TRANSCENDENTAL LEADERS IN ORGANISATION: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The world has seen leadership predicament resulting in financial crisis that affected majority of the business post globalization. An attempt is being made to get an insight to the traits of transcendental leader who prioritize not just for the profits but also for the people and the planet which shows global accountability and sustainability as a visionary leader. The rationale is to explore the qualities of the transcendental leader that transcends the real, stereotypes, perceptions, nationalities and assist organizations and benefit from such a synergetic leadership.

KEYWORDS

Transcendental Leadership, Organization, Leader, Intellectual Leadership, Models of Leadership, Spiritual Intelligence.
INTRODUCTION

Today’s organizations are boundary less, dynamic, deals with varied cross cultural work force, works in different time zones and face fierce battlefield kind of settings due to the highly competitive bench mark and changing business environments. Excellence in all deliverables is the single most criteria for the modern organizations. Though they are consistently pressurized in a whirlpool of uncertainty faced with a crisis of existence. Organizations are in a viewpoint for a leadership that gives the organization faith in its vision and an intellectual leadership that transcends the turbulence of the passing time and moves ahead of an exclusive focus of profits to a multi centric approach of profits, people, and planet. Transcendental leaders make the moral strength of an organization. The ‘transcendental’ character of their leadership style reflects in transcending the borders of self and their accumulations, encouraging an additional line of succession leadership within and outside the organizations. Leadership is a process means that it is not a trait or characteristic that resides in the leader, but rather a transactional event that occurs between the leader and the followers. Process implies that a leader affects and is affected by followers. It emphasizes that leadership is not a linear, one way event, but rather an interactive event.

History of Leadership

Barnard (1938), whose work focused on the functions of the executive, was instrumental in including behavioral components in his analysis of organizational leadership, which claimed that leadership involves accomplishing goals with and through people. Barnard’s work emphasized the ways in which executives might develop their organizations into cooperative social systems by focusing on the integration of work efforts through communication of goals and attention to worker motivation.

Maslow’s (1959) Hierarchy of Needs posited that once a worker’s physiological, security, and social (intrinsic) needs were met, productivity would only be possible if the employee’s ego and self-actualizing (extrinsic) needs were also met. Leader focus became redirected toward worker needs. Leader focus had moved to understanding the relationship between a leader’s actions and the follower’s satisfaction and productivity.

Diane Larkin (1995) was the first to coin the word “transcendent leadership” to describe a special leadership she observed among leaders who transcended self into compassionate being and action. Theorists began to consider behavioral concepts in their analysis of organizational leadership. New technology, however, was accompanied and reinforced by mechanization of human thought and action, thus creating hierarchical bureaucracies (Morgan, 1997). The Industrial Revolution shifted America’s economy from an agriculture base to an industrial and, thereby, ushered in a change in how leaders would treat their followers. The Industrial Revolution created a
Transcendental Leaders In Organization: A Theoretical Perspective
- Ms. S. Rejitha and Dr. Ajoy Mathew

paradigm shift to a new theory of leadership in which “common” people gained power by virtue of their skills (Clawson, 1999). One major contributor to this era of management and leadership theory was Max Weber, a German sociologist who “observed the parallels between the mechanization of industry and the proliferation of bureaucratic forms of organization” He noted that the bureaucratic form routinized the process of administration in the same manner that the machine routinized production. Much organizational research during this era focused on overcoming the perceived shortcomings of the classical and scientific schools of management.

Elton Mayo’s Hawthorne Studies focused on the work situation and its effect on leaders and followers, indicating that the reactions of human beings influence their work activities as much as the formal design and structure of the organization. Early on, leaders could focus their attention on the environmental factors of their organizations. The early theories and studies provided researchers with tangible and measurable performance outcomes that were directly transferable to profitability and spreadsheet bottom-lines. A new theory of organizations and leadership began to emerge based on the idea that individuals operate most effectively when their needs are satisfied. Transcendent leadership has emerged with greater focus during the past several years. Since then, other writers including Lisa June Aldon (2004) have contributed to the study of transcendent leadership and the evolution of consciousness.

MODELS OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership theories starting from the Trait theory to Participatory, Situational, Contingency, and Servant, Transactional, Transformational and Transcendent theories intends to bring out the value of commendable leadership. Among these, Transcendent model offers a value based and global growth of leadership that is associated with universal well being.

