



A research to understand the nuances of Transformational Leadership Definitions

Dipaali Pulekar

*PhD, Scholar SNTD Womens' University HR Department, Thakur Institute of Management
Research and Studies, India
dipaalipulekar@gmail.com*

Abstract:

This research paper aims to understand and study the nuances of elements involved in definitions of Transformational Leadership style which have been ever evolving. The study refers the secondary sources fundamentally and captures the dimensions of definitions.

The study looks into different literature and research papers to understand the ever growing multi dimensional nuances of definition on Transformational Leadership.

The poignant study of Jim Kouzes (2010) emphasizes that "Leadership is not just something about people who are CEOs and those who make it to the cover of magazines. It is something that is not dependent on age, gender or position. Leadership is something everyone can do" (p.30). This research study is a part of the thesis work undertaken for the topic on Transformational Leadership

Keywords

Transformational, Leadership, Definitions, Evolution, elements, process based, and traits based

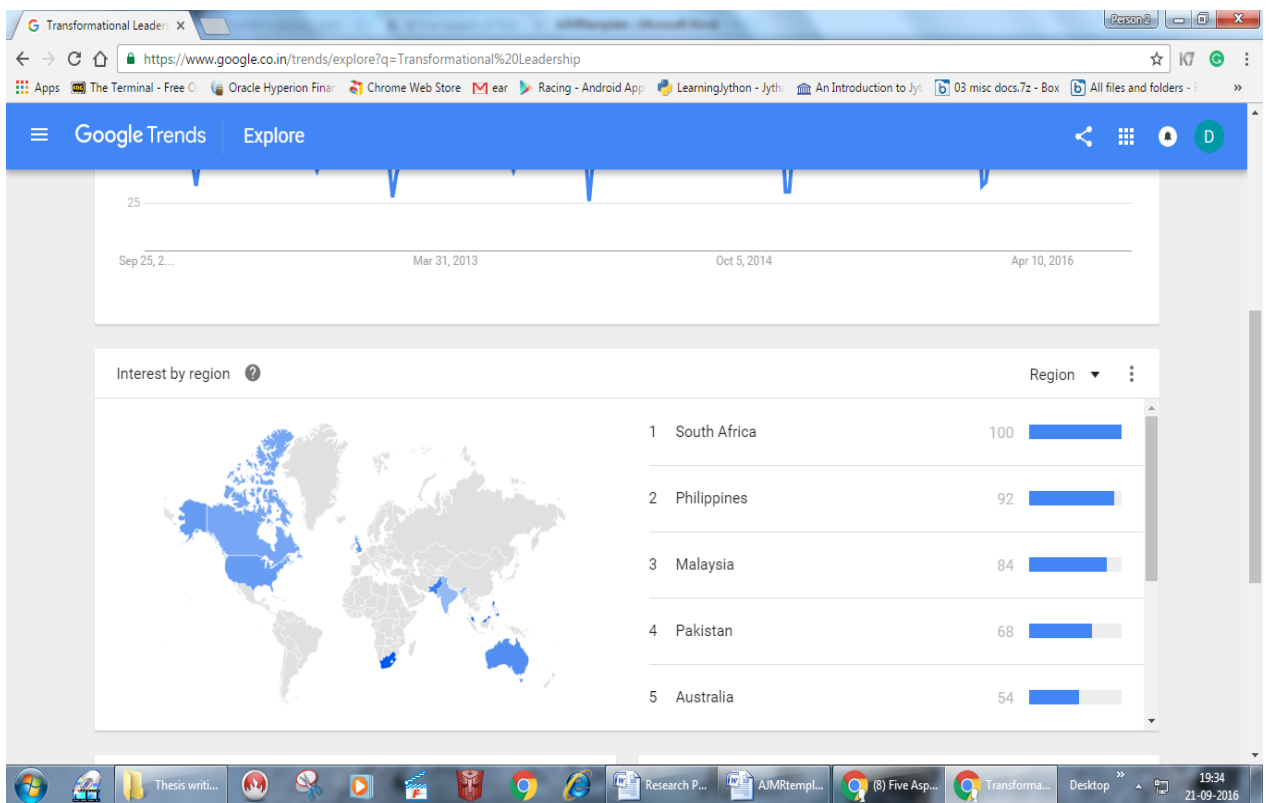
1. INTRODUCTION

Transformational Leadership evolved from Weber's theory (1952; 1978) theory about charisma.

