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# Transformational Styles of Department Heads and Teachers' Motivation in a Selected University in China

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**Abstract:** The study covered 235 respondents in a description-comparation-relevant design, and assessed that teachers agreed with the idealized influence, intellectual motivation, and personal and inspirational motivation that department heads exhibit in their transformational leadership style. Across all indicators, the highest average score was for the trait of a department head seeking long-term development for the department, while the lowest average score was for accepting ownership of team decisions. Respondents' overall assessments show that they agree with the transformational leadership style of their department heads. Of all the variables, personal considerations ranked first, followed by idealization, intellectual stimulation, and motivational motivation. There was no significant difference in idealization, motivation, intellectual motivation and personal consideration between male and female respondents on the evaluation of transformational leadership style of their department heads. Respondents' responses on how to rate the transformational leadership style of their respective department heads were age-related. In terms of department affiliation, respondents' evaluations of the transformational leadership style of their respective department heads were comparable, regardless of department affiliation.

**Keywords:** Transformational Styles; Department Heads; Teachers' Motivation.

## 1. Introduction

The differences between the self-assessments of male and female respondents on their motivations did not yield any significant differences in terms of power, affinity, achievement and ability. The respondents had common responses on how they assessed their motivations.

The relationships between the transformational leadership styles of department heads and the assessed teachers' motivations only yielded a significant result between inspirational motivation and power motivation. This implied that inspirational motivation as part of the leadership styles of the department heads influenced the power motivation of teachers. Contrariwise, the rest of the many pairs of variables did not yield any significant findings which implied no correlations between them. Furthermore, the degree of correlations seemed to be negligible.

## 2. Detailed Tabular Research

**Table 1.** Distribution of Teacher-Respondents according to Profiles

| Profiles | Indicators | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | Male | 118 | 50.0 |
| | Female | 117 | 50.0 |
| **Total** | | **235** | **100.0** |
| Age | 25 years old and below | 42 | 18.0 |
| | 26-35 years old | 72 | 31.0 |
| | 36-45 years old | 81 | 34.0 |
| | 46 years old and above | 40 | 17.0 |
| **Total** | | **235** | **100.0** |
| Department | Intelligent Manufacturing Institute | 20 | 9.0 |
| | Faculty of Literature and Law | 21 | 9.0 |
| | Academy of Marxism | 18 | 8.0 |
| | Physical Education Institute | 18 | 8.0 |
| | Foreign Language School | 30 | 13.0 |
| | College of Communication | 22 | 9.0 |
| | School of Information Engineering | 28 | 12.0 |
| | School of Civil and Environmental Engineering | 17 | 7.0 |
| | School of Chemistry and Biological Engineering | 36 | 15.0 |
| | School of Music and Dance | 21 | 9.0 |
| | Chinese Classics Academy | 4 | 2.0 |
| **Total** | | **235** | **100.0** |
| Number of Years in Teaching | 0-10 years | 58 | 25.0 |
| | 11-20 years | 85 | 36.0 |
| | 21-30 years | 53 | 23.0 |
| | 31 years and above | 39 | 17.0 |
| **Total** | | **235** | **100.0** |
| Educational Attainment | Bachelor's Degree | 104 | 44.0 |
| | Master's Degree | 79 | 34.0 |
| | Doctoral Degree | 52 | 22.0 |
| **Total** | | **235** | **100.0** |

Leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring schools progress and is a critical part to promote teachers' performance. It is an obligation of the school leaders to make sure that teachers are satisfied at work and perform their tasks to their fullest potential. However, every school leader has different management skills, styles of leadership to guarantee successful functioning of schools. A review of management literature suggests that transformational leadership theory has been studies and discussed the most in the new era. Transformational theory has been extensively utilized in school leadership system in education.

The study covered Hunan University of Science and Engineering**,** This is a full-time general undergraduate institution approved by the Ministry of Education and sponsored by the Hunan Provincial People's Government. The school is located in Lingling District, Yongzhou City, a famous national historical and cultural city.

