

Mental Health as a Mediator of the Transformational Leadership to Better Performance

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Abstract. Many people turn to their jobs as a source of self-actualization and financial security. People seek employment that offers both financial security and personal satisfaction. Many people believe that effort is necessary for success. Unfortunately, a lot of workers find it tedious and time-consuming. To increase employee engagement and commercial success, businesses must assist individuals in discovering their "best inner selves." The collaboration of management is necessary for employee satisfaction. Given this, the goal of this study is to investigate the connection between transformational leadership and mental health in order to support businesses in creating more effective leadership strategies. A conceptual framework is created by combining theories on transformational leadership and mental health. Transformative leaders have been shown to enhance employee mental health by fostering initiative, intrinsic motivation, and a better environment, all of which boost output and performance. Additionally, there is a connection between the theories of transformational leadership and self-determination; however, more study is required to determine the precise mechanisms underlying this. Leaders and groups received the results for discussion.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership; Employee Mental Health; Performance; Motivation.

1. Introduction

Work serves as a means of self-discovery and happiness for many people in addition to being a means of subsistence. People seek employment that is both financially secure and fulfilling. To advance in life, many people need to work. Sadly, for a vast majority of employees, it is a demanding profession from which they must take a lot of time off and from which they must recover. Because of this, it is critical for organizations to assist individuals in discovering their "best inner selves" in order to maximize employee engagement and productivity. In order to support staff in achieving their objectives, leadership is necessary. According to transformational leadership theory, a particular kind of leader, known as a "transforming leader," may persuade followers to set aside their own interests for the benefit of organizational goals and to embrace and accomplish challenging tasks that they otherwise wouldn't have attempted. One of the core concepts of the transformative leadership philosophy is this [1]. Additionally, the majority of people concur that transformative leaders' actions have a significant impact on how much their followers respect and trust them, as well as how successfully they perform their tasks and how content they are at work [2]. Benefits of transformational leaders include idealized influence, inspiring motivation, individualized care, and intellectual stimulation [1]. Transformative leadership can occasionally be transactional leadership, but it can also underline the need for extra work to achieve an organizational goal by using imagery or symbols, which is sufficient to inspire people on its own. On the other hand, transactional leadership may provide structure and demonstrate concern for subordinates to give them the impression that if they perform well, they will be rewarded with merit raises [3].

As COVID-19 spreads over the world, workplace stress is rising and negatively impacting employee mental health. Mental health issues can impair a person's ability to function normally and execute their work efficiently in a variety of ways. When a person's mental health issues first manifest, it can have a significant impact on how far they can advance in their professional careers. For example, depression impairs a person's ability to execute cognitive tasks around 35% of the time and interferes with their ability to perform physical job obligations approximately 20% of the time [4]. To put it another way, this could result in more absenteeism, a greater requirement for sick leave, and a

decrease in total office productivity. Furthermore, mental health issues affect persons other than the one suffering from them. They have an impact on the entire neighborhood. It is expensive to keep people with mental illnesses from fully participating in social life. Exclusion frequently has a negative impact on both productivity and human potential. Furthermore, mental health disorders are still stigmatized, and healing is frequently misunderstood. It's likely that stigma makes it more difficult for someone to succeed in their line of work. It has been noted, for example, that many professionals find it difficult to maintain stigma-free working relationships with their employers after quitting their positions or taking time off for health-related reasons relating to a mental illness episode, such as depression. Due to the same performance and behavioral difficulties, returning employees discover that their employers and coworkers no longer respect their skills the same way they did before [5]. Overall, workplace mental health difficulties, such as stress and job addiction, can have a negative impact on a worker's personal financial and physical well-being, as well as the firm and country in which they operate [6].

