Transformational Leadership and Psychological Resilience: A Conceptual Review

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Abstract

In the field of leadership and organisational dynamics, transformational leadership and psychological resilience stand out as key ideas. According to definitions, transformational leadership is a type of leadership characterised by actions that motivate and empower followers to go above and beyond expectations. Psychological resilience is the ability to recover from difficult circumstances and become stronger as a result of them. Transformational leadership influence and interact with psychological resilience, and what theoretical frameworks and mechanisms underlie this relationship in the organizational context.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, psychological resilience, leadership

1. Introduction

Transformational leadership encourages staff to go above and beyond the call of duty to work toward a common goal. Leaders can achieve their maximum potential by learning to balance these approaches. All organizations require transformational leaders. These leaders' main objectives are to alter the organization's current structure and encourage their followers to embrace a new vision that offers both personal and organizational growth chances (Tucker & Russell, 2004).

An individual's capacity to adjust to and recover from adversity, trauma, stress, or major life obstacles is referred to as psychological resilience. It is the ability to keep one's mental health in tact, deal with stress, and carry on working efficiently in the face of challenges. It's about developing, learning, and being stronger continuously through our job experiences, not just recovering from difficult moments.

In the "always-on" work culture that permeates many modern sectors, psychological resilience is also essential for stress management. According to studies, resilient people are better able to handle stress and are better able to see obstacles as opportunities rather than dangers. Not only can this way of thinking assist prevent burnout, but it also increases productivity and general wellbeing.

Better psychological health, which is influenced by leadership style, promotes employee resilience (Walsh et al., 2014). Engaging with staff members is a strategy used by transformational leaders to promote high performance (Farahnak et al., 2020). Therefore, according to Engülenedi et al. (2017), transformational leadership increases followers' positive psychological capital. Additionally, according to Lan and Chong (2015), transformational
leadership is linked to employee empowerment and higher motivation. Positive relationships exist between transformational leadership and employee engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Additionally, according to Franiska and AyiAhadiat (2021) and Al Yahyaei et al. (2022), transformational leadership affects job satisfaction, which in turn predicts employees' intent to stay.

In the past ten years, research has begun to show the significance of the link between Transformational leadership and psychological resilience (Folan, 2019). They are now clearly linked, and it is impossible to be a great leader without psychological resilience, according to abundant research. The greatest leaders of our time, those who will be remembered by future generations as admirable examples of leadership and leadership icons, build their own resilience, encourage those around them to do the same, and expand their organizations' capacity for success and recovery from adversity.

Psychological resilience and transformational leadership complement one another well. We must be dedicated to building resilience if we hope to provide a transformational leadership style that inspires and motivates others. Psychological resilience and leadership are closely related, as leaders and professionals who work with leaders have long intuitively understood. There is a desire for a fresh approach in transformational leadership development since research now supports this idea. Organizations must refocus their strategy on strengthening resilience in order to develop the capacity for transformational leadership. A leader without resilience won't get very far. Like a car without gas, no matter the number of abilities a leader has acquired or how good they are, without resilience, they cannot succeed. It is impossible to emphasize the value of resilience in leadership since it is the catalyst for powerful leadership. When it comes to thoroughly analyzing and synthesizing the connection between transformational leadership and psychological resilience, there is a glaring void in the present literature. Although these ideas have been researched separately, their complex interaction has not been fully examined. By providing a thorough understanding of how transformational leadership can affect psychological resilience and vice versa, this review seeks to close this knowledge gap.

2. Literature review

According to Walsh et al. (2014), transformational leadership is a management approach that refers to a collection of leadership behaviors that motivate and enable followers to go above and beyond what is necessary and expected. These four characteristics, namely idealistic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, define this form of leadership. Idealized influence happens when leaders cultivate followers' esteem and trust by acting ethically. When leaders communicate high expectations to their followers, it results in inspirational motivation. Followers are intellectually stimulated when they are urged to consider situations from various angles. When leaders respond to the wants and concerns of their followers, individual consideration happens (Walsh et al., 2014).

The quality of resilience, which is defined as the capacity to overcome difficulties, frustrations, and bad luck, is crucial for a leader to possess. According to the literature, a leader's capacity to remain resilient in the face of ongoing misfortune is directly correlated with the stress of their position (Ledesma, 2012).
According to De Terte and Stephens (2014), psychological resilience is the capacity to quickly regain pre-crisis status or deal with a crisis psychologically and emotionally.

