

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN LIBRARIES: A PANACEA FOR INCREASING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LIBRARY PERSONNEL

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that this era of globalization facilitated by rapid and sporadic growth in all aspects of human life which may make an organisation personnel lose interest in their work requires a leadership style that considers influencing, motivating, driving, and motivating organization's personnel to be responding to emerging challenges. Its main objective is to show how transformational leadership can be used to increase leadership effectiveness in libraries. It notes that the four qualities of transformational leadership – idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration – are instruments that if efficiently and technically utilized would aid in empowering, inspiring, motivating and exploiting the skills of library personnel in achieving a library mission, visions, and objectives. It recommends that the use of a transformational leadership style in library will make the library personnel productive because since it is concerned with intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, it drives library personnel to be committed to solving problems and responding to challenges that may arise while working on achieving library goals.

Keywords: Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Library Personnel, Library Goals, Library Objectives.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization facilitated by rapid and sporadic growth in technologies, many factors are facilitating the survival and stability of establishments and organizations – in which libraries are inclusive – and one of those factors is leadership. This is because the hallmark of a library's qualitative transition from its current routines, practices, and services is based on the qualities of the leadership of such a library.

According to Constantino (2016), leadership is a process that requires constant bi-directional feedback from everybody involved to ensure learning and make progression occur. This makes the concept of leadership to be one of the most talked-about concepts in recent times in every formal set-up – even in libraries – because leadership is the pillar that holds all other components of a library, particularly the personnel, ensuring that they cooperatively work in alignment to achieve a library's goals, missions, and visions.

The field of Librarianship is largely experiencing a shift of paradigms in all aspects and for libraries to positively respond to changes accompanying those paradigms requires individuals with leadership skills of the 21st century. This goes beyond holding a position in the library. It requires influencing every library stakeholder to be inspired and motivated to play their roles in advancing the course of Librarianship in this era. The late Steve Jobs says, "Leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could."

This makes Eswaran's (2021) notion on leadership that "Leadership is not a title. You can never be appointed a leader, whatever your business card may say. Leadership has to be earned. Certain individuals have the ability to impact the lives of others with their actions, insights, and words" fit into this context. The current reality in the field of Librarianship calls for viewing the status of Librarianship through the lens of leadership that possesses the charisma to engender positive workplace experience, improve library staff motivation, performance, and engagement, which thus means transformational leadership.

1.1 Conceptual Overview of Transformational Leadership

Since the concept of transformational leadership was propounded by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), it has undergone various interpretations and transformations from scholars and authors basing their views and positions on advancing Burns' and Bass' definitions. Masa'deh, Obeidat, and Tarhini (2016) defined transformational leadership as the process of developing personnel for the purpose of achieving the goals of an organization so that the person can contribute to the development of the organization.

Vito, Higgins, and Denney (2014) believed that the concept of transformational leadership can be better understood by comparing it with transactional leadership which were both propounded by Burns. They noted that transactional leadership is concerned with building a good relationship with each personnel a reciprocal relationship between organizational leaders and their subordinates. In transactional leadership, in order to build relationships, some form of values must be exchanged between leaders and subordinates. The values have been described as economic, political, and psychological (Ravichandran et al., as cited in Ugwu, Onyanacha, and Lombard, 2020).

The act of building relationships and some forms of values with organization personnel before they can be productive in organizations, therefore made Dubinski (2022) see transformational leadership as a leadership style that motivates personnel through inspiration. He submitted that transformational leadership is one of the most coveted leadership styles because it provides a high payout to organizations and personnel, boosts morale, increases motivation, job performance, and satisfaction.

Hooper and Potter (2001), in their book "Intelligent Leadership: Creating a Passion for Change" posited that transformational leadership requires the leader to inspire the personnel to reach standards of performance that they wouldn't otherwise have reached were it not for the impact of the leader. Thus, the personnel's behaviors have to be transformed by the actions and, perhaps, the charisma of the leader. Transformational leaders emphasize personal and professional growth and encourage all organizations' personnel to think creatively in developing solutions to longstanding challenges. They can also be most impactful in leading younger personnel, helping to integrate them into the organization's culture, and giving them a sense that their work is a part of something special (Michigan State University, 2022).

