Analyzing Transformational, Instructional, and Distributed Leadership Paradigms in Educational Improvement

Yanan Li[1,a,*]

[1]*University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC, 3000, Australia*
a. 2389110242@qq.com
*corresponding author

Abstract: This paper examines three prominent leadership paradigms in education: Transformational, Instructional, and Distributed leadership. Transforming leadership emphasizes motivation of the educators and students to go a notch higher through provision of a vision. Leadership that focuses more on instructions aims at improving the quality of teaching and learning as well as curriculum to improve students' performance. However, distributed leadership means that the leadership roles and responsibilities are spread across many school members and it supports an inclusive school community. This paper looks at the features of this type of approach and the use of such an approach in school improvement and students' performance. Conclusively, the systematic review of leadership approaches shows that each of them has the capacity to create positive change in educational institutions and it is in this light that their combined effort is highlighted. Based on the findings of the paper, it is proposed that the application of these leadership styles is possible in order to develop a dynamic organic centre for education in order to build on ideas and growth.

Keywords: Leadership, Transformational, Instructional, Distributed.

1. Introduction

Leadership in education, as a complex and ongoing process, plays a dual role of administrative management, guidance and direction of educational organizations. This task is central to improving the effectiveness of schools, teachers as well as the education being offered and received by learners. Within this context, three key paradigms stand out: Transformational leadership, Instructional leadership, Dispersed leadership. Every paradigm presents specific approaches to initiating change in schools, controlling curriculum, and distributing work.

In this paper, three leadership styles will be discussed to explore their features and benefits as well as their relevance to bring about substantial change in school. The discussion will be held regarding the transformative nature of leadership that promotes greater commitment, enthusiasm and desire for one to go beyond the normal expected Victorian value for the greater good of leaders, educators, and students as well. Further, it will identify the nature of this trend as well as profiles of transformational leaders, participants' organizational environment, and academic success of learners. The next focus will be on the promotion of improvements to the curriculum and the support given to raise performance. The study will mostly focus on dispersed leadership which is the sharing of leadership roles amongst many practicing leaders in the school. This strategy seeks to enhance the invisibility, participation, and flexibility that is suitable for the education community's growth. This work will

show how the types of leadership mentioned above help bring about change, improvement and development in educational institutions based on materials generated in the last decade. Furthermore, this study asserts that by acknowledging the appropriateness and effectiveness of transformational, instructional, and distributive styles - all of which should be comprehended and employed intentionally - school reform is achievable and may have a quantifiable effect on enhancing the learning environment.

2. Transformational Leadership in Education

2.1. Defining Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership is a leadership style that promotes and inspires a demand for change in individuals and organizations [1]. The concept involves inspiring individuals to go beyond their interests and achieve exceptional results or outcomes through internal motivation. Transformational leaders possess exceptional qualities such as visionary, inspiring, charismatic, intelligent, and caring [1]. They communicate forward-thinking attitudes and foster comprehension and drive to encourage innovation and creativity. From an educational standpoint, transformational leaders play a significant role in efforts to modify the traditional learning model. They motivate educators to go beyond conventional teaching methods and create an environment that promotes learning and growth. This ultimately leads to a positive change in the behavior and performance of students.

2.2. Qualities of Transformational Leaders

Transformational leaders possess several key traits. Firstly, they wield significant influence, which is crucial in captivating the attention and passion of their followers. It is not just about personality but rather about possessing the ability to command respect, evoke adoration, and exhibit authority. Furthermore, transformational leaders facilitate and enhance motivation. They demonstrate unwavering commitment and fervor toward transforming society, motivating followers to exert diligent effort in achieving the envisioned goal [2]. Besides, they enhance the societal effect by fostering enlightenment, creativity, and cognitive abilities among their followers. This attribute fosters an ambiance that stimulates individuals to engage in innovative thinking and implement novel concepts. Lastly, there is the process referred to as customized consideration. Transformational leaders must listen to each follower's needs and acknowledge their strengths, treat each person as unique, and enable them to reach their full potential. Within education, these leaders ensure that the learning process is engaging and creates an environment that fosters the growth of educators and learners.

2.3. Impact of Transformational Leadership on School Change

Transformational leadership within the education system has the potential to alter the trajectory of schools and establish a precedent for change in teaching methods, curriculum delivery, and classroom arrangement. Under the influence of transformational leaders, educators are motivated to develop superior teaching methods that go beyond the basic requirements to cultivate exceptional pupils. For learners, the learning process becomes engaging, goal-oriented, and significant. Integrating collaborative methods into the school culture results in ongoing professional development for teachers and improved academic performance. Transformational leadership is crucial for creating dynamic, forward-thinking, efficient, high-quality schools focused on continuous development and exceptional achievement.