According to Henderson & Milstein (1996), resilience is the capacity to bounce back from challenging situations and grow stronger as a result of them. To conceive studies in the area of educational administration most recently, it has been used. Geocaris (2004) used resilience theory to examine how to make the most of challenging circumstances. Isaacs (2003) used the resilience theory to ascertain how the high-school principals' resilience aspects related to enhancing their leadership skills.

According to Masten and Obradovi (2006), resilience theory provides a conceptual framework for understanding how certain people might recover from challenging circumstances by taking a strengths-based approach. Role models who are resilient are important, according to resilience theory. By displaying their own resiliency in the face of difficulties, leaders may act as role models and encourage and motivate their people to do the same. Leaders can experience failures and challenges, just like anybody else, according to resilience theory. Personally resilient leaders may traverse these difficulties more skillfully, keep their composure, and make wise decisions even under trying circumstances. According to Walsh et al. (2014), transformational leadership improves the psychological well-being and resiliency of employees. According to Arnold (2017), psychological empowerment acts as a mediator in the connection between transformational leadership and employees' subjective well-being. A statistically significant association between transformational leadership and self-efficacy, a facet of resilience, was also reported by Ehrnoot et al., 2021. Because transformational leaders are more motivated and hence more devoted to their organizations than other leaders, they may be able to predict greater levels of resilience among employees (Ghafoor et al., 2011).

The efficacy and resiliency of school principals were the subjects of a 2003 study by Goldstein. The organizational traits that encourage thriving, as viewed by elementary-school principals, were found and characterized by Nishikawa (2006), who researched the internal and external variables used by thriving elementary principals in leadership. Schaid (2005) has examined psychological resiliency in relation to the influence and difficulty faced by educational leaders who are spiritually based.

The importance of transformational leadership and its connection to psychological resiliency are emphasized in the research. Employee resilience and well-being are strongly influenced by transformational leadership, which is defined by traits like trust-building and motivating drive. It has been discovered to have a favorable effect on a number of resilience-related factors, including self-efficacy. Additionally, leaders themselves are not immune to stress, thus it's crucial for effective leadership to keep resilience.

Resilience theory emphasizes how crucial it is for leaders to serve as role models for resilience in order to inspire and encourage their workforce. Studies on the effectiveness and resilience of leaders, including school administrators, have focused on the relationship between leadership and resilience in educational administration. For bettering organizational outcomes and creating healthier work environments, it is crucial to comprehend how resilience and leadership interact.

A study was conducted by Yu et al., 2022 to explore the relationship between psychological resilience and leadership, as well as to provide practical strategies for developing resilience.
The authors conducted a systematic review of 46 empirical studies and used thematic synthesis to create a model focused on building resilience and being effective in leadership. The paper emphasizes the significance of psychological resilience for both individuals and organizations in various leadership contexts. Resilience is shown to have a positive impact on work outcomes, including work performance, job engagement, well-being, and enhanced leadership capability. The findings suggest that resilient leaders are better equipped to navigate difficulties and contribute positively to their organizations and teams.

3. Conclusion

In the conceptual framework outlined in this paper, transformational leadership and psychological resilience emerge as pivotal concepts in the realm of leadership and organizational dynamics. Transformational leadership is described as a leadership style characterized by behaviors that inspire and enable followers to exceed conventional expectations. These behaviors include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, collectively working to foster a shared vision for personal and organizational growth. In parallel, psychological resilience is defined as an individual's capacity to adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of adversity, stress, or life challenges, with an emphasis on sustaining mental well-being and work efficiency. This resilience becomes increasingly imperative in the contemporary "always-on" work culture, where it not only aids in stress management but also bolsters productivity and overall well-being. Transformational leaders, by cultivating trust, motivation, and a shared vision, are found to have a profound impact on enhancing employee resilience. This constructive leadership style contributes to better psychological health among employees, with subsequent benefits evident in various work-related outcomes. This mindset is instrumental in guiding leaders and their teams through adversities, ultimately resulting in favorable outcomes. The interrelatedness of these concepts suggests that organizations should place a strategic focus on strengthening resilience as a means of nurturing transformational leadership. Resilient leaders not only exemplify the importance of resilience to their teams but also serve as role models, inspiring others to develop their resilience. As leaders themselves encounter failures and challenges, their personal resilience enables them to navigate difficulties adeptly, maintain composure, and make sound decisions even under the most trying circumstances. In essence, this paper underscores the profound significance of understanding and harnessing the dynamics between transformational leadership and psychological resilience to foster effective leadership and drive organizational success.

References

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