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The concept of leadership is one of the most talked-about concepts in all walks of life (Burns, 1978; Hooper and Potter, 2001) because it is concerned with working with an organization's personnel, influencing them to do what is right, and bringing out the best in them. The need for leading people in accordance with their behaviors, interests, beliefs, and values has led to the development of various leadership styles, such as democratic, participatory, laissez-faire, autocratic, transactional, transformational, and other styles used in different organizations. These leadership styles are applicable to libraries, too.

As varied as the leadership styles are, with their respective benefits, it is disturbing to note that libraries have been struggling to identify the most appropriate leadership styles for many decades now. And because libraries are going through a period of rapid and drastic changes facilitated by the ICTs, which requires libraries' personnel to be continuously improving their competence and recharging their skills, it, therefore, becomes highly important for libraries to adopt transformational leadership as a leadership style that promises to catalyze libraries' personnel as they are striving to respond to change in all aspects of library operations.

Transformational leadership is suitable for enhancing personnel productivity because it is dynamic for three obvious reasons: First, it can be applied to different cultural settings (Ivey and Kline, 2010); second, it can lead to a better and more positive relationship between a supervisor and their subordinates (Masa'deh, Obeidat, and Tarhini, 2016) and third, it is reported to have a strong association with several individuals as well as organizational outcomes. Based on the foregoing, this paper, therefore, establishes bases for transformational leadership in libraries as a panacea for increasing the productivity of library personnel.

Objectives of the Paper

1. To show how transformational leadership can be used to increase leadership effectiveness in libraries,
2. To show how transformational leadership can be used to create emotional alignment between the library workforce and their works
3. To justify why transformational leadership is better to make library employees productive during this era of continuous change in all aspects of library operations

3.0 DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In 1978, James MacGregor Burns, an American historian, conducted descriptive research on political leaders. The outcome of the research led to the introduction of the concepts of "Transformational Leadership" and "Transactional leadership." Burns (1978) posited that transforming leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. He differentiated between transformational and transactional leadership and submitted that the transforming approach, unlike the transactional approach, is not based on a "give and take" relationship, but on the leader's personality, traits, and ability to make a change through example, articulation of an energizing vision and challenging goals.

Burns further noted that the transformational leadership approach creates a significant change in the life of people and organizations. It redesigns perceptions and values and changes the expectations and aspirations of personnel. Transformational leadership is idealized in the sense that leaders are amoral exemplars working towards the benefit of the team, organization, and/or community. Burns theorized that transforming and transactional leadership were mutually exclusive styles. Transactional leaders usually do not strive for cultural change in the organization but they work in the existing culture while transformational leaders can try to change organizational culture.

In 1985, Bernard M. Bass, an American psychologist cum researcher, extended the work of Burns (1978) by explaining the psychological mechanisms that underlie transforming and transactional leadership. Bass used the term "transformational" instead of "transforming" used by Burns (1978). Bass felt that the initial concepts of transforming and transactional leadership were not practically exhausted and therefore added metrics to help explain how transformational leadership could be measured, as well as how it impacts follower motivation and performance.

Burns asserted that the extent to which a leader is transformational is measured first in terms of his influence on the followers. The followers of such a leader feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect for the leader and because of the qualities of the transformational leader, followers are willing to work harder than originally expected. These outcomes occur because the transformational leader offers followers something more than just working for self-gain; they provide followers with an inspiring mission and vision and give them an identity. The leader transforms and motivates followers through his or her idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Langston University, n.d.). Bass further added that a transformational leader encourages followers to come up with new and unique ways to challenge the status quo and to alter the environment to support being successful (Bass, 1985).

4.0 QUALITIES OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The research related to transformational leadership by Bass resulted in the labeling of 4 distinct qualities. These four qualities of authentic transformational leadership (Liesl Keen Consulting, 2021) distinguished transformational leadership from other types of leadership (Ugwu, Onyancha, and Fombard, 2020). According to Bass as cited in Rao (2014) the four "Is" of transformational leadership qualities are:

1. **Idealised Influence:** This quality of transformational leadership means that a transformational leader's behaviors influence library personnel; it requires that a transformational leader should exhibit and demonstrate the behaviors he wants to see his followers in the library inculcate, influencing them by being the ideal person he wants them to be.

This quality results in library personnel developing deep trust and respect for the leader. The idealized influence has two major aspects: the leader's behaviors and the elements that are attributed to the leader by library personnel and other associates. Showing personnel that they can accomplish objectives they initially felt were impossible builds the leader's influence on future missions and objectives. This makes transformational leaders ultimately build the capacity in personnel to become self-organized and controlled (Liesl Keen Consulting, 2021).