J V Downtown is a sociologist known for his research on charismatic leadership, activism, and new religious movements? He received his PhD. from the University of California, Berkeley in 1968

with his thesis, Rebel leadership: revisiting the concept of charisma, a subject he developed more fully in his 1973 book, Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in the Revolutionary Process. He was the first to coin the term "Transformational leadership", a concept further developed by James MacGregor Burns, and one of the key concepts in leadership research over the past 25 years. In the informative study by Carver, Deborah (1989) in the essay A Transformational leadership: A Bibliographic Essay mentions that the researcher Warren Bennis one of the most published researcher has noted that there are more than 350 definitions of leaders and thousands of empirical investigations but never have so many labored so long to say so little Burns has commented that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomenon. The informative study of Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership, describing it as not a set of specific behaviors but rather a process by which "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20).

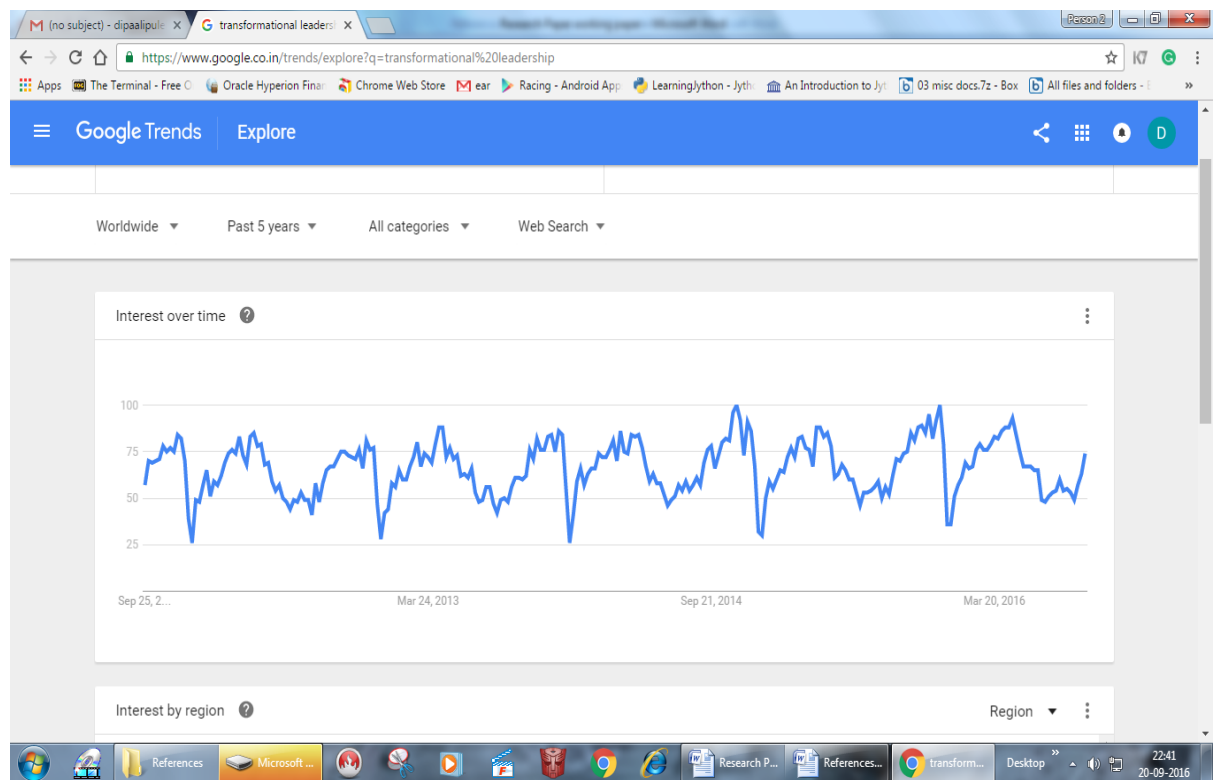
Transformational leadership from its evolution is defined in thousands of ways. The very popularity of getting more than 350 definitions speaks in loads and tones the journey of additional elements which got added during the different studies and literature. The screen shots taken from Google trends gives us informative insights of how the term Transformational Leadership is most frequently searched and has popularity even region wise.



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4. Source – <https://trends.google.co.in/> (Popularity for Transformational Leadership Region wise- Google Trends)



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4. Objective

1. To understand the evolution of definitions in Transformational Leadership
2. To understand the elements covered in the definitions of Transformational Leadership

Research Methodology

Study of Secondary Sources

Transformational leadership from Grass roots

Burns (1978), "Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that the leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20)

Bernard Bass (1985) "Transformational leaders attempt and succeed in raising colleagues, subordinates, followers, clients or constituencies to a greater level of awareness about issues of consequence

(Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1999a; 1999b) Transformational leadership, which can be defined as the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes, beliefs, and values of followers to a point where the goals of an organization and the vision of the leader are internalized and followers achieve performances beyond expectations

The term transformational leadership refers to that particular stratum of leadership which is inclusive of the ability to impact and develop extensive effects within an organization.

