Exploration into the Impact of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Change: Mediating Role of Organizational Development Interventions

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1. Introduction

1.1 Transformational Leadership

Leadership is a process under which individuals are influenced by a leader so as to accomplish an objective and carry out organizational direction in a manner making it more structured and logical. The basic attributes of leadership like beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills are used to carry out the process (Singh, 2011). As pointed by Senge (2000), there are three core competencies of a person to play the role of a leader i.e. a leader has to be an architect, a teacher and a steward. A substantial exploration has been carried out by academicians and practitioners to find out universal leadership competencies applicable to all business houses of 21st century (Singh, 2011). Because of the quality results for individuals as well as organizations, the models of leadership which focus on change implementation and management have been an area of interest for researchers and corporate world (Eisenbach, Watson, & Pillai, 1999). For the changes in this unpredictable and dynamic business and political environment, models of leadership which focus on transformation of the organization like charismatic, visionary and especially transformational leadership have been important to organizations.

Leadership adapts transformational character when it comes to bringing organizational change in an organizational setup. Transformational leadership constituted by idealized swaying, logical simulation, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration has a prospective to influence its followers psychologically which is ahead of providing conditional incentives and authorization (Bass, 1985). The vision and apt metamorphic skills that the transformational leaders possess are used to build and maintain a subtle emotional bond with the followers of the leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) by means of which transformational leadership can further steer them to take any step requisite for individual and organizational improvement. For an organization, the fruitful adjustment to a fresh environment asks for persons as transformational leaders leading the change. It is the transformational leaders who are in a position and capacity to bring into line the strategies of the organization with the demands of the dynamic environment and productively change the culture of the organization.

1.2 Organizational Development

Organizations of current era are facing a number of tests and perils to their efficiency, effectiveness and profitability which are created by turbulent environments, cut-throat competition, dynamic customer tastes and preferences and also they are struggling to keep up with rapidly changing facets of the organization technology, tactics, policies, customs, traditions and procedures. On the similar lines, the individuals within an organization also face multifarious problems. However a number of way outs are there which can support, lead and guide the organizations with its individuals to manage, adjust, endure and have fruitful functioning in the said time period and one of the most effective way outs is Organizational development.

Organizational development is an applied form of sciences related to behaviour which focuses on advancing organizations as well as individuals working with them with application of theory and practice of organizational learning and organizational change especially planned change (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014). Organizational development addresses the matter relating to human element of an organization by exploring and discovering the techniques to enhance the efficacy of individuals, teams and the social and human procedures of the organization. Organizational development is a process which consists of particular course of the interconnected proceedings taking place over time leading toward the important goals of organizational improvement and individual development (French, 1998) requisite for organizational change.

1.3 Organizational Change

Organizational change refers to the rapid transformations that organizations have faced and are facing which may define their success or failure. Organizational change comprises of different events which lead to altering the procedures and processes further affecting the approach in which are currently working (Hage, 1999).When the management of an organization feels dissatisfaction from the present situation and looks to improve it constrictively they resort to organizational change for the purpose. In addition to this, no matter the organizational change may be planned or unplanned/contingent based on the situation facing the organization, it becomes critical to successfully handle and implement the changes (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

Depending upon the nature of the organization and its environment, changes can be categorized as incremental changes, which are small in size and radical changes which are directed towards organizational transformation requiring changes at a

broader scale which are difficult to handle (Boston MA, 2000). Managerial efforts has to be more efficient and effective while dealing with the radical changes as they have wider implications and are determinant of the long term success of the organization.

1.4 Organizational Learning

The rapidly rising competition in contemporary industry has compelled organizations to explore fresh ways of perking up their performance and organizational learning is one of those ways which they look up to augment their competitive advantage, innovation and effectiveness (Ravi, 2016).This is why organizational learning has been receiving so much impetus over the past few years. The main precedence of organizational learning is to conceive and attain latest knowledge along with accentuate the part that people play in establishment and consumption of that knowledge (Denton, 1998). Organizational learning deals with the way in which learning is taking place in the organization thereby leading to improved alignment among organizational strategies, culture and competitive environment (Lien, Hung, & McLean, 2007). It can be portrayed as a complex progression involving three stages which are knowledge acquisition, knowledge dissemination and shared implementation (Dale, 1994).

