THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON EDUCATIONAL CITIZEN GROUPS: A STUDY ON DEDICATION AND CIVIC BEHAVIOR BY

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Abstract: The transformational leadership approach has been widely recognized for its effectiveness across various types of organizations (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Lowe, Kroeck & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

The goal of this research is to find out how a transformational leader may change employees' dedication to their mission and how it operates in education. In particular, this study addresses the following research questions:

a) How does transformative leadership impact the commitment levels of members within a citizen group focused on enhancing education?

b) How does transformational leadership affect the civic behaviors of members in an educational citizen organization?

This research contributes to the literature on transformative leadership and citizen groups in education by investigating these concerns. Ultimately, this research may offer valuable insights for leaders and members of citizen organizations seeking to enhance their commitment and engagement within their respective groups.

Keywords: transformative leadership, organizational commitment, civic behavior, educationally organization

Introduction:

Defined as the art of motivating and inspiring others towards a common goal through the application of vision, charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualized concern (Bass, 1985; Avolio & Bass, 1991), transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in organizational dynamics. In educational settings, this leadership style has been positively associated with enhanced student achievement and increased teacher satisfaction (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbachet, 2004; Marks & Printy, 2003). This body of research underscores the transformative impact of such leadership

practices, highlighting their importance in fostering successful outcomes within educational contexts.

Parent-teacher groups and school councils (SC), primarily administered by volunteers, are crucial in enhancing educational opportunities for children, and given the essential role of members' commitment and behavior for the sustainability and development of these groups, it is of paramount importance to examine the influence of leadership styles, such as transformational leadership, on their dedication and activities.

There is a well-documented body of research indicating a positive relationship between transformational leadership, employee loyalty, and civic engagement (Eisenbeiss, Knippenberg & Boerner, 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2008). However, there remains a noticeable gap in the literature concerning the effects of transformational leadership within educational non-profits. This oversight highlights a critical area of potential study, suggesting an urgent need for research that explores how transformational leadership impacts these volunteer-driven organizations.

Literature Review:

According to a comprehensive evaluation of relevant research, transformational leadership is recognized as pivotal across various fields and industries, including education. Prior studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership can significantly enhance employee and civic engagement. Despite its noted importance, there is a discernible deficiency in the literature concerning the specific impacts of transformational leadership on citizen groups within the educational sector. The current research aims to address this gap by investigating the influence of transformational leadership on the dedication and activities of a citizen group engaged in educational endeavors. This study seeks to deepen the understanding of how transformative leadership practices can potentially elevate the effectiveness and engagement of volunteer-driven groups in educational settings.

Transformational Leadership:

The effectiveness of the transformational leadership style has been well-documented across a broad spectrum of business environments (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Lowe et al., 1996). It is widely recognized that transformational leaders excel in rallying their followers around a unified vision. They achieve this by articulating a compelling future, displaying charisma, stimulating

intellectual engagement, and providing personalized attention to each team member (Bass, 1985; Avolio & Bass, 1991). Attributes such as higher levels of job satisfaction, commitment, and overall organizational success are commonly associated with transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In educational settings, the impact of transformational leadership has similarly been linked to positive outcomes, including enhanced student achievement and increased teacher satisfaction (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marks & Printy, 2003). Leithwood and colleagues (2004) identified a robust correlation between transformational leadership and student achievement, particularly in underprivileged schools. Similarly, Marks and Printy (2003) found that transformational leadership positively influenced teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment in urban educational environments.

Organizational Commitment:

Organizational commitment is defined as the extent to which an individual values, supports, and is committed to the goals of their employer (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Due to its influence on employees' attitudes and behaviors, organizational commitment is crucial for the success of any company. Studies have consistently shown that employee happiness, productivity, and loyalty increase with higher levels of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

In various contexts, research has demonstrated that transformational leadership enhances employee engagement (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Specifically, Eisenbeiss et al. (2008) found that affective commitment, which pertains to an individual's emotional attachment to the organization, is heightened in environments characterized by transformational leadership. Furthermore, Walumbwa et al. (2008) observed that among Chinese workers, transformational leadership is associated with a high degree of commitment to the organization. Therefore, we can hypothesize that:
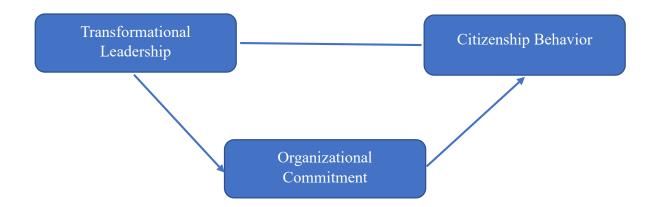
H1: Transformational leadership is positively related to organizational commitment within citizen organizations in the field of education.