In terms of the profile of respondents, the above table revealed that frequencies of male and female respondents were closely equivalent to one another. Many of them belonged to the age range of 36–45 years old followed by 26–35 years old. Moreover, they were many respondents whose affiliation is at the School of Chemistry and Biological Engineering. There were also greater frequencies found in Foreign Language School and School of Information Engineering. The number of years in teaching showed that many of them were connected in their present school within 11–20 years. Finally, the educational attainment of the respondents revealed that many of them obtained a Bachelor's Degree.

**Table 2.** Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads in terms of Idealized Influence

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leader has a vision for the department. | 3.09 | 0.47 | Agree |
| Leader is a champion of change. | 3.02 | 0.55 | Agree |
| Leader can seek long-term development for the department. | 3.32 | 0.57 | Agree |
| Leader follows the goal and works hard. | 3.01 | 0.26 | Agree |
| Leader accepts ownership of team decisions. | 2.95 | 0.60 | Agree |
| Leader can create a teamwork atmosphere. | 3.02 | 0.33 | Agree |
| Leader takes responsibility for his/her actions. | 3.08 | 0.27 | Agree |
| Leader makes others feel good when he is with colleagues | 3.01 | 0.63 | Agree |
| **Composite** | **3.06** | **0.46** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of idealized influence, the transformational leadership style of the department heads yielded a composite mean score of 3.06 with a 0.46 corresponding standard deviation. This implied that teachers agreed with their assessments on how the department heads manifested their idealized influence as part of their transformational leadership style. Of all the indicators, the highest mean score 3.32 was evident by the characteristics of the department heads to seek a long-term development for the department, while, the lowest mean score 2.95 was evident by accepting ownership of team decisions.

Charisma, which is defined personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, arouses strong emotions from followers, making the leaders their role models. Charisma is essential because it is how leaders can rally their followers around a shared vision which is most expressed by the leaders' ability to listen actively to each employee (Ugochukwu, 2021). Since the key term is influence, the display of charisma makes the employee want to be more like the transformational leaders. As role models, employees will strive to mimic this leader. These leaders demonstrate very high moral standards by conducting themselves in an ethical manner.

**Table 3.** Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads in terms of Inspirational Motivation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leader affirms and encourages faculty and staff. | 2.64 | 0.52 | Agree |
| Leader motivates faculty and staff to work as a team. | 2.82 | 1.13 | Agree |
| Leader takes the initiative to communicate with others and subordinates' effective advice. | 2.63 | 1.00 | Agree |
| Leader is loyal to his/her department and team. | 3.06 | 0.80 | Agree |
| Leader is rewarded for outstanding performance. | 3.23 | 0.77 | Agree |
| Leader can lead the team to challenge the future. | 3.08 | 0.59 | Agree |
| Leader knows how to influence others and get support. | 3.01 | 0.53 | Agree |
| Leader helps other in finding meaning in their work | 3.12 | 0.68 | Agree |
| **Composite** | **2.95** | **0.75** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of inspirational motivation, table shows the transformational leadership style of the department heads yielded a composite mean score of 2.95 with a 0.75

corresponding standard deviation. This implied that teachers agreed with their assessments on how the department heads manifested their inspirational motivation as part of their transformational leadership style. Specifically, the highest mean score 3.23 was evident by the reward of the leaders for their outstanding performances while the lowest mean 2.63 score was evident by the initiative of the leaders to communicate with others and subordinates' effective advice. This was followed by the characteristics of the department heads to affirm and encourage faculty and staff.

Cherry and Morin (2022) defined motivation as the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors, and it is what causes an individual to act. It involves the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces that activate behavior. Therefore, the motivation coming from the school leaders demonstrated in the school setting may have a positive impact on the teachers.

Inspirational Motivation is the degree to which a leader articulates an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. Leaders who use inspirational motivation have high standards and expectation for their followers.

