

Paper Review on the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Readiness for Change

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Citation

Ali Al-Tahitah, Mohamed Mihlar Abdul Muthaliff, Mohammed Abdulrab, Qais Ahmed Al-Maamari. Paper Review on the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Readiness for Change. *International Journal of Energy Policy and Management*. Vol. 3, No. 1, 2018, pp. 1-7.

Received: January 10, 2018; **Accepted:** January 29, 2018; **Published:** February 27, 2018

Abstract: The main purpose of this paper is to review the evidence concerning the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions, where are, idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, and organizational readiness for change. Furthermore, full range leadership theory hypothesizes that transformational leadership dimensions would positively and strongly relate to members' perception of organizational change readiness. The research aims to appraise the existing literatures and eventually set the research agenda. There were many studies revealed that there are relationships between transformational leadership and organizational readiness for change. This paper concludes with suggestions for educational leaders on how to focus and enhance the role of transformational leadership dimensions based on the readiness for change, in order to implement successful changes. Despite its exploratory nature, this study can guide Yemeni public sector's employees on how to respond the change implementation. Similarly, it can provide leaders a clear insight into how they can generate a high level of readiness for change among their followers, which demonstrates the importance of employee readiness for change.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Readiness for Change, Education, Yemen

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Nowadays, the contemporary world is filled with many rapid changes. Change is inevitable; hence, we must not ignore it, but recognize its existence. Recognizing this existence helps us to deal with many changes in the world. In this regard, 70% of all organizational change initiatives were unsuccessful [1-8]. Past studies have shown that the employees tend to resist changes and one of the main reasons cited for the high rate of failure is that the majority of employees in these organizations are not ready for change [9-11]. In the meantime, educational organizations, which are in the center of these changes, must keep up to date with all of

the changes happening in today's world. This is because we know that dealing with the human minds are much more difficult than dealing with material things that quickly adapt to new realities. While the need generations of humankind to adapt to change still persist, there need to be a period of time allowed to help accommodate and to adapt to these new changes. Thus, to address the significant imbalances in public administration, it is important to update rules, regulations and administrative procedures, means and ways for meaningful and fundamental acceptance, in the process of change and development to improve management performance in the government apparatus of Yemen [12]. In the other word, Karp and Helg [13] mentioned that leaders and managers are often the ones leading change. The success of these changes depends on their readiness to facilitate organizational

changes and organize it. This is because changes are imminent and may help their organizations survive. Additionally, other studies have [9, 10] stated that the readiness for organizational change has garnered interest from a large number of researchers in behavioral science. Therefore, adaptability and readiness for change are extremely important. Past studies also, examined the elements of transformational leadership and readiness for change and found that the employees' level of readiness to change differed based on influences of transformational leadership. In this regard, this study will review some recent studies, which focused on the relationship between the transformational leadership and readiness for organizational change. Additionally, this paper will include the problem statement, the significance of study, purpose, and the nature of the current study. This paper will also present the key definitions of terms used in the current study.

1.2. Problem Statement and Objective

As mentioned earlier and based on previous literature, up to 70% of all organizational change initiatives were deemed as unsuccessful. One of the reasons for this is readiness for change, which has played an important role in the success or failure of change initiatives among employees. Consequently, if the majority of employees are not ready and satisfied with the change initiative, the implementation of change may lead to change resistance [9-11]. In today's world, successful organizations develop their performance and productivity through the creation of new strategies. They work in favor of the change process and strive to keep themselves up to date with all the changes around them. The education sector considers itself one of the most important sectors in enhancing the sustainable development in any country. In the meantime, Yemen is always working to improve public sector, especially education, and the education sector is always seeking for new strategies, rules, regulations and administrative procedures to help improve the management performance in the Yemeni government. This done to address the significant imbalance affecting the public administration [12]. Thus, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in Yemen, the government has initiated the change process in state agencies by reducing decentralization and doing a series of reforms in several domains. This includes restructuring the financial and administrative aspects and creating new technology systems [14]. However, such attempts been made by the Yemeni government in implementing these changes was not enough to ensure a high level of efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector. In this light, the human being is considered as the key factor of successful change. But the government has not paid appropriate attention to the improvement of both leaders and followers commitment to change, even though are only can ones that can implement it.