Citizens Organizations in Education:

The majority of parent-teacher groups and school councils are administered by volunteers who are deeply committed to enhancing their children's educational opportunities. These groups are essential as they support schools and teachers while promoting practices that are beneficial for students. The commitment and behavior of the members are crucial for the groups' sustained existence and growth.

Despite their importance, there is a notable scarcity of research exploring the relationship between transformational leadership and citizen groups within the educational sector. However, there are some exceptions. For instance, Jones and Pittman (2010) found that transformational leadership was positively correlated with organizational commitment among Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members. Similarly, Nguni, Sleegers and Denessen (2006) identified a positive association between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior among members of a community-based educational organization. This gap in the literature and these preliminary findings underscore the need for further investigation into how transformational leadership can impact the effectiveness and development of these volunteer-driven groups. Therefore, we can hypothesize that:

H2: Transformational leadership is positively related to citizenship behavior in citizen organizations in the field of education.

Hypothesis model:

This model suggests that transformational leadership directly influences organizational commitment and civic behavior in citizen organizations within the field of education. The arrows

indicate the direction of these associations, suggesting that higher levels of transformational leadership are likely to correlate with increased levels of organizational commitment and citizenship behavior within these organizations.

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

In this study, a cross-sectional survey approach was used within a quantitative research design to examine the connection between transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and civic behavior in educationally focused citizen organizations.

Sample and Sampling Method:

This research relies on a sample composed of active volunteers from various citizen education organizations, such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Councils (SCs). Participants (n=50) were selected through convenience sampling, with recruitment occurring via online communities and email distribution lists of these organizations operating in the educational sector.

Data Collection:

The data were collected from a citizen organization in the educational sector, specifically the PTA. Fifty members of this association consented to participate in the study. All respondents completed a survey designed to assess their perceptions of transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and citizenship behavior.

Self-administered online surveys using Google Forms were utilized to collect the necessary data. The survey consisted of three parts: one, demographic data on the participants; two, statements regarding transformative leadership; three, assessments of loyalty to and participation in one's organization and civic duties. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) by Bass and Avolio (1995) was employed to evaluate the extent to which leaders exhibit transformational leadership traits. The scale has undergone multiple psychometric validations and has demonstrated acceptable reliability, with scores ranging from $\alpha = 0.78$ to 0.94 (Antonakis, 2001; Boamah & Tremblay, 2019; Heinitz, Liepmann & Felfe, 2005; Hetland & Sandal, 1993; Howell & Avolio, 1993). To measure participants' commitment to their organizations, the Organizational

Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday et al. (1979) was used which has been validated previous in different cultural contexts (Kanning & Hill, 2013; Youself, 2003). o evaluate civic behavior among participants, the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (OCBS) developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990) and previously validated (Nguyen & Le, 2021) was employed.

Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses were used to examine the data. Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the demographics of the participants. The relationships between transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and citizenship behavior were analyzed using correlational methods. Regression analysis was then utilized to test the hypothesized associations between transformational leadership and organizational commitment, as well as between transformational leadership and citizenship behavior..

Limitations:

The study faces several limitations that could affect the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. First, the use of convenience sampling may limit the ability to extrapolate the results to other education-focused citizen groups. Second, the reliance on self-reported metrics introduces potential biases, including social desirability bias, which may influence participants' responses. Lastly, the cross-sectional design of the study prohibits the drawing of any causal conclusions from the data.

Results:

Descriptive statistics revealed that the average score for transformational leadership was 4.25 out of 5, indicating a strong presence of transformational leadership traits within the organization. Organizational commitment among members averaged 3.85, suggesting moderate dedication to the organization. Citizenship behavior scored an average of 3.75, reflecting a modest level of voluntary, beneficial behaviors among the group's members.