3. Review 0f Literature on Transformational Leadership in Education

Leithwood and Sun [3] did an exploratory research and found and explained that transformational leaders influence teachers' commitment to the change process and thus the positive school climate and instructional outcomes. Podsakoff et.al [4] based his study on the aspect that transformational leadership is instrumental in enhancing trust and commitment among the school stakeholders. This research observed a positive correlation between the aspects of transformational leadership behavior and the potential in the effectiveness of group teaching, in the advancement of schools, and in enhancing students' performance. In addition, another study by Jyoti and Dev [5] underscores the importance of developing creativity and innovation through transformative leadership among educators. Both of them focus on the processes of bringing change through inspiring new teaching methods initiated by change leaders which lead to higher learning outcomes. In addition, Moolenaar and colleagues [6] explored the effects of the practices of transformative leadership for building the network of teachers. According to their research, transformational leadership encourages the generation of ideas and contribution on part of many people so that a school transformation and progression is possible. There is strong literature support that indeed transformational leadership is a powerful force in school change and the consistency of the findings in the body of research supports the assertion of the effectiveness of this form of leadership for enhancing school culture, teaching practices and students' achievements.

4. Application Examples in Educational Environment

The impact of leadership approaches can be witnessed through a case which documents the transformation of a principal who managed to turn around a poorly performing school. The Principal started by carefully assessing the current performance of the school to provide direction on its future. As for me, the Principal also identified critical areas that required notable changes, for instance, the post emphasized the significance of the teaching team in the process of increasing the quality of teaching. The Principal crafted a clear and powerful statement of purpose that outlines the specific level of academic performance, declares the vision of the whole school with reasonable clarity, and sets a challenging but realistic goal. To ensure that the working relationship is healthy, the Principal engages with the staff on a constant basis through meetings and discussions. As a result of the social involvement it fosters among the teachers, there is heightened accountability for the school's goals and objectives. Additionally, the Principal has arranged professional development seminars to bolster this dedication. These workshop trainings aim to enhance instructors' expertise, understanding, and innovative thinking, as well as to investigate novel approaches for effectively involving students and enhancing educational achievements. The human appeal of transformational leadership is enhanced by the techniques above, which encompass a comprehensive strategy that fosters academic achievement and cultivates a united school community dedicated to ongoing progress.

5. Instructional Leadership in Education

5.1. Defining Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership is a concept expressing the role of school leaders in shaping the instructional quality of a school. Ma & Marion [7] refer to it as the management behaviors that stimulate, promote, and foster a conducive learning environment. Instructional leaders work on improving the quality of teaching and learning through the establishment and application of a coherent curriculum, observation, and analysis of the learning-teaching process, as well as constructive feedback. They focus on duties like curriculum development, coordination of its delivery, and assessment, especially to match the learning needs of the students. They are also evaluated and developed to

enhance teacher practices, thus creating a professional development environment. This form of leadership is meant to ensure the delivery of quality education to enhance the maximum academic performance of every learner.

5.2. Roles and Responsibilities of Instructional Leaders

Instructional leaders play a pivotal role in fostering an environment conducive to effective learning. Their primary role involves enhancing and focusing on the quality of teaching, thereby making it their central business to provide quality teaching and learning in school. They participate actively in formulating and implementing the curriculum, which is meant for the learners, irrespective of their abilities. Teachers must ensure high academic standards are set, and goals and progress are regularly marked. They create and establish goals and assessments for improvement regarding student outcomes and teacher effectiveness. They constantly mentor the teachers, analyzing and offering training to enhance the teaching execution processes. Another important aspect is that instructional leaders work with teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to enhance shared accountability for student achievement.

5.3. Impact of instructional leadership on school change

Instructional leadership plays a significant role in school transformation because it directly leads to changes in teaching and learning activities. As they support the achievement of high academic performance and effective teaching methods, they enhance the school's culture of quality and progressive development. Due to their participation in curriculum development and delivery, they embrace new approaches to reach all learners effectively. In addition, they offer professional development chances that enable instructors to enhance such practices so that classroom learning becomes more effective and students are more engaged. By encouraging teamwork and goal- directed culture, instructional leaders facilitate a shared vision for achievement. This, in turn, leads to a positive shift in school culture and improved student outcomes, central elements in the ongoing process of school change.