Everyone knows how stressful it can be if work for a demanding or abusive manager. Going to work might become such a miserable thought that you end yourself dissatisfied most of the time. Unfortunately, a lot of businesses do not understand that more adaptable leadership is the first step in improving mental health at work. Deadlines, stress at work, a lack of support, and many other things are already causing people to experience mental health issues like stress, anxiety, and despair. The likelihood of developing a positive workplace environment is significantly reduced by the addition of a toxic leadership style. Better mental health can be promoted and achieved through transformative leadership, which uses more flexible leadership techniques. To solve the organization's most pressing issues, transformative leaders collaborate with their team members. Additionally, they promote their individuality and provide them space to express their ideas. This leadership approach, according to research, boosts group happiness and workplace effectiveness [7]. People live in a world where things are always changing. It's normal for an employee's requirements, performance, and circumstances to change from time to time. Managers and leaders should prepare for this. Due to this, it's critical to keep lines of communication open and to regularly check in with the team. Because of this, it is important to always take into account how leadership affects employee mental health. Every circumstance should be approached uniquely by leaders, who should also discuss any issues that need to be resolved with their team. There is a good probability that workers will require various items at various times. Everyone will experience less stress as a result of flexibility, which will also foster a culture whereby the change is both expected and welcomed. Numerous studies have confirmed the advantages of transformative leadership for firms as a whole. However, very few studies have specifically looked at the part that mental health plays in transformational leadership. This study's goal is to assess and analyze how transformational leadership impacts work performance through a particular mediator- mental health. The method of literature review is applied in this research to explore the association between mental health and motivation. Source of materials include data from academic journals, World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Relations of Employee Mental Health to Job Performance

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States, mental illness and stress can have a negative impact on an employee's ability to perform well at work and be productive, to be engaged in their work, to communicate with coworkers, and to function normally on a daily basis. It's becoming clearer that a worker's mental health has a big effect on their overall health, and that stress at work can lead to a number of physical problems. Poor mental health can also lead to employee burnout, which makes it hard for them to contribute meaningfully in both their personal and professional lives [8]. Additionally, mental health issues have a direct effect on businesses and organizations through higher absenteeism, a decline in productivity and income, and

a rise in management expenses [9]. The exploratory qualitative study by Hennekam et al. investigates how people with mental health issues manage their symptoms at work as well as the effect of these conditions on self-perceived job performance [10]. The study is based on 257 responses to a qualitative questionnaire and 17 in-depth interviews with people who have mental illnesses. The findings show that a person's ability to accurately assess their work performance can be greatly influenced by their mental health. Lesser work quality, slower work pace, and more errors are signs of this. The findings also suggest stress management techniques that influence both good and negative work performance. Poor performance might result from using drugs and injuring oneself, from hiding and stifling symptoms, or from forcing oneself to work when ill. As well as medication and counseling, mindfulness practices, open communication, humor, and compensation schemes, accepting one's illness and taking time off are helpful coping mechanisms. An increasing number of people are experiencing mental health issues at work, which has an impact on both the employer and the employee. However, little is known about how mental health issues impact how successfully employees perform their jobs, how they handle these issues at work, or how this impacts crucial business outcomes.

2.2 Transformational Leadership and Mental Health

James MacGregor Burns, a U.S. political scientist who lived from 1918 to 2014, defined transformational leadership as a charismatic, inspiring way to lead others. Usually, transformational leadership involves making followers more motivated, confident, and happy, uniting them in the pursuit of difficult, shared goals, and changing their views, values, and needs. It is a process of changing the leader as well as the behavior, culture, and people of an organization. Transformational leaders are always coming up with new ways to move the group forward. They are passionate and sure of what they believe, and they give ethics and values a high priority while setting accountability standards in the organization. Transformational leaders are often charismatic and able to have a huge impact on their followers, persuading them to share the leader's vision and do more than what is expected of them. Transformational leaders are good at getting things done and can match the goals and incentives of each person with the organization's vision.