2. **Inspirational Motivation:** This quality is concerned with the leader's abilities to make targets, goals, objectives, mission, and vision appealing or meet the expectations of the followers. This requires a high level of charisma because charismatic leaders are good at inspiring followers by talking optimistically about what needs to be accomplished in the future and instilling in their followers positive ideals that are related to desired outcomes.

Transformational leaders possess inspirational appeal by making followers feel valued, self-confident, and assured that their leader can overcome obstacles to meet new challenges and opportunities. It also involves the act of specifying a vision and sharing it with followers to strengthen a leader's level of inspirational motivation and results in an organization's openness to change (Avoleo, Waldman, and Yamarinno, 1991).

3. **Intellectual Stimulation:** Transformational leaders in libraries empower employees by allowing mistakes, encouraging employees to use their voice by being open to upward and bottom-up feedback. Transformational leaders support and stimulate their followers' creativity and innovation, encourage their followers to challenge assumptions, take risks and apply new methods of solving problems.

4. **Individualised Consideration:** This core of transformational leadership style means a genuine interest in followers' needs, development, and feelings (Dubinski, 2022). Thus, transformational leaders have to pay a great deal of personal attention to followers, increasing trust and improving relationships within the library. A transformational leader in the library is expected to be aware of the personal interests, needs, and motivations of every library employee, attend to the employees' needs, act as a mentor or coach, and listen to the employees' concerns.

5.0 EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN LIBRARIES

Libraries across the globe are using different leadership styles they perceive suitable to the issues at hand, their socio-cultural contexts, and how the library managers choose to drive and inspire personnel to achieve set objectives. The outcomes of various undertakings in libraries, influenced by the roles of leaders have led to conducting academic inquiries on finding the best leadership style for libraries. Most of the research results revealed that as

occasion demands, library leaders need to adjust their styles in order to respond to the call of leadership.

Uwandu (2020) conducted research on the Influence of Leadership Styles on the Job Performance of Librarians in Public University Libraries in Imo State. Survey and correlational research designs were used, whilst the census enumeration sampling technique was used to collect data from 61 librarians through questionnaires. Her study establishes the relationship between leadership styles and job performance of librarians in university libraries in Imo State. It revealed that the majority of the librarians perform their jobs to a high extent. It also revealed that the leadership style adopted by a library has a significant individual and joint effect on the job performance of the librarians.

Philips (2014) in her article titled What Do We Mean by Library Leadership? Leadership in LIS Education, she argues that the multiple definitions for the word 'leadership' and vast numbers of leadership styles make it difficult to identify what exactly leadership means when discussing library leadership. She acknowledged that transformational leadership has been responsible for significant changes in libraries because it is a style of leadership often discussed in LIS education and leadership literature. A transformational leader is particularly adept at handling organizational change by providing a support system for evolving leadership. In many ways, transformational leadership encourages change. The very nature of an organization is changed as a result of strong transformational leadership.

Germano (2011) in his research titled Library Leadership that Creates and Sustains Innovation considers all the major leadership styles. He submitted that transformational leaders use knowledge, expertise, and vision to change those around them in a way that makes their personnel deeply buy into the leader's vision even when the leader that created it is no longer on the scene. Transformational leaders represent the most valuable form of leadership since followers are given the chance to change, transform and in the process, develop themselves as contributors (Strang as cited in Germano, 2011).

Germano (2011) further explained that transformational leaders are most beneficial to organizations since they develop the personnel in the organization. This leadership is also strongly desired since it has no artificial constraints in terms of buy-in and instead is focused on getting personnel onboard based on their own evolving thought process and changing responses to strategic challenges. It is particularly suited for fast-paced, change-laden environments that demand creative problem solving and customer commitment.

Adeniran and Chidi (2015) wrote an article on Leadership Styles and Job Productivity of University Library Staff: Interrogating the Nexus. They reviewed democratic, autocratic, transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership styles. However, with respect to transformational leadership, they asserted that transformational leadership is a kind of leadership that clearly outlines goals and objectives to be achieved and positively drives subordinates to its achievement. The leader influences the personnel through motivation and by creating demanding and challenging opportunities for personnel in the library to add their qualitative input into achieving set objectives.

