

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS OF THE STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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Abstract

The evolving landscape of higher education necessitates the development of 21st-century skills among university students to ensure their adaptability and success in a rapidly changing world. This study aims to explore the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership skills and the development of students' 21st-century skills at the university level. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, plays a crucial role in shaping students' critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration abilities. Using a mixed-method approach, data will be collected through surveys and interviews with university faculty and students. The study will employ statistical analysis to determine the correlation between transformational leadership practices and students' skill development. Findings from this research will provide valuable insights for educational policy makers and university administrators to enhance teaching strategies, leadership training, and curriculum development. The study's outcomes will contribute to fostering a more innovative and student-centered learning environment in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers should educate the students in such a way to help them in becoming constructive member of the society. Since the world is changing so quickly, leaders must constantly acquire new skills and information. The 21st century is very different from the 20th due to the development of modern information and communications technologies (Dede, 2009). The role of teacher as a leader is more challenging because focus is on developing such skills among the students which are helpful in making them critical and creative thinkers, communication, and collaborative. Moreover, according to Zhao (2020), in the wake of COVID-19, leadership positions at universities and

education have undergone a redesign and reworking to become technology-enabled online activities.

There are different leadership styles which the leaders follow. Among these styles innovative, situational, charismatic, pace setter, command and control, laissez-faire, transformational, and servant leadership are the common (Blanken, 2019). Furthermore, follower-centered and leader-centered are the two categories of leadership styles. As per Maslennikova's (2007) analysis, leadership styles that are centered on followers comprise participative, transformational, and servant leadership, whereas those that are centered on leaders comprise transactional, authoritarian, and charismatic leadership.

Attempts to induce followers to reorder their needs by transcending self-interests and strive for higher order needs" is how Bass (1985) describes a transformational leader. Numerous studies demonstrate that principals who enhance strong expectations-based linkages encourage instructors and pupils to embark on difficult and challenging jobs. These characteristics have a direct correlation to those of a transformational leader. A transformational leader possesses the following four traits: intellectual inspiration, individualized care, motivating desire, and personal encouragement. The ideal situation for classroom teachers is one in which pupils are motivated to do their best work and overcome obstacles thanks to a believing relationship with the teacher and the guidance of transformational leaders (Stuhlman, & Pianta, 2009).

The world is changing rapidly, demanding new expertise and skills from leaders. The 21st century is completely dissimilar from the 20th century due to the expansion of cultured information and communication technologies (Dede, 2010). The 21st century sees a rise in the globalization and unification of life, and the achievement of goals at work in the field of education calls for new skills (Suto, 2013). Despite the fact that it is widely acknowledged that specific 21st-century talents are necessary for success, leaders have claimed that students "lack" these skills and that the lack of these skills in our culture "will meaningfully influence forthcoming financial development in the United States". Keeping in view the importance of 21st century skills, researcher planned this study to investigate that whether transformational leaders are playing their role in developing these skills among university students.

Statement of the Problem

In the researcher's context, universities and university teachers are facing the challenge and they must have to transform the traditional classroom into 21st-century learning environments to develop 21st-century skills among the students (Bellanca, 2015). Moreover, transformational leadership is considered effective to impart knowledge and develop skills among the learners. However, there is a gap in the research that precisely investigates the impact of a teacher's leadership style on promoting students' 21st-century skills among students at the university level.

So, the researcher decided to investigate the predictability of 21st-century skills through the transformational leadership styles of teachers.

Research Objectives

- To determine the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership skills and 21st century skills of the students at university level.

Research Question

The following research question was addressed in this research:

- Is there significant correlation between teachers' transformational leadership and 21st century skills of the students at university level?

Review of Literature

Transforming leadership

According to Richardson (2009), a principal's efforts to implement usual school-related events and initiatives that foster an environment that is conducive to and supports high student achievement are impeded by teachers' lack of commitment. Low teacher commitment results in poor attendance during lessons, persistent absences, disregard for school policies, and a failure to keep track of students' progress. Due to low motivation, teachers typically become more effective when compensated for providing additional student coaching. The significance of strengthening teachers' dedication to their students' education because a lack of it creates issues for the principal and lowers student achievement. It is imperative that principals embrace leadership strategies that will augment their leadership abilities amidst the current wave of educational reforms. Many academics have explained why transformational leadership works best in institutions that are going through a reform process (Heck & Hallinger, 2014).