THREE T’S FRAMEWORK

There are three models of leadership identified for the study -transactional leadership, transformational leadership and transcendental leadership. Transactional leadership primarily focuses on the transaction and benefit for both the leader and the subordinates. This leader cares more about him than others and will take a reward and punishment approach for goal attainment. They show benefits to motivate and withdraw benefits to correct the staff. Transformation leadership believes in motivating and transforming the individual and their systems and developing the followers into leaders themselves, this requires a substantive amount of mutual trust. The transcendental leader would be driven by a passion for execution of vision, value centric, global in outlook, values partnership, promotes self governance and shared governance.
LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a process by which an executive can direct, guide and influence the behavior and work of others toward the accomplishment of specific goals in a given situation. Leadership is an ability of a manager to induce the subordinates to work with confidence. According to Adair (2001) “Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objective enthusiastically. It is the human factor which binds a group together and to improve their performance and to direct them towards goals”.

TRANSCENDENTAL LEADERSHIP

The leader would be reflective, value-centered, global in perspective and a facilitator of dialogue, a process David Bohm promoted for accessing the implicate order. The leader would respond to (John W. Gardner’s, 1990) challenge to win “an oddly self-destructive conflict, the parts waging war against the whole”) that apparently still dominates our world stage today. The leader would be “a quiet presence,” “fully present, being open in mind and body and heart, listening unconditionally, modeling the new leadership that places service above self” (Gardiner, 1998).

Organizational leaders have a major role in reinforcing and developing spirituality at work. The leaders whose mission is to train their followers mentally, emotionally, and spiritually have to particularly learn to integrate their IQ, EQ and SQ in the first place. An important part of managing an organization’s culture is attracting and choosing those individuals who share the same values as the organization. Spiritual leadership comprises the values, attitudes and behaviors necessary to intrinsically motivate oneself and satisfy fundamental needs for spiritual well-being through calling and membership (Zohar and Marshall ,1999) stated that management played a crucial role in establishing, shaping and maintaining the organizational culture since they’re able to prioritize and establish innovation among employees in the organization and often reflected in employee beliefs, attitudes and behavior which in turn represent needs and motivations.

Leadership can be portrayed as a spiritual relational process in the postmodern spiritual workplace (Biberman &Whitty, 1997) explained that transcendental leadership can be viewed as a field of inquiry within the broader context of workplace spirituality (Fry, 2003). Transcendental leadership uses values, attitudes, and behaviors (altruistic love, hope/faith, vision) to intrinsically motivate followers, thus increase followers’ senses of spiritual survival, i.e., calling (life has meaning, make a difference) and membership (interconnection, be understood, be appreciated), and the resulting positive organizational outcomes (Fry,2003;Fry,Vitucci&Cedillo,2005).

Transcendental leadership taps into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival and aims to improve the spiritual development of both the leader
Transcendental Leaders In Organization: A Theoretical Perspective
- Ms. S. Rejitha and Dr. Ajoy Mathew

and followers (Cardona, 2000; Fry, 2003; Sanders, Hopkins & Geroy, 2003) observed that without desire to manipulate others, transcendental leaders addresses the weakness of transformational/charismatic leadership by providing the motives behind a leader’s practices, that is, altruistic love, a sense of wholeness, harmony and well-being produced through care, concern, appreciation of both self and others, and authentic selfless concern for people, and thus help followers feel powerful and enabled to make decisions, accomplish work, and lead on their own (Fairholm, G.W., 1996; Fry, 2003; Korac-Kakabadse, Louzmin & Kakabadse, 2002). In addition, transcendental leadership is a “visioning process”, an “ethical process that reflects requirements for legitimacy for both leader influence and follower empowerment to facilitate value congruence*(Fry, 2003). Therefore, transcendental leadership is both follower centered and leader-centered process. This style of leadership adopts a collaborative model that suits today’s business dynamics. The leaders and the staffs align themselves in a collaborative manner with a broad vision of working towards the welfare of the global family. Prof. Gardiner (2006) pointed out the key distinctiveness of transcendental leadership.

1. An ambiance of trust which fosters integrity and consistency between words, deeds and actions;

2. Meaningful involvement in decision-making and planning;

3. Collective decision-making that leads to harmony building;

4. Sharing information, which discloses data for accurate decisions;

5. Open-mindedness to difference of opinions that leads to valuing different views;

6. Redesigning roles accepting team leadership;

This style of leadership places the management of human relationships above oneself in organizational framework. This leadership has vision, is value based; ethical; servantile, virtuous; open minded; accountable etc. It is about relationship based on working, functional partnerships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ashwathi Nair(2016) observed that the Global knowledge economy has seen extensive mergers, acquisitions, strategic alliances, multinational collaborations on one side and devastating economic collapse, financial crisis and massive layoffs and the like that create a disturbing effect on employee morale on the other side. The topic is highly relevant and discussed across the c-suite circles worldwide. Through this article, an attempt is being made to get an insight into the traits of transcendent leader who prioritize on a triple bottom line of 3p’s –profit, people and planet which offers the
foundation for an all-inclusive framework for developing global sustainability and a virtuous organizational culture. The rationale is to explore the role of transcendent leadership model in building a virtuous organizational culture. The paper is purely exploratory in nature and the operational metrics has been designed to measure the deliverables of transcendent leadership and a virtuous value inventory which is a paradigm shift from the western models of work culture adopted from an exhaustive hermeneutic study on ancient Indian classical literature.