Organizational learning along with successful espousal and dispersal of innovations are imperative to organizations realizing the call to innovate so as to enhance their performance (Sandberg & Ohman, 2011). Moreover, Organizational learning can be regarded as the systems change which are synchronized with mechanisms en suite for individuals and groups to access, construct and utilize organizational reminiscence, structure and culture to develop long-term organizational capacity (Marsick, 1994). Thus organizational learning can be regarded as both technical as well as social process and from technical perspective organizational learning is the successful dispensation, elucidation, and retort to information internal as well as external to the organization (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999) whereas the social outlook to organizational learning is centred around the manner in which human resources make sagacity to their experiences at work there by leading towards human capital creation for the organization which it can rely on for long term growth and development.

The leadership for delivery of aspired and expected results need to be connected with organizational learning which helps in building up skills, knowledge and abilities of the organization requisite for successful individual and organizational development to foster organizational change and the relationship is presented in the analogy as:

$$OC = f \ (TL \ \& \ OD)$$

2. Review of Literature (Select)

2.1 Transformational Leadership and Organizational Change

Four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual simulation and personal consideration which support and drive organizational change (Bass, 1985). The process which comprises of a progression of steps like identifying the call for change, establishing a new vision and further institutionalizing the change is the carried out by transformational leadership for successful organizational change (Tichy & Devanna, 1990). As described in the theory, the followers of transformational leadership are motivated to make additional achievements than what is planned and beyond what is anticipated. The positive effect of transformational leadership on both organizational results and personnel has been supported by literature and research on leadership.

Many researchers have confirmed that transformational leadership positively impacts behaviour and performance of the organizational incumbents and culture of the organization at macro level and at the same time at micro level, it significantly impacts satisfaction and performance, develops self-belief required for the individual to be resourceful and ingenious and further enables individual to perilously analyze the problems of the status quo (Borkowski & Deckhard, 2015) which drives individuals and organizations at large to work for improvement of the situation and for this they resort to comprehensive development activities and further change. It has been demonstrated by researches that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee's commitment to organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Koh, Steers & Terborg, 1995) and evidence of relationship between transformational leadership and attitudes towards change have been provided by few, however it is not clear that whether this relationship is direct or indirect (Hechanova & Cementia-Olpoc, 2013). Bommer et al. (2005) carried out a longitudinal study which depicts the affirmative role played by transformational leadership in reducing cynicism towards change. A positive correlation between capabilities of change leadership and readiness for change has been depicted in the study of Bouckenooghe et al. (2009). On the similar lines, Herold et al. (2007) reported that high levels of commitment towards change is linked to transformational leadership assisted by effective change management practices. Hence for the purpose, our proposition should be:

Transformational Leadership significantly impacts Organizational Change.

2.1.1   Transformational Leadership and Organizational Learning

In the innovative economy based on intellectual capital, organizational learning and resultant change is promoted and supported by transformational leadership which are essential for the success of the organization (Tushman & Nadler, 1986; Senge, 1990; Slater & Narver, 1995). Moreover, transformational leadership opens an organization for learning by means of experimentation, communication, discourse, personal mastery (McGill & Slocum, 1993; Senge, 1990) and also by creation of

knowledge for an organization (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) which is necessary for organizational improvement and development as fresh knowledge can be attained and utilized in better way to develop decisive capabilities and skills (Senge et al., 1994).

2.2 Organizational Learning and Organizational Development

Organizational learning may be described as the way in which organizations acclimatize to fresh and evolving environments by embracing and amalgamating latest and innovative actions and policies (Davenport, 1993). The means by which individuals learn in organizational perspective and the approach by the use of which organizations themselves rely on to learn is the major concern of Organizational Learning (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). Organizational learning is commonly related to the conversion of individual knowledge and information to organisationally relevant knowledge with strong potential for delivering organisational competitive advantage. All these activities and actions make learning organizations a place for sharing and transmission of knowledge and are directed towards learning throughout the organization and creation of a sound knowledge base which further leads to Organizational Development.