Ndiga et al. (2014) claim that teachers who are involved in decision-making and general school administration are more driven and put forth greater effort at work, which eventually benefits students' academic performance. Teachers believe that transformational leaders have a crucial role in providing opportunities for students to actively

participate in school goals and in supporting their personal professional development. Thus, it is critical for leaders to set up systems that let employees and parents take part in decision-making, learn about the learning objectives, and work together to lead school transformation and improvement initiatives (Cowan, 2013).

The literature review indicates that there is substantial evidence supporting the notion that transformational leadership behaviors, such as idealized authority, customized thought, motivational speeches, and intellectual stimulation, positively correlate with enhanced job satisfaction, better performance, and higher employee acceptance in educational environments. The key results include creating a common vision, setting high expectations for performance, deciding on group goals, and encouraging thought. One of the main reasons teachers keep on to become engaged with the connection among authority and outcomes for students is that policy makers want to see improvements in educational achievement, and they believe that educational leadership is essential to achieving this goal. Consequently, the transformation of schools depends on the transformational leadership practices of principals (Aydin, 2018).

It's a method of persuading staff members to pursue organizational excellence and goals. In the context of education, leadership is the capacity for vision. A leader must be able to see clearly about the institutions they work for, including uncommon dimensions of actions that need to be taken into consideration in order to accomplish the desired state in the long run. Thus, one of the most important aspects of management in education is having the ability to secure the future (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015).

Educational Leadership for 21st Century Organizations

More than ever, effective leadership is required in the fast-paced, high-stakes environment of today. It's evident that new leadership techniques are required, but it's still unclear exactly what kind of techniques are required to handle the difficulties and complexities associated with globalization and advances in technology. Harris (2013), when it comes to giving young people opportunities, especially those

from the poorest communities, schools play a significant role. "In all schools, but especially in those with high levels of poverty, leadership plays a crucial role in turning around low expectations and subpar work." The most potent influence on schooling has been demonstrated to be the caliber of leadership, with instruction and curriculum coming in second (Leithwood et al, 2006).

Changing our perspective on leadership entails letting go of our preconceived notions about it and realizing that, in the modern world, organizations are more like "casinos of knowledge" than they are like "halls of production," with less repetition and predictability. Schools will need to make full use of all available leadership potential in the new economic landscape. Only through maximizing all types of intellectual, social, and human capital will schools be able to accomplish this. Schools must function and perform at the top level in order to optimize leadership potential; this calls for a dramatic change in leadership approaches. The nature of education has changed so drastically and irrevocably that we must reevaluate what we there is a noticeable shift in education toward leader accountability and a focus on results rather than inputs. In addition to being aware of their own leadership tactics, leaders must also be aware of the ways in which knowledge and research will be used (Adams et al, 2017).

"To effectively function in the workplace of the twenty-first century, leaders must recognize the changing times and adjust their leadership styles." The goals of organizational leadership in the modern era are knowledge expansion, employee empowerment, and employee motivation to work toward organizational improvement. The global environment brought about by the internet has had a significant impact on leadership and organizations. Social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have made it possible for the world to instantly learn about the actions of world leaders. Using programs like "Skype" or "Zoom," remote teams can collaborate on significant projects at any time of day for multinational corporations (Kimmelman, 2010).

Teachers need to be the part school leaders' team, and they should be free to carry out instructions without being constrained by formalities. Teachers must receive the proper leadership skills for the role that will be assigned to them in their work. "Generally

speaking, it is safe to presume that teachers will be responsible for directing educational initiatives based on their experience rather than whether or not they have received leadership training." Education administrative courses in institutions of higher learning have produced many school leaders rather than leadership theory. It is common to hear school administrators claim that their experiences did not prepare them for this type of work (Kimmelman, 2010).

Application of behavioral theory of learning in standardized accountability environments involves striking a balance between the interests of the organization and its workers. "Educational leaders face significant pressure to deliver results in schools facing difficult circumstances while also being sensitive to employees who are frequently safeguarded by laws and collective bargaining agreements that require collaboration to attain the desired outcomes." Comprehending behavioral theories can assist leaders in adopting a well-rounded leadership approach, which is essential in 21st-century educational institutions (Adefolalu, 2018).