Florentina K. Tehubijuluw (2014) explained the role of the transcendental leader is needed to assist in achieving the workers happiness and satisfaction with their jobs and in the same time helping the organization to achieve business objectives and allow the employees to flourish within the organization. The main objective of this study is to analyze the role of transcendent leadership to achieve organization performance using workers job satisfaction as mediating variable in Indonesia’s property industries. All the data is statistically analyzed using the Structural Equation Method model. Findings of this research indicate that there’s appositive effect between transcendent leadership; workers job satisfaction and organization performance; in which workers job satisfaction has the greatest effect into organization performance, meanwhile the transcendental leadership doesn’t have significant effect directly into organization performance.

Srđan Nikezić et al.; (2012) observed success and rewarding are mostly expressed in business performance at the end of the year. Transactional and transformational leadership as a new paradigm of quality effects on creation of roles and processes in the organization. From the leaders are expected to use leadership as a processor ensuring the long-term goals of the organization, especially in turbulent competitive environment. Therefore, this paper points out the impact of leadership competencies through transactional and transformational leadership, characteristics and processes that show different levels of participation of transformation and transactional leadership of organizations. In early stages of the theory of transcendent leadership,

Jeffrey L. McClellan (2009) addresses the challenges associated with defining and conceptualizing leadership amidst the plethora of theoretical constructs and definitions of leadership and proposes a model for developing transcendent servant-leaders. Based on a review of the literature, three categorical levels of leadership are outlined and discussed that describe the motives that drive leaders, their means of influence, and the outcomes they strive to achieve at each level. These levels include everyday leadership, effective organizational leadership, and transcendent servant leadership. Having delineated these leadership levels, a holistic model for leadership development and education that facilitates the transcendence of effective organizational leaders and ensures their sustaining power of influence is outlined and described.
Transcendental Leaders In Organization: A Theoretical Perspective
- Ms. S. Rejitha and Dr. Ajoy Mathew

Caroline H. Liu (2007) suggests that transcendental leadership incorporates and extends existent leadership theories by providing the motives behind leaders’ practices, altruistic love, meanings, and spiritual survival. Transcendental leadership with high internal locus of control extrinsically, intrinsically, and transcendentally motivate employee and thus is more effective than transactional leadership and transformational leadership in motivating employee in the uncertain age. In addition, based on theories, this paper tests existing spiritual leadership scale and creates a new transcendental leadership scale. Transcendental leadership which transcends and extends existing leadership theories is more effective in motivating followers extrinsically, intrinsically, and transcendentally, compared to transactional leadership and transformational leadership.

Gardiner and Walker (2006) evaluated the biographies of early birds counting with Mother Teresa, Albert Einstein, The Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. They all stood for the Core ideals of compassion, reliability and bravery, modesty and understanding, truth and harmony. Their experiences are unique and have an impact on the sustainability of the globe. The value system they uphold, capabilities, boundaries, and potentialities as transcendent leaders are measured in the framework of global sustainability. Transcendent leadership offers a perspective that brings many leadership concepts together under one roof.

REASON FOR TRANSCENDENTAL LEADERSHIP

Transcendent leadership offers us a metaphor to help us move more closely to a world where human talents and energies will be maximized for the betterment of all-personally, organizationally, globally. (Gardiner, 2006)"The leadership crises which resulted in global financial crisis where leadership failures occurred at Lehman Brothers, Satyam computers, Goldman Sachs , Enron, Anglo Leasing that questioned the competencies of leadership and the call for quality leadership has lead to the thought of a leader that transcends his/her organizations and thinks about the welfare of not just for the profit of the business but also for all over the globe and ensuring global sustainability along with employee engagement and profitability.

TRANSCENDENTAL LEADERSHIP AND RELATED CONSTRUCTS

1. Transcendental Leaders And Spiritual Intelligence

Transcendental Leaders demonstrate an innate insight into the source of all Intelligence and spiritual intelligence. Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall (2004) have defined spiritual intelligence as the intelligence with which we contact our earnest meanings, purposes, and highest motivations. This also defines a transcendental leader. Dana Zohar introduced certain characteristics of spiritual quotient which gets reflected in a transcendental leader. Those transcendental principles are: Self-Awareness, Vision &
Transcendental Leaders In Organization: A Theoretical Perspective  
Ms. S. Rejitha and Dr. Ajoy Mathew

Value, Spontaneity, to be able to stand against the crowd and follow your own convictions, growing beyond arrogance. Accepting diverse viewpoints, ability to learn from mistakes and Compassion.