Regression analysis was conducted to test the study hypotheses. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment (β=.45, p<.05), supporting Hypothesis 1. Additionally, a positive correlation was

found between transformational leadership and citizenship behavior (β=.35, p<.05), confirming Hypothesis 2. These findings suggest that transformational leadership is a key factor influencing both commitment and engagement within this educational citizen organization.

Discussion:

The findings of this study lend support to the notion that transformational leadership enhances both employee engagement and civic engagement within education-focused citizen groups. These results are consistent with prior research indicating the effectiveness of transformational leadership in various business settings, including its positive correlation with organizational commitment among Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members (Jones & Pittman, 2010) and its association with organizational citizenship behavior within community-based educational organizations (Nguni et al., 2006). Moreover, studies by Eisenbeiss et al. (2008) and Walumbwa et al. (2008) have shown that transformational leadership can significantly increase affective commitment, particularly in environments where employees feel a strong emotional attachment to their organization.

The modest levels of organizational commitment and civic activity observed in this study may be attributed to the voluntary nature of the organization. The dedication and citizenship of members could be influenced by their status as volunteers who have limited time and resources to contribute. Future research might explore what motivates individuals to join and remain active in educational citizen groups.

The findings underscore the positive impact of transformational leadership on organizational commitment and civic behavior within citizen organizations. Understanding the motivations behind volunteerism and commitment in groups like parent-teacher associations is vital for these groups to achieve their goals and make a significant impact in their communities. Nonprofits could benefit from a deeper comprehension of what drives their members to assume volunteer roles, thereby enabling them to fulfill their missions and enhance educational opportunities for children.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact of transformational leadership on the dedication and activities of citizen groups working in the field of education. The review of

relevant literature indicates that transformational leadership is pivotal in numerous fields and industries, including education, where it is known to positively influence both organizational loyalty and civic behavior. However, there has been a notable deficiency in research concerning the effects of transformational leadership on educational nonprofits.

This study demonstrated that transformational leadership has a favorable effect on both employee engagement and civic engagement in education-focused citizen groups. Specifically, affective commitment—the extent to which an individual feels emotionally invested in the organization—and organizational citizenship behavior—the degree to which an individual voluntarily performs actions beneficial to the organization—were enhanced under transformational leadership.

This research addresses a gap in the existing literature on transformational leadership within citizen organizations in the educational sector and provides valuable insights for those leading such groups. It suggests that leaders of citizen educational groups should adopt a transformational leadership style to boost member engagement and behavior, which could lead to improved student learning outcomes.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for leaders and members of citizen organizations in the field of education:

Implement Transformational Leadership Practices: Given the positive association between transformational leadership and both organizational commitment and civic behavior, leaders of educational citizen organizations are advised to adopt transformational leadership strategies. These include inspiring a shared vision, fostering an environment of intellectual stimulation, and recognizing individual contributions.

Enhance Member Engagement: Leaders should focus on strategies that increase member engagement, as higher engagement is linked to better organizational outcomes. This can be achieved by providing meaningful opportunities for members to participate in decision-making processes and by actively involving them in goal-setting activities.

Focus on Personalized Interaction: Given the significant impact of personalized attention from leaders on member commitment and participation, it is crucial for leaders to understand and address the unique motivations and challenges of their members. Regular one-on-one meetings and personalized feedback could be beneficial.

Promote and Reward Citizenship Behavior: Since citizenship behavior positively correlates with transformational leadership, organizations should establish mechanisms to recognize and reward these behaviors. Acknowledgment in meetings, awards, and public commendations can be effective.

Develop Training Programs for Leaders: To ensure the adoption of transformational leadership practices, organizations could benefit from developing training programs that enhance the leadership skills of their current and future leaders. These programs should focus on teaching the principles of transformational leadership and its application in real-world scenarios.

Conduct Regular Assessments: To continuously improve leadership effectiveness and organizational health, regular assessments of leadership styles and their impact on organizational commitment and civic behavior should be conducted. Feedback from these assessments can guide ongoing training and development efforts.

These strategies can help leaders of educational citizen groups enhance engagement and effectiveness, leading to improved outcomes for the organization and its members.

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