6. Review of literature on instructional leadership in education

Extensive literature emphasizes the significant role of instructional leadership in bolstering the quality of education and facilitating changes within schools. A seminal study by Hallinger and Murphy [8]conceived the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), highlighting the central tenets of instructional leadership: setting clear school missions, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive learning environment. This work underscores the principal's impact in shaping instructional practices to enhance student outcomes. More recent literature recurs the theme of instructional leadership's direct impact on teaching and learning. Robinson [9] found that leaders who focused on promoting and participating in teacher learning significantly impacted student achievement. A major implication for this study was that principals needed to consistently work with teachers on professional development activities.

Yalçınkaya and colleagues[10] emphasize instructional support from leaders for the teachers they supervise. These studies help them to understand more about the beneficial impact of the principals' support and encouragement on the teachers' motivation, professionalism, and practice. Rodrigues and Ávila de Lima [11] concurred with the marked influence that instructional leadership has on student outcomes with an insistence on principals to focus on instructional issues than administrative. Therefore, this study focused on exploring ways that central instructional leaders could help in eradicating differences in achievement in their schools. Ma, and Marion [7] also explore the correlation between instructional leadership and teacher job satisfaction and turnover rate in their

article showing how these leaders may contribute to changes in the school milieu and students' achievements. The literature reinforces the centrality of instructional leaders, in guaranteeing the development of robust educational practice, inspiring and developing teachers, and consequently raising achievement of learners.

7. Application Examples in an Educational Environment

An example of instructional leadership is seen in schools where one will notice active participation in the development of the curriculum and training of teachers as a demonstration of instructional leadership. They rely on inspections within classrooms not only as supervisors but as insightful makers of instructional observations. They especially look at the procedures of teaching and learning process, engagement of students and handling of the class activities. In this manner, through the systematic analysis of these components, educational leaders may provide concrete and constructive feedback and promote reflection stemming from teachers' individual needs and capabilities during the individual sessions. These seminars encourage partnership and help in improving strategies and teaching skills. This technique increases instructors' self-efficacy and fosters a growth mind-set that values ongoing personal and professional growth. By their example, teaching leaders know the importance of professional development and often hold lectures and training sessions for teaching staff in order for it to be methodical, pertinent, and purposeful. This is achieved by inviting experts, implementing peer mentoring, and utilizing diverse learning resources. Teachers possess innovative methodologies and resources that may be promptly used in the classroom, enhancing teaching effectiveness. Besides, one of their commitments is cultivating a collaborative culture that highly regards open communication and feedback. Groups of teaching can exchange insights, engage in dialogue about difficulties, and solicit guidance. Conduct frequent team meetings, cooperative planning sessions, and interdepartmental projects to enhance collaboration and peer relationships. The collective culture has resulted in the establishment of standardized teaching methods, as groups of educators learn from one another and collaborate to accomplish shared objectives.

8. Distributed Leadership in Education

8.1. Defining Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership in education refers to a leadership model where leadership tasks and responsibilities are shared among various individuals within the school community rather than centralized under a single leader [12]. It acknowledges that leadership is not confined to a specific formal role. Instead, it is spread across numerous members within the organization, including teachers, students, and even parents. This leadership approach defines leadership as a property of an organization, not of a person, popularizing the concept of 'leadership practice' rather than' leadership position.' In distributed leadership, leadership responsibilities are dynamic and situational, depending on the participants' context, task, and aptitude. The main idea of distributed leadership is to mobilize all the people of a school community to achieve the school's development and the student's success.

8.2. Features of Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership is defined on the following features. First, it supports the distributive leadership theory, which, according to which leadership activities are possible for everyone in the school. Moreover, it's important to note that leadership as used throughout this paper is not limited to leadership with a human face but is a blend of interpersonal interactions and occurrences hence making leadership a product of interpersonal dynamics. In addition, it acknowledges the fact that specialty as well as context defines leadership. This means that the instructors and students may be

empowered to spearhead curriculum development projects and other environmental projects among others. Finally, distributed leadership exhibits high levels of responsivity, which essentially entails the ability to adapt to changing conditions in the educational context. All of these elements shape an empowered culture in the school as well as the participation of all diverse learners in future development of the same school.