Twenty-first century skills

According to definitions from the 21st century, it is "a collection of abilities needed for guaranteeing that students have the ability to acquire knowledge, develop, perform daily tasks, and utilize ideal applications for media, knowledge, and technology. "It can be described as that "the skills which a student must depend on oneself to keep keeping up with contemporary advances and face challenges" in order to achieve the four pillars of becoming aware, job, reside, and participate with others. These abilities can be roughly divided into three categories: skills related to digital culture, skills related to life and work, and skills related to creative learning. Learners must possess the wide range of competencies referred to as "skills for the 21st century" in order to successfully navigate the difficulties of the information age. The 21st-century competencies involve instructing students in understanding, analyzing, and reasoning, as well as using higher-order thinking and collaboration to identify and address problems associated with their areas of interest. Procedure-speaking, in light of the aforementioned definitions, this can be described as a set of skills necessary to

provide female students, teachers, and early childcare providers with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and succeed in it (Voogt & Roblin, 2010).

Teaching the "basics," which include reading, writing, and arithmetic, has been a top priority ever since public school began. Although these abilities are still crucial, educating kids 21st century skills is a hot topic these days. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2009) stated in a press release that "the abilities that progressively require imagination, determination, and innovative thinking in addition to performing well as part of a team" are skills important to the 21st century (Richardson, 2009).

The precise content and definition of 21st century skills can be viewed in a variety of ways, but they all generally focus on the abilities of students and how they apply what they learn in real-world situations. Their core competencies include effective teamwork and communication abilities, technological know-how, the capacity for original and creative thought, and problem-solving abilities. Many of the competencies required for success in the technological world are included in the category of 21st Century Skills. 21st century skills help students develop lifetime knowledge, enabling them to better understand and respond to the vicissitudes of the outside world while also fostering self-improvement. Success in the global workplace increasingly depends on one's ability to adapt to the fast-paced lifestyle of a global community as workplace and culture change constantly. As a result, it's critical that students develop the whole spectrum of 21st century skills so they can adapt and change with the times. While there were slight differences among the different theoretical frameworks for teaching 21st century skills, such as creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, and teamwork (Dede, 2010).

Characteristics of The Twenty-First Century Teacher

In addition to working in the classroom, educators in the 21st century can build strong social bonds with families and other individuals both within and beyond the school. The ability to face problems and devise original solutions. The ability to adapt to rapid changes and make use of them when in the classroom. Ability to take on a range of responsibilities while keeping current with the requirements of the

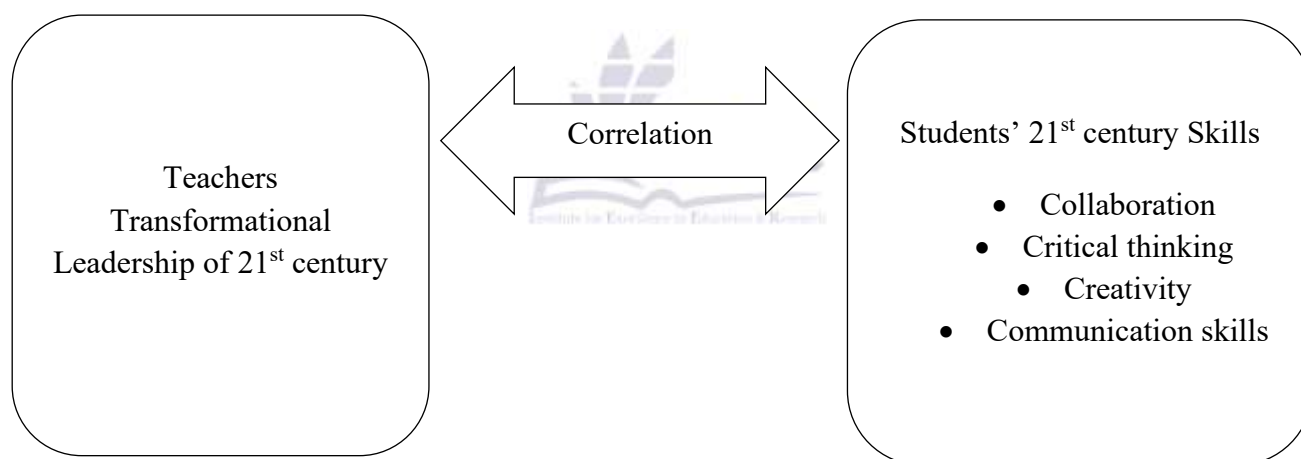
technological revolution and information revolution. Ability to assess teaching methods, identify points of weaknesses and strengths, and put improvements into practice to raise the standard of instruction. Possess essential thoughtful, imaginative, and cognitive abilities skills for higher-order thinking, and work to develop them by planning imaginative educational activities that promote focus, attention, imagination, and a range of higher-order thinking abilities.-Arranging life skills, applying them in educational settings, and imparting them to pupils.-Managing students' skills through the use of (distinguished guidance, diagnostic-remedial instruction, and multiple intelligences-based teaching) possess the capacity to collaborate with others to achieve group goals in education. Possess strong productivity skills, including the capacity to organize, oversee, and