Transformational leadership is "the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization's mission or objective" (Yukl, 1989, p. 204).

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner: "Transformational leaders attempt to raise the level of consciousness of followers by appealing to higher ideals and values and not emotions such as fear and greed

Bass (1990b, p. 21) transformational leadership "occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group."

Sergiovanni (1991) defined transformational leadership with three concepts: building, bonding, and banking

(Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991) *Transformational leadership* describes a process by which leaders bring about significant positive changes in individuals, groups, teams, and organizations by using inspiration, vision, and the ability to motivate followers to transcend their self-interests for a collective purpose.

Leithwood (1992) stated, "Transformational leadership is a collaborative, shared decision-making approach; an emphasis on teacher professionalism and empowerment; and an understanding of change, including how to encourage change in others" (p. 10) Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1994) define transformational leadership as follows: The term 'transform' implies major changes in the form, nature, function and/or potential of some phenomenon; applied to leadership, it specifies general ends to be pursued although it is largely mute with respect to means. From this beginning, we consider the central purpose of transformational leadership to be the enhancement of the individual and collective problem-solving capacities of organizational members; such capacities are exercised in the identification of goals to be achieved and practices to be used in their achievement (p. 7)

Lucas; Bass (1994). Leaders and followers share a vision. Transformational leaders value justice and equality and values that provide empowerment to followers Transformational Leadership

Francis Yammarino (1994) describes the process of transformational leadership. "...the

transformational leader arouses heightened awareness and interests in the group or organization, increases confidence, and moves followers gradually from concerns for existence to concerns for achievement and growth...in short, transformational leaders develop their followers to the point where followers are able to take on leadership roles and perform beyond established standards or goals.."

(Bass and Avolio, 1994; Gardner, 1990).

Transformational leadership seeks to raise the consciousness of followers by motivation and a new level of morality

Northouse (1997) believed that transformational leadership is a "...process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (p. 131)

Black and Porter (2000, p. 432) define transformational leadership as: "leadership that motivates followers to ignore self-interests and work for the larger good of the organization to achieve significant accomplishments; emphasis is on articulating a vision that will convince subordinates to make major changes." These leaders have a profound effect on their followers' beliefs regarding what the organization should become and also on their subordinates' values. They also provide their followers with guidance so that they are able to achieve their goals.

Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway (2000) Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers. Transformational leaders build

subordinates' respect and trust by 1) behaving in a fair manner and doing what is right rather than what is expedient; 2) by increasing followers' awareness of the mission or vision toward which they are working and raising followers' expectations of what they can achieve, there by motivating them to pursue the group's goals; 3) by encouraging their followers to look at old problems from new and differing perspectives, giving rise to followers' creative thinking and innovation; and, lastly, 4) by granting individualized attention to their followers, considering their needs and abilities, playing an especially important role in the followers' growth and development

Transformational leadership is the leadership style encompassed by seven behaviors aimed at developing the follower: (1) communicates a vision, (2) develops staff, (3) provides support, (4) empowers staff, (5) is innovative, (6) leads by example, and (7) is charismatic (Northouse, 2013; Carless, Wearing, & Mann, 2000).

Marks and Printy (2003), "...transformational leaders play a pivotal role in precipitating change, followers and leaders are bound together in the transformational process" (p. 375)

Avolio and Bass (2004) described transformational leaders as "... inspirational, intellectually stimulating, challenging, visionary, development oriented, and determined to maximize performance. In many cases the term 'charisma' was used" (p. 3)

Avolio and Bass (2004), "Transformational leadership is associated with motivating associates to do more than they originally thought possible....Associates' perception of self efficacy or confidence, as well as their developmental potential, are enhanced through the transformational leadership process" (pp. 26-27)

Avolio and Bass (2004) described transformational leadership as: A process of influencing in which leaders change their associates awareness of what is important, and move them to see themselves and the opportunities and challenges of their environment in a new way

Barbuto,(2005) Transformational leaders are said to engender trust, admiration, loyalty and respect amongst their followers

Robbins & Judge(2005).Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self interest and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers

Noel Tichy (2010) A transformational leader is someone who fundamentally transforms the organization, takes it to a different level and it never (p. 91).

The transformational leader can be defined one "who is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help followers reach their full potential" (Northouse, 2013, p. 186).