**Table 4.** Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads in terms of Intellectual Stimulation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leader formulates the talent introduction plan of their department. | 3.14 | 0.65 | Agree |
| Leader selects the most qualified candidates for the open positions. | 2.67 | 0.62 | Agree |
| Leader helps in mentoring team members. | 3.51 | 0.76 | Strongly Agree |
| Leader can present to a group of peers and/or seniors. | 2.99 | 0.82 | Agree |
| Leader can organize the team to go out to research. | 2.83 | 0.85 | Agree |
| Leader provides support for teachers to participate in values training. | 2.83 | 0.73 | Agree |
| Leader enables others to think about old problems in new ways. | 3.37 | 0.65 | Agree |
| Leader guides and assists teachers in career planning. | 2.70 | 0.60 | Agree |
| **Composite** | **3.01** | **0.71** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of intellectual stimulation, the transformational leadership style of the department heads on Table yielded a composite mean score of 3.01 with a 0.71 corresponding standard deviation. This implied that teachers agreed with their assessments on how the department heads manifested their intellectual stimulation as part of their transformational leadership style. Remarkably, the highest mean score 3.51 was apparent by the characteristics of the department heads to mentor their team members while the lowest mean score 2.67 was evident by selecting the most qualified candidates for the open positions.

The leader's ability to provide intellectual stimulation had the highest influence on teacher self-efficacy Francisco (2019). Teachers are intellectually stimulated and encouraged to try new things (Fontein, 2022). Intellectual stimulation describes leaders who encourage their members to think outside the box and be innovative. Stimulating followers promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills to improve the group or whole organization (Ugochukwu, 2021).

**Table 5.** Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads in terms of Individual Consideration

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leader can respond to his/her co-faculty members who are unhappy with them or others in the department. | 3.43 | 0.78 | Agree |
| Leader has counseled faculty and staff with personal concerns (family, health, finances). | 3.04 | 0.20 | Agree |
| Leader can react to staff productivity declines | 2.61 | 0.66 | Agree |
| Leader works with faculty members who have performance issues, such as chronic lateness or absenteeism. | 3.57 | 0.73 | Strongly Agree |
| Leader provides faculty members with opportunities and places for leisure activities that are conducive to physical and mental health. | 3.15 | 0.71 | Agree |
| Leader respects quality time between work and family/personal matters. | 2.96 | 0.84 | Agree |
| Leader can recognize balanced work and rest. | 2.80 | 0.80 | Agree |
| Leader helps others to develop themselves | 3.43 | 0.59 | Agree |
| **Composite** | **3.13** | **0.66** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of individual consideration, table shows the transformational leadership style of the department heads yielded a composite mean score of 3.13 with a 0.66 corresponding standard deviation. This implied that teachers agreed with their assessments on how the department heads manifested their individual consideration as part of their transformational leadership style. Of all the indicators, the highest mean score was evident by working with faculty members who have performance issues, such as chronic lateness or absenteeism, while the lowest mean score was apparent by the reactions of the department heads to the staff when the productivity declines.

**Table 6.** Overall Assessment on the Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads

| Variables | Composite | | | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Interpretation | |
| Idealized Influence | 3.06 | 0.46 | Agree | 2 |
| Inspirational Motivation | 2.95 | 0.75 | Agree | 4 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 3.01 | 0.71 | Agree | 3 |
| Individual Consideration | 3.13 | 0.66 | Agree | 1 |
| **Composite** | **3.04** | **0.65** | **Agree** | **--** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

As gleaned in the above table, the overall assessment of the respondents revealed that they agreed with the transformational leadership styles of their respective department heads. Of all the variables, the individual consideration was placed on top ranking followed by the idealized influence, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation.

Another type of transformational leadership is *Individual Consideration*. (Ugochukwu, 2021) defined it as the degree to which a leader attends to each follower's personal needs. A transformational leader encourages members by focusing on the way each employee affects the overall goal. It refers to the support of the leader for each follower. *Individual Consideration* may include training and coaching, allocating tasks according to the competence of each individual, and supervision of performances. Recognizing and valuing the motivations, desires, and needs of the employees may help them grow and learn in an environment they feel comfortable in

When a leader shows individualized consideration, they are also aware of the unique talents that each follower brings to the workplace and support them in developing and demonstrating these key skills and behaviors. This leads the follower to aspire to develop further and they show intrinsic motivation when performing their work.