reassess needs in order to get things done (Romero et al., 2015).

Research Design

According to the nature of the study quantitative research method was used to better understand and anticipate the phenomena. In quantitative method, correlational research design was implied to find out the relationship between transformational leadership among university teachers and 21st century skills among university students. The 21st-century transformational leadership abilities of instructors and pupils served as the research's variables. Additionally, the researcher systematically examined the coefficient correlation of variables in this study; the model describing the link between two variables is as follows:

Figure 1: Correlation Design



The target population of the study was teachers and students of universities of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. The 500 individual students from the University of Gujarat made up the study's sample. The researcher used a random sampling procedure to choose the sample for the quantitative method. Two instruments were developed for data collection. First questionnaire was developed to determine the level of teachers' transformational leadership and the other was developed to find out students' level of 21st century skills. 21st century skills were further categories into following sub-constructs;

collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and communication skills.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics; mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. Moreover, inferential statistics (Pearson r) was also used to find out the relationship between transformational leadership among university teachers and 21st century skills among university students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Level of Transformation Leadership

N	492
Mean	3.85
Std. Deviation	0.77

Table 1 describes that level of teachers' transformational leadership was found near the maximum mean score i.e., 5. Which showed that teachers have high level of their transformational leadership.

Table 2: Level of 21st Century Skills

	Collaboration Skills	Critical Thinking Skills	Creativity Skills	Communication Skills
Mean	3.83	3.81	3.83	3.84
S.D.	0.76	0.80	0.79	0.82

Table 2 depicts the level of 21st century skills among the students. Analysis of data showed that each skill was found at high level as mean score of collaboration skill was found 3.86 with S.D. 0.76. Similarly, mean score of critical thinking skill was calculated as 3.81

with S.D. 0.80, Creativity skill, mean score 3.83 and S.D. 0.79, and mean score of communication skills 3.84 with S.D. 0.82.

Table 3: Correlation between Transformational Leadership and Collaboration Skills

		Transformation Leadership	Collaboration Skills
Transformation Leadership	R	1	.57**
	Sig.		.00
	N	492	492

Table 3 demonstrates the results of relationship between transformational leadership and collaborative skill of the students. It was found significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and the collaborative skill of the students ($N = 492$, $p = .00 < .05$). Moreover, the

magnitude of this relationship was found strong ($r = .57$). Furthermore, the dimension of this correlation was found positive which shows that teachers' transformational leadership has its significant role in developing students' collaborative skills.

Table 4: Correlation between Transformational Leadership and Critical Thinking Skills

		Transformation Leadership	Critical Thinking Skills
Transformation Leadership	r	1	.58**
	Sig.		.00
	N	492	492

Table 4 demonstrates the results of relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and critical thinking skill of the students. It was found significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and the critical thinking skill of the students ($N = 492$, $p = .00 < .05$). Moreover, the magnitude of this relationship was

found strong ($r = .58$). Furthermore, the dimension of this correlation was found positive which shows that teachers' transformational leadership has its significant role in developing students' critical thinking skills.