In Bass' multifactor model of leadership, the "let's simply let things happen" leadership style is contrasted with the "transformational" and "transactional" leadership styles [11]. This study project compares staff burnout in teams that provide mental health services, organizational culture indicators, and leadership styles. Corrigan et al. examined 236 leaders and 620 followers from 54 different mental health teams to learn about their program's burnout, organizational culture, and leadership styles [12]. According to the findings, transformative leadership has a positive relationship with healthy corporate culture but a negative relationship with employee fatigue. Furthermore, leaders have a different viewpoint than followers on what constitutes transformative leadership; leaders have a more positive self-image. As a result of these research, there is a clearer awareness of the critical role that team leaders play in organizational structure.

Burnout and emotional tiredness are two common problems among those who provide mental health services in the public sector. These issues have a detrimental effect on both the quality of the work completed and the degree of customer satisfaction. Even while there is some evidence that transformative leadership can be advantageous, relatively little research has been done to investigate ways to break these ties. Green et. al. took a sample of 388 professionals working in the field of community mental health and investigate the correlations between transformative leadership, emotional tiredness, and intention to leave their current position [13]. Emotional tiredness and intention to leave a job were found to have a positive correlation, but transformational leadership was found to have a negative correlation with both of these criteria. It was discovered that transformative leadership weakens the connection between emotional tiredness and intention to leave a job. This finding suggests that having a transformational leader may lessen the impact of providers' emotional weariness on their likelihood of leaving their jobs. If supervisors in the public sector mental health

industry received training in transformational leadership, there may be a reduction in employee turnover as well as less emotional weariness among workers.

Numerous pieces of evidence point to connections between motivation and important outcomes in many different areas of life. For instance, performance and productivity at work are correlated with interest in and plans for dropping out of school. SDT predicts that with self-determined motivation, positive outcomes will rise [14]. Objective performance, coping, effort, reduced burnout, enjoyment, and mental health in the context of sports have all been connected to self-determined motivation. This study's objective is to investigate the links between motivation and mental health, which are supported by early SDT research [15] and are still important in the workplace.

3. Transformational Leadership Improves Employee Mental Health

Transformational leaders developed into a behavioral role model for followers (idealize influence) by providing them with challenges and meaning in their daily activities (inspiration motivation), recognizing individual differences through a supportive leadership style, and challenging them to think in new ways to address challenges and issues that are both new and old (individualized consideration). By going above and beyond what even the team members anticipate, increasing team outcomes through their leadership, and developing not only better managers but also better coworkers, managers achieve results through transformational leadership behaviors. The HMIEM gives us a way to think about the causes and effects of motivation at three different levels: the universal (personality), contextual (life domain), and situational (state)[14]. It says, more specifically, that the extent to which basic psychological needs are met by social-environmental factors affects the extent to which motivation is seen as self-determined, which in turn affects affective, cognitive, or behavioral outcomes [14].

3.1 Motivational Climate

By providing challenges and meaning in their daily actions, transformational leadership helps to create a motivational climate (inspiration motivation). In the corporate setting, there are many social and environmental components that make up the motivational atmosphere (for instance, group members and structures) [19]. Therefore, it is believed that the leader is one of the key architects of the workplace motivational climate, and that his or her emphasis on mastery and self-comparison fosters a task motivational climate, whereas his or her emphasis on outcomes and normative comparison fosters an ego motivational climate. This contradiction resulted from the achievement goal theory [20]. An ego environment is associated with maladaptive (more negative) outcomes like extrinsic motivation, amotivation, and negative affect, whereas an adaptive (more positive) climate is associated with results like improved competence, intrinsic motivation, and positive affect [21].

The psychological needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy are affected by the motivational environment, which in turn affects motivation [14]. Research shows that these "innate psychological nutrients" are very important for long-term psychological health, integrity, and growth [22]. Competence is the belief that you can do something well; autonomy is the ability to make decisions that are in line with your values; and relatedness is the feeling that you belong to a group. In a setting where task motivation is common, managers often show that they trust their coworkers' skills (competence support), give them choices (autonomy support), and listen to their ideas (relatedness support). All of these things help employees meet their needs, be self-motivated, and have other positive experiences.