In the same context, Ahmad and Gelaidan [15], found leaders or their followers are considered the most important obstacles for the process of change in Yemeni public organizations. Furthermore, several factors, such as fear of

change and unwillingness to implement change, lead to failure of the organizational change; Muthanna and Karaman [16] in their study entitled, "Higher education challenges in Yemen", showed that there is a pressing demand for improving a change systemic in higher education in Yemen. Besides that, organizational changes often fail to be successfully implemented because of opposition from key participants [17]. In this regard, although, Yemeni public sector suffers from the resistance to change, negative attitudes toward change, and lack of knowledge, it would be good for this sector to diagnose the weaknesses faced in strategizing and planning towards organizational change.

In addition, Gaston and Dawsari [18] concluded that the change process in Yemen will need more efforts and time due to the magnitude of the challenges faced by leaders or followers in Yemen. It was stated that people in Yemen are not really ready for the implementation of changes. This supports the significance of this study, which is concerned about change readiness and the leaders' role in this matter. The authors also mentioned that many people are concerned that the government would require more efforts in delivering more effective changes, despite popular support from others. They also highlighted that the people understood that changes should happen slowly and require more patience from them. However, Yemeni government needs to take serious steps in this regard to come up with tangible results.

1.3. Significance of the Study

By reviewing the current literature associated with the role of transformational leadership and organizational readiness for change, the study can provide support for department leaders and organizations in implementing the change process which will result in better performance. Besides that, this study is expected to contribute to the development of the public education sector in Yemen. Since education provided one of the fundamental foundations for the development of any nations, this would ensure better educational outcomes.

This research also contributes to the body of knowledge regarding transformational leadership and readiness for change. In addition, this study urges future studies on the importance of the readiness for change in the public sector in Yemen, where had been left out by any previous studies on the administrative environment in Yemen.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Leadership

There are several points of view that can be used to define the leadership concept as it can be analyzed in various ways. Northouse [19] defined leadership in a set of components; one being the procedures and processes that make up the interactions between a leader and his/her subordinates. This component assures that the leadership is considered as both a direct effect and an interaction operation. Another component is the effect that leadership requires of the main condition of

leadership, where it is impossible to initiate leadership without making an impact on their followers. Oftentimes, the leader is the person who sets the standards to reach a common goal. Leadership involves creating a practical group, which might consist of a small group or a large group of task team. In other words, the leader is the first person in the group who affects the team in regards to the common goals of the group. Furthermore, since leadership plays a prominent role in any process of governmental or private organizations, it is important to recognize how the leadership role in any organizational change process is extremely important and necessary. The change process will not succeed in any organization without a positive role for leadership. This corresponds with a study by Zafar and Naveed [20] which described that leaders and managers can play a very positive role in process of organizational change. Furthermore, one of the most positive roles of a leader is developing a logical strategy in creating a future vision that would help to implement change process in an organization.

2.1.1. Transformational Leadership

Burns [21] is the first scholar who identified the concepts "transformational and transactional leadership" leadership style. The Transformational leadership theory centers on the basis that the leader is able to change the assumptions and behaviors of his subordinates by meeting their needs and demands in ways that inspire and motivate them to reach a common vision. 'Transformational leadership' style of leadership behavior is distinct from "transactional leadership". A leader with leadership style is described as someone who depends on self-interest of his/her followers as on a "give and take" type relationship. This type of leadership is considered as a fundamental source of motivation. Therefore, Burns [21] claimed that 'transformational and transactional leadership' leadership style are mutually exclusive. After a decade, Bass [22], extended Burns' work into "Bass Transformational Leadership Theory", [22, 23].

Furthermore, transformational leadership seeks to raise the level of security and safety to spare them of any fears that may arise in the future. This study also highlighted the comparison of transformational leadership and transactional leadership, based on Bass [24] work which claimed that transformational leadership the most effective approached compared to others. He also mentioned that transformational leaders inspire both themselves and their subordinates to go beyond merely satisfying their self-interests.