Simola et al. (2012) define transformational leadership as a type of leadership in which interactions among interested parties are organized "around a collective purpose" in such a way that "transform, motivate, and enhance the actions and ethical aspirations of followers."

Geib and Swenson,(2013)Transformational leadership is a leadership style that seeks positive transformations "in those who follow" and that achieves desired changes through the "strategy and structure" of the organization

McCloskey W (2015)Mark transformational leadership as the process of creating, sustaining and enhancing leader-follower, follower-leader and leader-leader partnerships in pursuit of a common vision, in accordance with shared values and on behalf of the community in which leaders and followers jointly serve

Style of leadership in which the leader identifies the needed change, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executes the change with the commitment of the members of the group.

"A style of leadership in which the leader identifies the needed change, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executes the change with the commitment of the members of the group." – *BusinessDictionary.com*

Transformational leadership is a type of leadership style that leads to positive changes in those who follow." – *psychology.about.com*

Tandon, Soma(2012) in her handbook on A Novel Approach to Moral dimension of Leadership defines A transformational leader is one who has high morals and values, a strong sense of purpose and evaluates moral and ethical consequences of decisions. He encourages divergent thinking and stimulates others, considering each individual's needs, thus building the respect and trust of his followers.

Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher found from the study that freezing on the operational definition to understand Transformational Leadership was a daunting challenge.

There have been continuous and countless refinements happening in the basic fundamental definition which evolved from Weber to Burns and to Bass. The major contributors for the study on Transformational Leadership are Weber, Burns, Bass, Tichy and Devanna and Sashkin, Northouse The theorists have given the definition of Transformational Leadership as definitions which identify qualities and behaviour

Other school of researchers Avolio and Bass (2004) Marks and Printy (2003) Northouse (1997) process,

Avolia, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991 , Burn Motivation and Morality define process based dimension of Transformational leadership.

Definitions	Process based	Qualities and Behaviors
Burns	Motivation and Morality	
Bass (1985)	Awareness	
Bass, 1985 Yukl 1999 a;199b)		Attitudes, beliefs, values
Bennis and Nanus(1985)		logical thinking, persistence, empowerment , and self-control
Tichy and DeVanna (1986)		courageous, strong believers in people, value driven people, dedicated life-long learners, people capable of dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty, and each of these leaders was a visionary.
Posner (1995)		consciousness of followers, higher ideals and values fear and greed (not there)
Bass (1990b, p. 21)		purposes and mission of the group
Sergiovanni (1991)		building, bonding, and banking
(Avolia, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991	Positive changes in individuals, groups, teams, and organizations by using inspiration, vision, and the ability to motivate followers to	

	transcend their self-interests for a collective purpose.	
Leithwood (1992)		collaborative, shared decision-making approach
Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1994)		individual and collective problem-solving capacities of organizational members;
Lucas; Bass (1994)		justice and equality and values, empowerment to followers
Francis Yammarino (1994)		followers are able to take on leadership roles
Bass and Avolio, 1994; Gardner, 1990		motivation and a new level of morality
Northouse (1997)	motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower	
Black and Porter (2000, p. 432)		work for the larger good of the organization
Zacharatos,		respect and

Barling, & Kelloway (2000)		trust, awareness of the mission or vision ,individualize d attention to their followers
(Northouse, 2013; Carless, Wearing, & Mann, 2000		leads by example
Marks and Printy (2003)	followers and leaders are bound together	
Avolio and Bass (2004)	process of influencing	
Barbuto,(2005)		engender trust, admiration, loyalty among followers
Robbins&Judge(2005).		inspire followers
Noel Tichy (2010)		transforms
Tandon,Soma(2012)		morals and values
Northouse, 2013, p. 186.		attentive to the needs and motives of followers

Limitations of the study

There are ever evolving elements into the definitions on Transformational Leadership.

The researchers will have to look at the operational definition of Transformational Leadership by understanding the process based nature in the study or understanding the traits or attributes of Transformational Leadership

Conclusion

There is no single definition which defines Transformational leadership completely. Therefore the research scholars would face the difficulty in

operational sing definition on Transformational Leadership.

There are very few interdisciplinary studies and literature available to understand Transformational Leadership definition from historical perspective

Future Scope of study

The researchers while conducting the study on Transformational Leadership have to comprehend the dimensions of Transformational leadership. The researchers will have to do a thorough road map to understand the process based relevance and qualities of leaders. The researchers will have to follow a model of transformational leadership contributed by the authors namely Bass, Kouszes and Posner, Tichy & Devanna

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