

A Shared Leadership Approach to Transformational Leadership Theory: Analysis of Research Methods and Philosophies

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this paper is to identify the research philosophy as well as research methodologies that are most appropriate for the research fields identified above; this paper will highlight the research methodologies that are most applicable to this research effort by reviewing the research methodologies utilized in research performed by other researchers, in similar fields of research to those identified above. This paper acts as a guide in order to outline the research philosophies, research canons, ethical considerations, research methodologies/designs, data collection and analysis methods, sample size requirements, and “what to measure” requirements. Based on the decision to utilize the quantitative research philosophy, the paper discusses other significant research topics in terms of the quantitative research philosophy. The topics will be discussed from the quantitative perspective in order to provide the reader with the full understanding of how the quantitative research philosophy needs to be accounted for in every aspect of the research design/approach. Finally, the paper discusses a general summary of the various section of the paper and the final section also details the future intentions and responsibilities of the researcher.

KEYWORDS

Organizational Development, Research Methods, Shared Leadership, Transformational Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Shared Leadership is an up and coming dynamic topic that has appeared to have an increase in use through academia and industry since this topic has a high level of influence and impact on many aspects of an organization; of these different levels of an organization, the intentions of this future research effort aim at addressing the following research question: Can an organization/team that utilizes a shared leadership model (SLM) be more effective in transformational leadership theory when compared to an organization/team that utilizes a directive-style structured leadership model as its method of transformational leadership? This research question will be assessed through four variables including: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Within these areas of focus, it is desired that research is focused on two learning levels, one being from an engineering educational perspective and the other being from an industrial/learning organization perspective.

More specifically, this research effort will intend to study the relationship (if one exists) between shared leadership and transformational leadership theory in terms of the following factors of an organization: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Within the main research question, three sub-research questions exist, which include:

1. What is the relationship (if any) and impact that shared leadership has on the four variables in terms of transformational leadership? What is the relationship (if any) and impact that a directive-style structured leadership model has on the four variables in terms of transformational leadership?
2. What are the environmental requirements or the organizational culture (i.e. team dynamics) that would result in the development (and sustaining) of a shared leadership model that fosters the positive effects of the four variables while simultaneously minimizing the negative effects of the three factors? Compare this environment/culture to the culture of a directive-style structured leadership model.
3. Is a shared leadership environment a better producer of the types of changes that is seen by transformational leadership theory, when compared to a directive-style structured leadership model?

This research is interested in evaluating the relationships (if any) between shared leadership and transformational leadership theory, especially in terms of the four variables outlined above; this research seeks to identify and evaluate the impact that each of these variables has on the topic of shared leadership and transformational leadership theory as well as the impact that these factors have on the other factors; this inquiry and analysis will include identifying and studying the positive and negative effects of the direct/indirect relationships that these factors have with the topic of shared leadership and transformational leadership theory as well as the direct/indirect relationships that these factors have with each other.

This research seeks to determine the environmental requirements or the organizational culture (i.e. team dynamics) that would result in the development (and sustaining) of a transformational leadership that is based on shared leadership, which fosters the positive effects of the four variables while simultaneously minimizing the negative effects of shared leadership and transformational leadership. The overall goal of this segment will be to determine if a shared leadership approach to transformational leadership could be developed that encompasses the foundations of shared leadership while fostering (and sustaining) the four variables of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (encouraging the positive effects and relationships of these four variables and minimizing the negative effects and relationships of these four variables).

After completing this segment of the research, this effort will seek to compare these findings with the traditional leadership (hierarchical) structure that is seen in many education and business/industrial learning environments. In conjunction with this comparison, this research intends to study the relationships (if any) between traditional leadership (hierarchical) structure and these four variables; this research intends to identify and evaluate the impact that each of these factors has on the traditional leadership (hierarchical) structure. In addition, in this segment of research, this effort will compare the two environments (traditional leadership model versus shared leadership/transformational leadership model) in order to determine which structure is more successful at being organizationally effective (in general, which structure enables an organization to be more profitable or produce more successful/qualified engineers?).

Another segment of this research effort will involve evaluating the organizational (and classroom) cultures of these two structures in order to determine the type of cultures and team member relations that are required in order to foster and sustain a shared leadership/transformational leadership environment. In conjunction with this, this segment of research would evaluate the differing cultures in order to identify the similarities and differences between the two cultures as well as why members of these cultures might prefer one structure over another. In this section of the study, the research might consider several factors, including: satisfaction, autonomy, involvement, supervisor/leader dominance, and employee retention, student/employee intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation for success, and student/employee growth and development (there are several other factors that the research could consider).

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