**Table 7.** Difference in the Assessment of the Teachers on the Transformational Leadership Styles by Educational Attainment

| Variable | Educational Attainment | Mean | F-value | sig | Decision Ho | Interpret |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Idealized Influence | Bachelor | 3.06 | 1.391 | .251 | Accept | Not Significant |
| | Masters | 3.08 | | | | |
| | Doctorate | 3.03 | | | | |
| Inspirational Motivation | Bachelor | 2.92 | 1.734 | .179 | Accept | Not Significant |
| | Masters | 3.00 | | | | |
| | Doctorate | 2.92 | | | | |
| Intellectual Stimulation | Bachelor | 2.98 | 2.582 | .078 | Accept | Not Significant |
| | Masters | 3.00 | | | | |
| | Doctorate | 3.07 | | | | |
| Individual Consideration | Bachelor | 3.14 | .201 | .818 | Accept | Not Significant |
| | Masters | 3.11 | | | | |
| | Doctorate | 3.13 | | | | |

**Table 8.** Motivation of Teachers in terms of Power Motivation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I like it when people listen to me carefully | 2.40 | 1.02 | Disagree |
| I enjoy the feeling when others seek my opinion | 2.40 | 0.92 | Disagree |
| I strive to be promoted | 2.99 | 0.90 | Agree |
| I will point out others' problems when they do something wrong | 2.60 | 1.11 | Agree |
| I prefer to be their leader than their confidant | 2.19 | 1.17 | Agree |
| **Composite** | **2.51** | **1.02** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

Using ANOVA or F-Test, the differences among the assessments of respondents by educational attainment on the transformational leadership styles of their respective department heads did not yield any significant differences in terms of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. The null hypothesis was accepted at a 5% level of significance. This implied that the respondents had the same responses on how they assessed the transformational leadership styles of their respective department heads regardless of the educational attainment

In terms of power motivation, the motivation of teachers yielded a composite mean score of 2.51 with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.02. This implied an agreement among the self-assessments of teachers regarding power motivation. Of all the indicators, the highest mean score was evident by striving to be promoted while the lowest mean score was evident by preferring to be a leader than their confidant.

In terms of affinity motivation, the motivation of teachers yielded a composite mean score of 2.54 with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.01. This implied an agreement among the self-assessments of teachers regarding affinity motivation. Specifically, the highest mean score was evident by giving a chance when others make mistakes, while, the lowest mean score was evident by expressing a gratitude to somebody who

helped them. This was similarly followed by feeling at ease in the group and feeling happy when their colleagues around them are also happy.

**Table 9.** Motivation of Teachers in terms of Affinity Motivation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel happy when my colleagues around me are happy | 2.39 | 1.00 | Disagree |
| I feel at ease in the group | 2.39 | 0.92 | Disagree |
| When someone makes a mistake, I will give him/her a chance | 3.08 | 0.83 | Agree |
| When someone helps me, I will express my gratitude to him/her | 2.38 | 1.15 | Disagree |
| I think everyone needs the help of others | 2.46 | 1.15 | Disagree |
| **Composite** | **2.54** | **1.01** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

**Table 10.** Motivation of Teachers in terms of Achievement Motivation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel happy after overcoming difficulties | 2.41 | 0.95 | Disagree |
| I like novel and challenging tasks | 2.46 | 0.84 | Disagree |
| I am not satisfied with the status quo and do my best to complete the work | 3.08 | 0.83 | Agree |
| I will persist in things that I am not sure about | 2.53 | 1.09 | Agree |
| Even if I have plenty of time to complete the task, I will start immediately | 2.07 | 1.07 | Disagree |
| **Composite** | **2.51** | **0.96** | **Agree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of achievement motivation, the motivation of teachers yielded a composite mean score of 2.51 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.96. This implied an agreement among the self-assessments of teachers regarding achievement motivation. Particularly, the highest mean score 3.08 was evident by being not satisfied with the status quo and doing the best to complete their works. On the other hand, teachers disagreed on these matters as part of their achievement motivation: 1) feeling happy after overcoming difficulties; 2) liking novel and challenging task and; 3) starting immediately even the teachers had plenty of times to do the tasks.

The accomplishment motivation, according to the need achievement theory of Atkinson and McClelland, is a personal attribute in which some people choose to succeed over fear of failure. In this instance, there is a high level of achievement motivation.