Table 5: Correlation between Transformational leadership and Creativity Skills

		Transformation Leadership	Creativity Skills
	R	1	.61**
Transformation Leadership	Sig.		.00
	N	492	492

Table 5 determines the results of relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and creativity skills of the students. A significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and the creativity skills of the students was found ($N = 492$, $p = .00 < .05$). Moreover, the magnitude of this

relationship was found strong ($r = .61$). Furthermore, the dimension of this correlation was found positive which shows that teachers' transformational leadership has its significant role in developing students' creativity skills.

Table 6: Correlation between Transformational leadership and Communication Skills

		Transformation Leadership	Communication Skills
	R	1	.63**
Transformation Leadership	Sig.		.00
	N	492	492

Table 6 demonstrated the results of relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and communication skill of the students. It was found significant relationship between teachers' transformational leadership and the communication skills of the students ($N = 492$, $p = .00 < .05$). Moreover, the magnitude of this relationship was found strong ($r = .63$). Furthermore, the dimension of this correlation was found positive which shows that teachers' transformational leadership has its significant role in developing students' communication skills.

Findings

1. Results showed that there is significant correlation ($p < .05$) between teachers'

- transformational leadership and collaboration skills of the students at university level.
2. Findings of the study showed that there is significant correlation ($p < .05$) between teachers' transformational leadership and critical thinking skills of the students at university level.
3. Results showed that there is significant correlation ($p < .05$) between teachers' transformational leadership and creativity skills of the students at university level.
4. Finding revealed that there is significant correlation ($p < .05$) between teachers' transformational leadership and

communication skills of the students at university level.

Conclusions

1. First research question was about the level of teachers' transformational leadership at university level. Mean score on the transformational leadership was tending towards maximum. On the basis of these findings it was concluded that university teachers have high level of transformational leadership.
2. Next research question was about the current level of university students' development of 21st century skills. These skills were included collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, creativity skills, and communication skills. Mean score of each skill were near to maximum mean score i.e., 5. So, it was concluded that students are at high level of each skill.
3. Results showed that there is significant correlation between teachers' transformational leadership and collaboration skills of the students at university level. As the level of teachers' transformational leadership enhanced, the level of students' collaboration skills was significantly improved. Both have positive strong and significant relationship. It was concluded teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing collaboration skills among university students.
4. Findings of the study showed that there is significant correlation between teachers' transformational leadership and critical thinking skills of the students at university level. As the level of teachers' transformational leadership enhanced, the level of students' critical thinking skills was significantly improved. Both have positive strong and significant relationship. It was concluded teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing critical thinking skills among university students.

5. Results showed that there is significant correlation between teachers' transformational leadership and creativity skills of the students at university level. As the level of teachers' transformational leadership enhanced, the level of students' creativity skills was significantly improved. Both have positive strong and significant relationship. It was concluded teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing creativity skills among university students.
6. Finding revealed that there is significant correlation between teachers' transformational leadership and communication skills of the students at university level. As the level of teachers' transformational leadership enhanced, the level of students' communication skills was significantly improved. Both have positive strong and significant relationship. It was concluded teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing communication skills among university students.

Recommendations

1. Results reflect that university teachers transformational level falls in the high range but not very high. It is assumed that the teachers should have very high level of transformational level. Hence, the authorities may conduct professional development sessions and awareness seminars on teachers' transformational leadership.
2. Results reflect that mean score of each skill i.e. collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication were near to maximum mean score but not above 4 i.e. high level. So, the teachers may focus on development of 21st century skills among the students through innovative teaching methods.
3. Results showed that teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing collaboration skills among university students. Hence, the teachers may use group discussions, project method, and democratic methods to boost students' collaboration skills.

4. Results revealed that teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing critical thinking skills among university students. Therefore, the teachers are recommended that they may use problem solving method and open book assignments to enhance critical thinking skills of the learners.
5. Results reflect that teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing creativity skills among university students. Hence, the teachers may apply scientific method and enquiry-based approach to enhance creativity of the students.
6. Results revealed that teachers' transformational leadership is playing its role in developing communication skills among university students. Hence, the teachers may apply discussion method in class to enhance communication of the learners.

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