school leadership is influenced by the context i.e. change with respect to context and noticeably having high influence in high power distance and typical collective cultures. These findings of study identified that it is feasible to strengthen the perception of teachers regarding transformational school

leadership and impact it is having on commitment of teachers to changes.

Additionally, this study also identified that effective management of instructional programs has strong influence of transformational school leadership's four dimensions on commitment of teachers to changes. Similarly, context beliefs, personal goals, emotional arousal and capacity beliefs were considered as individual variables, strongly influenced by the effective management of instructional programs and organization redesign, as compared with other dimensions of transformational school leadership.

These findings are interesting particularly in case of Southern Punjab Region of Pakistan as society here is focusing on building relationships instead on management, therefore qualitative research would facilitate to explore the reasons behind teachers' perception that why institutional heads and principals are focusing mainly on instructional activities. These findings also identified and suggest that balanced instructional management with different other capacity building activities in secondary schools of Southern Punjab Region of Pakistan would be beneficial for region and schools as changes and sustainability of institutional developments are relying on organizational capacity.

These findings are also implying that the impact of different transformational school leadership dimensions can change in different cultural contexts. This requires further investigation and research, focusing on effectiveness of different dimensions so that general rules of leadership can be established across cultures. Finally, this study confirmed that different organizational factors for instance including the environment, structure, strategy and culture have more significant role in development and formation of perceptions of teachers regarding transformational school leadership as compared with the teachers' personal factors.

Additionally, different teacher factors other than their age and grade they taught have little influence on the perception of teachers regarding transformations school leadership among secondary schools of Southern Punjab Region in Pakistan. According to the results of this study, transformational school leadership has been identified evidently as an effective approach in secondary school of Southern Punjab, Pakistan and combining and applying different practices under transformation school leadership can motivate the teachers effectively to be a part of changes management system in their respective schools and institutions.

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