On the other hand, Bass [22] assumed that both transformational and transactional leadership are complementing structures. In this light, most scholars who are interested in leadership behavior studies used the 'Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire' (MLQ) instrument developed by Bass [25, 26]. In the meantime, Wang and Howell [27] addressed that transformational leaders struggle to understand needs, skills, and abilities of employees, through offering series of personal coaching and professional mentoring to overcome their weaknesses in any areas.

Leaders with transformational leadership style avoid the abuse of personal power as they prefer to share the official power, consequently, this makes the followers to more motivated when their leader shows a good example by treating them fairly. Burns [21] defined that the leaders in this style of leadership are those who are involved directly with employees in particular ways. Both leaders and followers are working together in steering the direction of each person, improve motivation level, and increase workers' morale.

2.1.2. Transformational Leadership Dimensions

According to Avolio, Bass [28], there are four dimensions in the transformational leadership model. These dimensions are (1) Inspirational motivation, (2) Individualized consideration, and (3) Intellectual stimulation (4) idealized influences; to be precise, inspirational motivation is the leader's ability to inspire and motivate his/her subordinates and is defined as the leader's charisma, which has an attractive vision to his followers. Meanwhile, individualized consideration illustrates in how a leader pays more attentions on his/her subordinates and shows more interests in an effort to meet their feelings and needs, and intellectual stimulation is the degree of intellectual motivation given the leader to his subordinates through encouragement, empowerment, and job autonomy [29]. Finally, the idealized influences dimension illustrates the degree of charisma which a transformational leader shows his followers through the ideal role model and ethical outcomes of decisions.

2.2. Organizational Change

BusinessDictionary [30] defined organizational change as "a company or organization going through a transformation, it occurs when business strategies or major sections of an organization are altered". It is also known as the reorganization, restructuring, and turnaround. Past literature on organizational theory, management, and an accounting had considered organizational change as one of most the important issues [31]. These studies claimed that organizational change is the shifting their operations, management control systems, or organizational structure; for instance, creating a new information system. Moreover, organizational change is one of the features of the administrative actions that empower employees and enhance them more experience through job rotation within different sectors and departments in the workplace. [32-36]. consequently, organizational change is an inevitable process either in the public or private sector; Shin, Taylor [33] highlighted that the services and products should be close to, and aligned with needs of people and desires. In the other meaning, they mentioned that the changes of current work strategies and procedures would affect a whole organization.

In this regard, Lewin's model emphasizes the need to diagnose the critical steps of a change program in order to reach its goals successfully. The three general steps are generally referred to as unfreezing, changing and refreezing.

In this context, Kritsonis [37] in his study, "Comparison of Change Theories" summarized Lewin's model as quite logical, objective and plan oriented. However, while change seems to be logical and looks well on paper, it should not be confined to paperwork, it must be in contact with the aspirations and requirements of employees through making a change logically and flexibly otherwise, they will face either resistance or little enthusiasm, which might lead to failure in organizational change. Furthermore, the rapid pace of ongoing changes in today's organizations lacks some flexibility and adaptability that are considered as the features of perpetual transition.

2.3. Readiness for Change

People's understanding of the process of organizational change is very influential and important. Bridges [38] concluded that readiness for change requires one to know why change is necessary. His work also discussed why an organization eliminates old routines and systems and whether there is a willingness among employees to coexist during the transition period which is laden with complexities and uncertainties, as well as how they engage with the new system. These questions would help increase people's acceptance and readiness for change. Kurt Lewin (1951) described organizational change as a three-phase process of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. This theory thought of change readiness as unfreezing, where organizational members are prepared for change efforts.

Moreover, Beckhard and Harris [39] discussed the extent of individuals' readiness for change and found it includes mental preparations, psychological or physical. Furthermore, change readiness is defined as the extent employees perceive the necessity for organizational change as positive, as well as the extent employees believe that changes will have positive results for themselves and the organization as well [10, 40]. Moreover, Hultman [41] as cited in [42] defined readiness as a desire for the change and a state of mind that shows individuals' willingness and acceptance of the change of process through his way of thinking and acting. It also reflects the readiness at the start of the change process.

In the Yemeni context, a study by Almaamari, Abdulrab [43] aimed to investigate the most important factors that foster the success of change initiatives such as TQM implementation at Oil Units in Yemen. The study found that there is a positive association between total quality management practices and individual readiness for change.