3.2 Proactivity

One of history's most well-known and influential transformative figures is usually considered as being Steve Jobs. Steve Jobs was known to his coworkers as someone who incessantly demanded more and pushed them to think beyond their previous accomplishments. He encouraged them to consider things they didn't even know they needed, then pursue those things with everything they had.

He improved employee satisfaction by reorganizing the organizational structure of his company with the aid of his leadership, and he used the company's products to improve the world. Apple's status as an innovative firm is primarily attributable to Steve Jobs' capacity to inspire his team members and exercise transformative leadership in order to unleash everyone's creative potential.

Another brilliant transformational leader, Jeff Bezos is well-known. His managerial approach comprises constantly encouraging subordinates to look for potential new business opportunities and perhaps even new products. Amazon has attained unheard-of heights in both online shopping and product delivery as a result of his original and forward-thinking business strategy. Several initiatives, including Amazon Technical Academy, Surge2IT, the UXDR Apprenticeship Program, and AWS Grow Our Own Talent, were credited to Jeff Bezos as its designers. These occurrences encourage staff members to go above and beyond what was required of them. Jeff encourages employees to take part in decision-making processes and experiment with new working practices, which is something they like. The only conclusion that could be drawn from a review of the organization's five-year financial record was expansion. This proves the initiatives' success in motivating employees. An organization's performance as a whole improves when its workers are inspired to work harder.

Both of the CEOs were successful in inspiring and motivating their employees to take initiative by providing them with intellectual stimulation, deliberate individual consideration, and motivational inspiration. Recently, a few management and organizational theorists have been looking at the concept of proactivity. Being self-directed, inventive, and taking care of one's work responsibilities are all examples of what is meant by the empirical term "proactive conduct" [16,17]. The idea that humans are proactive by nature is one of the main meta-theoretical foundations of self-determination theory. Intrinsic desire and engagement are considered as manifestations of this proactive character. In addition, what we mean when we talk about autonomously driven behavior in the context of SDT is pretty comparable to the concept of proactivity, which is defined as the ability to direct one's own efforts, be innovative, and take the initiative. White demonstrated, in an entirely different context, that the level of staff motivation in the service delivery industry was primarily responsible for the level of customer satisfaction [18]. Workers' motivations that were linked to having a lot of freedom were always good predictors of how they felt and how well the company did its job.

By embracing individual variety through a supportive leadership style, on the other hand, transformational leaders developed become behavioral role models for followers (idealize influence). All helpful activities will automatically become extrinsic motivation for employers who are battling with mental health. For example, leaders' praise and affirmations assist employers in discovering their own values and realizing that their contribution is being recognized; as a result, employers are more positive about their job and create greater performance. Extrinsic motivation entails act that are linked to various outcomes and is composed of four behavioral rules. Three types of extrinsic motivation exist: identifiable regulation, rewarded regulation, and integrated regulation. The most self-determined kind of extrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, involves actions that are in line with an individual's identity and value system (for example, employees who participate because it is in line with their ideals) (e.g., employees who engages in training in order to get recognition from leaders or managers).

3.3 Intrinsic Motivation

Employees who are self-motivated regularly perform their best work because they are more aware, focused, and motivated to collaborate with one another to further the company's objectives. Kuvaas' study sought to determine whether there was a link between intrinsic motivation and work performance among public employees in a variety of occupations. He sought to contribute to the concept of self-determination as well as advance public management research and implementation [23]. Three different Norwegian cities provided responses. A survey was given to 2,015 employees via the web application "Questback." It was completed totally by 779 employees, or roughly 39% of the total. Kuvaas discovered that the degree of independence and reliance a task had on other tasks affected its completion success. SDT thought it was critical that these connections were made possible

in part by each individual's motivation [23]. This demonstrates that having a say in how one completes a task, as well as the opportunity to connect with and cooperate with coworkers, can improve performance by making it more enjoyable. Kuvaas shown in the same study that supervisors' support for autonomy, competence, and development predicted work performance. These correlations were totally mediated by intrinsic motivation in this case [23].