Sucozhañay, et.al. (2014) in their research titled Transformational Leadership and Stakeholder Management in Library Change. They performed a case study in a Latin

American academic library. The experiences acquired for a period of six years were analyzed, during which three library managers were involved in managing change. Qualitative data from documents, interviews, and observations were collected, and qualitative analysis methods were used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the change process. Results show that a lack of transformational leadership and stakeholder management contributes to the delayed implementation and limited adoption of innovations. They, therefore, concluded that because of the importance of the "human factor" in technological innovations in libraries, transformational leadership plays a critical role. To ensure the success of change, leaders have to align the vision and the implementation strategies of change among stakeholders at multiple levels.

6.0 HOW TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP CAN ENHANCE PERSONNEL PRODUCTIVITY IN LIBRARIES

Before delving into the discourse of how transformational leadership can help in library personnel productivity, it is important to describe what the concept of library employee is. Library employee, also known as a library worker, personnel, or staff is the entire group of paid employees responsible for the operation and management of a library or library system, including its director, librarians, paraprofessionals, technical assistants, clerical personnel, and pages or student assistants (Reitz, 2004).

Since library personnel is a group of the workforce of a library working on behalf of the library, managing and operating a library system effectively thus required a leadership style that knows how to design a mission and vision that captivate the library workforce, inspires them to subscribe to the mission and vision, honorably challenges the personnel to work on getting the mission accomplished, by recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each library personnel. These are what transformational leadership does.

Noting that the personnel of libraries are those who determine how changes in the existing system would affect the library operations, they evaluate every changing situation in order to know their position in it. This means that the personnel of libraries need transformational leadership to demonstrate the charisma, infuse morality and motivation, concentrate of talents, abundant resources, and favorable governance needed to perform at their best.

The transformational leader prioritizes coaching a library team's to be harnessing their creativity to respond to change; enables, encourages, and supports innovation enshrined in building and sustaining corporate excellence, stimulating the interest of library staff in sustaining the values, mission, and vision underpinning a library's existence and creates avenues for library personnel to enjoy their works by inspiring and motivating them to look forward to being part of their works on daily basis.

Transformational leadership is promising to have a greater positive effect on a library workforce because transformational leaders are skilled at getting subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the larger group. Transformational leaders bring out the best in their subordinates, they encourage participation, share power and information, enhance other people's self-worth, and get others excited about their work (Stueart and Moran, 2007).

In these difficult times, fraught with disruption at all levels in all types of libraries, the leadership of libraries continued to experience frequent changes. These changes require a steady supply of new leaders to fill the shoes of those who retire or those who left their positions for other reasons. Today, the library profession is confronted with the question of whether or not we will have enough new leaders stepping up to leadership roles to drive the sustainability of library and information services (Matarazzo and Pearlstein, 2016).

So far that libraries are now operating in a market that requires them to respond to constantly evolving environmental factors — global practices, constant technological developments, and fluctuations in the current services delivery methods — library leaders and managers are often (Kuhlman, 2021) required to be drifted to prudently inspire and influence their staff to establish a mission, accomplish the library vision and achieve its goals.

In summary, transformational library leaders always identify the need to learn and adopt the right strategies and skills that can help them influence impactful action among their team. Transformational library leaders respond to their leadership responsibilities by engaging, encouraging, and stimulating their team to achieve the library’s goals efficiently and effectively (Abubakre, 2022).

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper explains the importance of transformational leadership in enhancing the productivity of library personnel, most especially in this era of rapid technological innovations in libraries. Transformational leadership has four major qualities, which if efficiently and technically utilized would aid in empowering, inspiring, motivating, and exploiting the skills of library personnel in achieving a library mission, visions, and objectives.

Based on the contexts raised in this paper, we, therefore, recommend the following:

1. Library leaders and managers should consider the use of a transformational leadership style because it offers the library personnel opportunities to make mistakes and grow in the process of working on achieving library goals.
2. Library leaders and managers should always ponder on the four qualities of transformational leadership when they are responding to change. This is because these qualities allow leaders to create space for the library personnel, which makes them identify their position in a leader's missions and vision.
3. The use of transformational leadership style in the library will make the library personnel productive because since it is concerned with intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, it drives library personnel to be committed to solving problems and responding to challenges that may arise while working on achieving library goals.

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