2.4. The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Readiness for Change

Several studies have explored the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change, such as [34, 44-56].

In this respect, Allen [45] conducted an empirical study to examine the relationship between leadership style and organizational members' readiness for change and valuing of

creativity in Churches in the USA. The study showed that perceptions of an organization's readiness for change are positively influenced by transformational leadership. Meanwhile, in a study on the healthcare sector, Caldwell, Chatman [46] conducted a survey among physicians working in thirty-seven specialty departments in a large American health care organization. The study focused on the interaction between norms supporting change readiness and the quality of leadership. The result revealed that the quality of leadership is positively related to change in patient satisfaction. Moreover, the study emphasized that leaders can increase the readiness for change within the organization by developing the general norms and creating an effective teamwork environment in the workplace.

Lyons *et al.* (2009) focused on the US Military and highlighted the impact of leadership as a factor related to the change readiness of personnel. The study also found that leadership behaviors are significantly and positively related to readiness for change.

In the Malaysian context, Nordin [34] studied the factors influencing change readiness in Malaysia's higher learning institution. The findings of the study showed that leadership behavior and organizational commitment are two important factors for organization's change readiness. Furthermore, the study indicated that affective commitment is a significant moderating factor in the relation between transformational leadership and change readiness and suggested giving more priority to the process of developing transformational leadership in the workplace more priority, since this will positively enhance the organizational outcomes.

Another study by Santhidran, Chandran [50] included middle management employees in a Malaysian energy organization hypothesized that leadership is positively related to change readiness and found a positive significant relationship between leadership and readiness for change.

Likewise, an empirical study by Lutz Allen, Smith [51] assumed that transformational leadership has a significant relation with organizational change readiness. The study indicated that psychological climate for organizational change readiness is positively influenced by transformational leadership. Similarly, a recent study conducted in Indonesian public service companies by Saragih [53] claimed that implementation of a successful organizational change could be constrained by individual readiness for organizational change. The researcher emphasized that transformational leadership plays a strategic and important role in implementing a change in the organization.

3. Proposed Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

The aim of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework that identifies the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational change among the employees in the Yemeni public educational

sectors. The existing literature revealed the transformational leadership dimensions affects readiness for change and there are four dimensions of transformational leadership, which are intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence which are deemed to affect organizational change readiness. Thus, based on the rationale above, the research conceptual framework is constructed as shown in Figure 1.

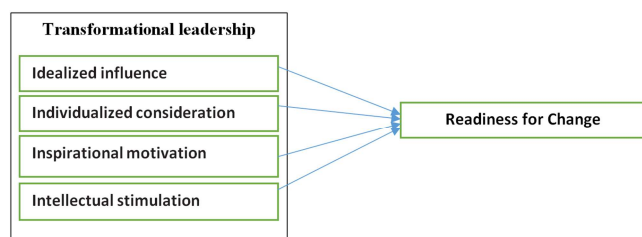


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the Study.

Hypotheses;

The study proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between the idealized influence dimension of transformational leadership and readiness for change.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between individualized consideration dimension of transformational leadership and readiness for change.

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership and readiness for change.

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between intellectual stimulation dimension of transformational leadership and readiness for change.

4. Conclusion

The present study has reviewed current literature associated with the role of transformational leadership dimensions which are idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, on organizational readiness for change. This research will provide insights into how transformational leadership dimensions can affect employee's readiness for change. Since the change process in a mission statement of any organization plays a key role, the abilities of transformational leaders are effective to increase their followers' motivations.

In addition, this research focuses on the public education sector in Yemen and will address some of the critical issues facing the public administrative system, including the role of transformational leadership and the effectiveness of the change process which in return, will help to raise the level of management performance in the Yemeni public sector. Moreover, it will guide the employees in the Yemeni public sector on how to respond to the implementation of change. It also provides leaders with a clear insight on how they can generate a high level of change readiness among their followers. This will demonstrate the importance of employee

readiness for change. Finally, this study can recommend the leaders to pay more attentions on increasing their employees' readiness for change, which will lead to the increase in organizational performance.

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