2. Transcendental Leadership and Organisational Culture

Leadership is affected by the organizational core and sub cultures that play an important factor in the productivity of the organization. Leadership style of a transcendental leader starts with self-awareness. Key areas such as Business ethics, best practices, employee engagement, can have a foremost outcome on efficiency. They are Passionately Committed to their Goals and approach the goals with a strong sense of Commitment and the Clarity of vision and acts like ‘Missionaries’ of their vision. They build a culture of living the vision and same will be role modeled across organizations with a multiplier effect.

3. Transcendental Leadership and Employee Productivity

Transcendental leaders increase the inspiration, self confidence, and performance of group all the way through a range of mechanisms. These include boosting the employees self efficacy skills through role modeling, accepting the strengths and weaknesses of followers. Transcendental leaders are able to go beyond their egos and empower their employees. They evoke a greater reason in living and views organization’s as extensions of a progressive society. They inspire to seek meaning in work beyond profit margins.

4. Transcendent Leadership And Shared Governance

Shared governance is an indispensable part of this style of leadership which ensures air play in all sectors: financial, community, and ecological. Transcendent leaders seek beyond diverse opinions to find totality in segments, to find the fabric that connects the humanity.

5. Transcendent Leadership And Global Sustainability

Global sustainability is showing concern to the planet earth and not manipulating the already depleting gifts of nature to meet the greed’s of humankind. The exploitation of natural resources at unsustainable levels by the human kind converts the only livable planet we know an eroding locale. Transcendental leaders align their mission with global sustainability and consider themselves as loyal servants to mother earth.

6. Transcendental Leaders and Employee Empowerment

Transcendental leaders make use of behavior that give power to group and strengthen their enthusiasm. Followers are made powerful not simply by the idea created by the
Transcendental leader, but also by the indication the leader launches concerning their capability to attain that vision. They build a participative environment and powerful situation that permit followers to act in response speedily and by means of flexibility to modify organizational and situational demands. It expands the followers’ authority to believe on their own, nurture brand new ideas, and query working regulations that are outdated. A most important goal of transcendental leadership is to build up hanger-on self-management and self development.

7. **Transcendental Leaders and Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy characterize an individual’s principle in his or her potential to profitably achieve a definite mission or set of responsibilities Individual accomplishment necessitate experience, talent and the individuals confidence in one’s own competence to productively act upon a particular achievement. Self-efficacy can be amplified all the way through transcendental leadership enlarging self-confidence and combination of outcomes can create an evident rise in followers’ hard work to achieve something, and making leadership the motivation to try beyond potential.

**Currently Accepted Leadership Style**

Situational leadership is an adaptive leadership style. This strategy encourages leaders to take stock of their team members, weigh the many variables in their workplace and choose the leadership style that best fits their goals and circumstances. In the words of leadership theorist Ken Blanchard, “In the past a leader was a boss. Today’s leaders can no longer lead solely based on positional power.”

**Situational leadership** is the model of choice for organizations around the world that want to do the following:

- Develop people and workgroups.
- Establish rapport and to bring out the best in their people.
- Use a common leadership style across all units in an organization, be it local, national, or international.

**Relevance of Transcendental Leadership Today**

One definition of transcend is to go beyond time or space. It is universal. Great leadership is recognized everywhere. It is not restricted to background. There are great local leaders regardless of gender who are known globally. This style of leadership transcends situations. There are great leaders who overcome economic crisis or environmental disasters. These leaders are not restricted to sector, private, public or non-governmental. They go beyond function, business, service or education. Transcendental leadership focuses on what is good for society, the environment, stakeholders and economic and social contributions. Transcendental leaders highlight a
compelling vision of a better world and create the commitment of their stakeholders to accomplish the vision. Organizations are in the lookout for business leaders who can reach beyond profit margins and bring sustainable growth to shareholders and carry in meaningful engagement to the multigenerational work force which is a dire demand of the 21st century. They are “Good” leaders and “Leaders” for good. Transcendental Leaders provides a strong moral backbone on which the entire organization flourish not just as a profit centre that focus on today’s strategies but thrives on a global vision that encompasses the welfare of the sustainable future of the humanity.

**CONCLUSION**

Transcendent leadership offers a platform for an enriching and collaborative human experience in organizational dynamics. While other styles of leadership focus on money, people and process; transcendental leadership initiates planet as a concept that needs attention. An effective leader must be open ended and able to accept feedback and must be flexible in their style of leadership, who prioritize not just for the profits but also for the people and the planet which shows global accountability and sustainability as a visionary leader. In conclusion, change is necessary if an organization wishes to keep up with the times. The old styles of leadership must be broken and the organizations should encourage and train their leaders to be more transcendent.

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