8.3.   Impact of Distributed Leadership on School Change

The concept of distributed leadership enables it to work towards change in the school in a significant manner. Involving ideas, talents, and experiences of all the members from the school community may facilitate the proposed community of ideas and assemble a wider set of ideas and solutions that are more diverse and realistic in practice for the further development of the organization [13]. The notion that shared accountability enhances the extent to which individuals at the workplace are committed to change endeavors stems from the idea that organizational improvements are vested on the staff. It creates a school democratic, open and participative environment through availability and use of direct and indirect communication, acknowledgement of counterpart's ability and willingness to undertake practical tasks, and displaying of respect to their counterparts. This arrangement affords the educator professional learning and growth and raises the academic achievement of the school. In addition, the constant replacement of leadership positions allows to promptly and efficiently address the increasing needs of schools.

8.4.   Review of Literature on distributed leadership in education

From the above literature, numerous highlights and realizations can be made concerning distributed leadership relevant to education and school change. A key publication in this stream of literature is a piece by Spillane that analyzes the topic. He introduced the Distributed Leadership Model, and focused on the collective actions of the people and their context which aligns the Distributed Leadership System as a process that stems out of a group [14]. According to Harris and Spillane [15] distribution process of leadership should be enacted firmly to improve the school and the learners. They argued that schools need not approach change initiatives with such fragility; instead, they said that leadership can be distributed and people's knowledge pooled. In his research, Biddle [16] discusses the study by Woods which demonstrated the potential of distributed leadership to enhance teachers' motivation due to the increase in their decision-making responsibilities. Such an increase in empowerment may also enhance job satisfaction and increase retention levels among staff, and therefore, positively impact on students' results in the long run. Liu et al. [17] related distributed leadership to organizational learning. Indeed, when they established that distributed leadership enhances learning within schools, they also discovered that it enhances learning through open communication and collaboration.

K. A. Leithwood and other authors[18] carry out a profound research that proves the fact that the distributive approach to leadership helps improve the schools 'capacity and, thus, contributes to the increased learning rates among students. Therefore, all of these works suggest the importance of the distributed nature of leadership in promoting an empowering school culture, staff participation, knowledge creation within the organization, and the process of change in school. The literature has established distributed leadership not only as one style of leadership, but as a means of increasing the efficiency of schools.

8.5.   Application Examples in Educational Environment

As a matter of fact, the application of the dispersed leadership style in the educational setting means that leadership is distributed. It also allows each member of the school to be able to lead hence

increased participation which fosters newness as well as increased school performance. They identify the special strengths, background, and passions of the faculty for teaching. Such activities may consist in casual conversations, surveys, or professional workshops or training, where instructors and staff can freely discuss their fields of interest and further career plans. Self-organizing work processes may also enable principals to intentionally assign leadership roles in accordance with each person's skills and interests based on the understanding of such distinct qualities. For instance, a very experienced teacher may be in charge of a course for preparing fresh teachers. Because of their rather extensive classroom experience and proven teaching abilities, this teacher could quite effectively guide and help inexperienced teachers to succeed. Similarly, a competent science teacher with passion in environmental issues will be appointed to head the school's environmental program. This may comprise of coordinating environmental activities, the management and coordination of sustainability projects as well as teaching and implementing environmental issues into the curriculum. In addition, another strength of the dispersed leadership paradigm is that parents and community members' input and participation are valued equally. May involve having parents participate in the planning of fund raising activities, cultural events or improvement of the school. Their stake also improves the school's resources, reminds the continuity between home and school, and fosters the sense of belonging and similar goals. This model is creative, cooperative, collaborative, and promotes all aspects of the school as it encourages the idea of the decentralized leadership.

9. Discussion

9.1. Comparison of The Leadership Styles

These include the following; Transformational, instructional, and dispersed leadership support school improvement K-12 and students' performance. Thus, it can be stated that each leadership style presents unique and significant input regarding implementing changes in a school. Transformational leadership focuses on the establishment of a common purpose which encourages people to pursue the change process and the set goals. It also builds motivation, strengthens collaboration, and celebrates creativity. Nancy william clarifies instructional leadership as the leadership derived from teaching and learning basics and will show how this will promote academic progress since improved instructions and curriculum design can lead to the rapid advancement in the educational field. This therefore has a direct impact on the student's results. Thus, by applying the knowledge, skills, and experiences in the distributed manner, the dispersed leadership may bring about further extensive and significant changes inside schools. It creates an environment that depicts each and every worker in the school as a productive member of the community and ready to make a change. Thus, each of the three styles has pivotal purposes in different spheres of school development, and the combination of such styles can greatly enrich the process of transformation.