**Table 11.** Motivation of Teachers in terms of Ability Motivation

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I can do the job alone and do it well | 2.07 | 1.07 | Disagree |
| I can try various methods to solve difficulties | 2.31 | 0.82 | Disagree |
| I can continuously innovate my teaching method | 3.00 | 0.78 | Disagree |
| I can make my students learn better | 2.93 | 1.14 | Disagree |
| I can get good results in the competition | 1.92 | 1.14 | Disagree |
| **Composite** | **2.45** | **0.99** | **Disagree** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

In terms of ability motivation, the motivation of teachers yielded a composite mean score of 2.45 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.99. This implied a disagreement among the self-assessments of teachers regarding ability motivation. Of all the indicators, the highest mean score was evident by continuous innovating their teaching methods while the lowest mean score was evident by having good results in the competition. Sad to note that teachers disagreed with all the indicators related to their ability motivation. This manifests the lack of motivation in the abilities of teachers.

**Table 12.** Overall Assessment on the Motivation of Teachers

| Variables | Composite | | | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Interpretation | |
| Power Motivation | 2.51 | 1.02 | Agree | 2.5 |
| Affinity Motivation | 2.54 | 1.01 | Agree | 1 |
| Achievement Motivation | 2.51 | 0.96 | Agree | 2.5 |
| Ability Motivation | 2.45 | 0.99 | Disagree | 4 |
| **Composite** | **2.50** | **1.00** | **Disagree** | **--** |

**Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree; 3.50-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.51=Disagree; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree**

Of all the variables of motivation, the highest rank was apparent by the affinity motivation while the lowest rank was evident by the ability motivation.

Han, Jiying et al. (2019) provided a comprehensive review of teacher motivation research from a diverse theoretical perspective. Five areas of research related to teacher motivation research will be identified: influences on teacher motivation; teacher motivation and teaching effectiveness; teacher motivation and student motivation; interdisciplinary teacher motivation research; and instruments for assessing teacher motivation. A key conclusion is drawn: teacher motivation has been identified as a key determinant of student motivation and instructional effectiveness.

Table using a Pearson r, the relationships between the transformational leadership styles of department heads and the assessed teachers' motivations only yielded a significant result between inspirational motivation and power motivation. This implied that inspirational motivation as part of the

leadership styles of the department heads influenced the power motivation of teachers. Contrariwise, the rest of the many pairs of variables did not yield any significant findings which implied no correlations between them. Furthermore, the degree of correlations seemed to be negligible.

**Table 13.** Relationship between the Transformational Leadership Styles of Department Heads and the Self-Assessment Teachers' Motivations

| **Transformational Leadership Styles** | **Statistical Treatment** | Assessments on Teachers' Motivation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Power Motivation | Affinity Motivation | Achievement Motivation | Ability Motivation |
| Idealized Influence | *Pearson r* | .016 | .004 | -.057 | .053 |
| | *sig* | .807 | .953 | .381 | .422 |
| | *Decision Ho* | Accept | Accept | Accept | Accept |
| | *Interpretation* | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |
| Inspirational Motivation | *Pearson r* | .211** | .004 | .002 | .007 |
| | *sig* | .001 | .949 | .977 | .919 |
| | *Decision Ho* | Reject | Accept | Accept | Accept |
| | *Interpretation* | **Significant** | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |
| Intellectual Stimulation | *Pearson r* | .055 | -.006 | .033 | -.013 |
| | *sig* | .403 | .922 | .614 | .845 |
| | *Decision Ho* | Accept | Accept | Accept | Accept |
| | *Interpretation* | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |
| Individual Consideration | *Pearson r* | .002 | .002 | -.019 | .028 |
| | *sig* | .976 | .973 | .776 | .664 |
| | *Decision Ho* | Accept | Accept | Accept | Accept |
| | *Interpretation* | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |

Han, Jiying et al. (2019) provided a comprehensive review of teacher motivation research from a diverse theoretical perspective. Five areas of research related to teacher motivation research will be identified: influences on teacher motivation; teacher motivation and teaching effectiveness; teacher motivation and student motivation; interdisciplinary teacher motivation research; and instruments for assessing teacher motivation. A key conclusion is drawn: teacher motivation has been identified as a key determinant of student motivation and instructional effectiveness.

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