Additionally, earlier research has demonstrated that intrinsic drive has the exact opposite impact on employee burnout [24]. People who are genuinely motivated find joy and satisfaction in the act of performing a task. As a result, they are more positive, persistent, and believe their work is more exciting. They also put more effort into it. According to Vallerand's research, "high intrinsically motivated workers have higher levels of vitality, positive affect, self-esteem, absorption, focus, effort, and tenacity," and when these workers suffered burnout, they had more personal resources to get through it [14]. These workers are more motivated to advance the company and feel less worn out, agitated, and anxious [14]. People with self-interested motivation experience less stress and strain than those without it. There might be a connection between burned-out workers' lack of inner motivation [24]. Thus, those with high levels of intrinsic motivation can avoid being bored with their work. CX Organizations are most concerned about burnout because it has an impact on important results. Low dedication and a lack of labor are the consequences. As a result, there is a high rate of employee turnover and absences. According to studies, leaders have a significant impact on their employees' health and happiness. On the other hand, little research has been done on how a leader's style impacts employee burnout. As was already said, there is a connection between intrinsic drive and transformational leadership that enables employees to advance their knowledge, develop coping mechanisms for difficult circumstances, and experience reduced burnout.

4. Summary

Business is constantly evolving, therefore it's critical for leaders to have the flexibility to respond to new circumstances and modify their leadership philosophies as necessary to meet the demands of their organizations. Companies and leaders who are resistant to change are unlikely to succeed. People believe that the most crucial mental capacity is the ability to reason and think logically since emotions are the most significant aspect of what makes us human. The majority of people's actions are actually dictated by their feelings. If people are feeling positive emotions like self-assurance, optimism, or satisfaction, they will concur on what needs to be done. Even if the facts are the same, our decision may be significantly different if we are experiencing negative emotions like concern, rage, or despair. In actuality, our priorities fluctuate depending on our mood. When we are terrified, our minds are only on the thing that is frightening us. And the majority of the time, we make decisions based on how we anticipate they will make us feel.

Given that intrinsic drive is the mechanism driving what are known as transformational leaders, transformational leadership would be strongly advised. To encourage their teams to succeed, good leaders provide intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation. They strive to inspire their staff and set a positive example for them so that the entire company can advance. Good leadership is centered on the notion that the success of the organization depends on individuals who have high levels of job satisfaction. Leadership that is transformational can help in this situation. For businesses whose goals include disruption and inspiration, this style of leadership is essential. To increase employee empowerment and job happiness, transformational leaders deploy inspiring motivation and mental stimulation.

It is highly recommended that further research be done on the connections between workplace mental health and motivation. In order to improve outcomes, organizations should seriously consider offering leadership training. Intellectual stimulation for followers is essential because democratic leadership produces greater commitment, increased productivity, and highly inventive problem-solving solutions. It's important for your supporters to have creative outlets. Effective leaders should support and encourage their followers as they come up with creative solutions to issues. Encourage

team members to participate is also crucial. If team members want to share their thoughts, they should be made to feel welcome. Participatory leaders encourage team members to speak up and get involved. Although these leaders have the last say in all decisions, they actively involve the team members in achieving the team's objectives by giving them support. Transformative leaders aren't only concerned with getting things done; they also genuinely enjoy and care about what they accomplish. Along with having passion, you also need to know how to communicate it. People must realize how crucial their advancement is to you. Never forget to thank your teammates for their work. Outstanding communicators are transformational leaders. One-on-one communication with each team member is highly valued by them. Both orally and nonverbally, a great leader should express genuine concern and care for the people on their team. By keeping the lines of communication open, leaders can make sure that employees may freely contribute and get credit for their work.

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