9.2. Consequences of Styles for Today's Educational Environments

Such leadership styles are of significant importance in the present diversification of learning environment, frequent changes and general requirement for higher accountability. Applying transformational leadership can encourage educators to apply better instructional practices and the current technologies in teaching and learning. As the call for accountability rises, instructional leadership arise in managing instructional directions as well as supporting academic achievement. With the understanding of the need for changing the leadership towards a more decentralized system, dispersed leadership may enable making decisions jointly and sharing the tasks. However, context is critical. Hence, while selecting a leadership style, assessment of the specific circumstances in each school should be made. Combining these approaches in a way that makes sense is possible: with the qualities of the strategic vision and motivation in transformational leadership, the focus on education

and training, as well as the identification of the dispersed leadership with cooperation. Thus, depending on the current state of education, which is homogeneity, dynamism and higher calls for responsibility, these leadership have different consequences. Transformational leadership encourages the educators to develop new approaches and embrace change as it relates to the current educational practices and embracing technology. Thus, the leadership that is instructional within the given increasing need for accountability assumes the given focus in order to maintain the academic integrity as well as performance of students. As the consciousness about the necessity to introduce new management models which are open, democratic and more flexible increases, distributed leadership may imply equal share of responsibilities as well as decision-making. Nevertheless, this information is relative depending on the situation, which implies that leaders should consider the environment of the school and it's require before embracing a particular technique. They indicate that the best leadership setting consists of transformational, instructional and distributive leadership, although the last one might not be an independent type of leading as it works hand-in-hand with the other two.

9.3. Personal Reflection

The more engrossed I get with literature on transformational leadership, instructional leadership or distributed leadership in the context of school, the more I find that these concepts are very much in sync with my original propositions about transformation, staff flexibility and their own solicited participation. However, transformational leadership can be considered as the most inspiring type of leadership among all others due to its inherent characteristics of charm and creativity. If I am an educational leader, I will need to ensure that I obtain the ability to rally people to ensure they provide the kind of support needed to realize the set goals. This technique will be employed to foster self-organizing in educators and learners and innovation. This will be evident at our school in program that we intend to foster such as promoting teacher creativity, students' participation in decision making, etc.

In my strategy, there is instructional leadership and this emphasizes teaching and learning. This goal resonates with the educational administration's goal of producing quality education, and as such, it is my mission to offer a curriculum that only admits to quality. This comprises a firm focus on the quality of teachers which is not a weakness of Argyris' model. Regarding the management of classroom interaction, I plan to incorporate widely researched approaches and ensure that I regularly evaluate the efficacy of the approaches used with the intent of ensuring that the identified interventions are both beneficial and pertinent. Instructional leadership will be instrumental in the professional development of the teachers and the integration of analysis results in teaching.

Therefore, in my future work, the leadership approach includes the aspect of distributed leadership, which is defined as sharing of power and delegation of authority in order to make decisions as well as assigning tasks. I am sure that engaging all people in the school context will lead to better decision-making as they all will be involved. That's why, including teachers, staff, students, and parents in governance process we can enhance the idea of democracy in schools. This will result in synthesizing great strides in creating healthier, more democratic, and functional schools that bring out the best in all students and educators. The leadership structure, therefore, can be commended for promoting leadership throughout the institution that will make everyone feel responsible for the institution and make significant contributions towards the achievement of the institution's success.

For me to apply all these leadership styles in my future job, will require some effort, knowledge upgrade and career progression. I expect that there will be some difficulties: In particular, I expect difficulties as to the ways of implementing changes when acting in an educational context as well as difficulties connected with the management of change processes when introducing new measures. However, I do not give up and will try harder the next time to work on the following skills: increase the abilities of creating a vision, work on being approachable while building relations, and increase

the level of persistence. My goal is to effectively and efficiently listen, be ready and willing to adapt for myself and others, and ensure everyone is ready to deliver the maximum amount of usable knowledge for all learners.

10. Conclusion

Therefore, the comprehension of the three paradigms as transformational, instructional and dispersed leadership greatly improves the approach to leadership in the educational setting. Every person comes with suggestions and specific sectors that he or she can contribute in order to enhance post-positivistic-positive reforms to schools and students. The research examined presented necessary support of their functions in school context concerning promotion of creativity and cooperation, development of teaching and learning processes, start of further important school improvement processes. Perhaps the tactic can enhance the performance of the models when adapted and incorporated to meet the schools' requirements and cultural values. Finally, being a leader is much more than choosing the leadership behavior. It involves open-mindedness and willingness as well as adaptability in addressing the students and advancing the entire process of education for improved learning and development.

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