The planned advancement and corroboration of strategies, processes, systems and structures in order to improve the overall effectiveness of an organization with the application of knowledge of behavioural sciences throughout the organizational arrangement is regarded as organizational development. (Cummings & Worley, 1997). The collaborative intentions of learning and organizational development are leading organizations and individuals towards calculated and specific learning and development via diverse and scrupulous way out of learning and development problems thereby leading individuals, groups and organizations towards the achievement of amazing outcomes in education, research and corporate world (Duke University, 2018).

2.3 Organizational Development and Organizational Change

An environment fostering the organized and participative setup in which the acumen, know-how and inventiveness of the people associated with the organization is taken up in the form of change by means of which organizations and individuals also provide solutions to the most pressing challenges that they face is bred and fostered by the organizational development. In fact, organizational development as a field itself was initiated, setup and evolved to assist the leaders in order to deal with and inculcate change, so that organizations can look upon changes as opportunities rather than threats (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014). Although individuals operate as the instruments which drive change, it is also to be noted that the intention of the change is to make alterations to the organization as a system and not the individuals working with the organizations.

The systems perspective becomes an important foundation to the theory of OD as the systems perspective leads the OD practitioners to be aware about the interdependencies, interrelatedness and manifold causes and effects as systems theory suggests that change in one element or part of the system will necessitate the changes in other elements or parts of the system to be made (Shafritz & Ott, 1987). Despite the observation that the systems perspective makes the organizational change to sound somewhat complex, it aids the leaders in having an understanding about the complex and intricate organizational dynamics and taking the prompt and requisite actions for efficient and effective organizational change (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014). As we are aware about the high influence of culture on individual behaviour and group behaviour as organizational culture determines how people think and perceive about various things.

So in order to make planned change successful, according to Burke (1994), a change is culture has to be one of the basic alterations of organizational development so that a permanent change can take place and that is why organizational development is also referred the course of making essential change in an organizational culture. The external factors like regulators, market forces, competitors, technology, customers and society at large as well as internal factors which might include product and services obsolescence, opportunities in new markets, new guidelines related to strategy, workforce diversity and so on calls for change which simulates organizational development to embrace change which is rapid and turbulent (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014). Hence our proposition here should be:

Organizational Development is a determinant of Organizational Change.

2.3.1 Organizational Development as Planned Change effort

The management for an organization mostly works for making the planned changes successful and which is why strong dedication and logical approach is necessary for planned change along with the leadership vision and clarity of intention. Organizational development assisted by its various interventions helps in developing the requisite processes, procedures and approaches that change demands and lays out platform for successful planned change (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

2.3.2 Organizational Development Interventions for Change

The arrangements of predetermined activities which are sequentially carried out by selected units of organization for producing desired changes inn organization and further for organizational improvement are called organizational development interventions. French et al. (2014) have categorically stated four situations and any one or more of these situations usually necessitate organizational development interventions to play their part. The first such situation is when a component within the organization is not working and corrective actions in the form of OD interventions are employed to mend the emergency. The second situation where organizational identifies an opportunity which needs to be realized for growth and profitability and organization takes enabling actions in the form of OD interventions to get the best out of the

opportunity. For the third situation where the components and activities of the organization are misaligned misarranged and hence alignment activities in the form OD interventions are developed and employed to synchronize and arrange things. The fourth situation deals with the vision steering organizational changes because of the obsolete organization systems and structures due to changes in business environment. In this case interventions in the form of actions which help in building the essential structures, processes and cultures to support the organization to cope up with the changes so as to realize the new vision. Having the knowledge of different types of organizational development and the underlying principle for their usage, we can depict how change takes place via OD programs as OD interventions are the vehicles for carrying change for any organization (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014).

Therefore, depending on the organizational learning context, learning structure and learning maturity, we can make our proposition as different Organizational Development interventions mediate change process and resultant outcomes.

3. Research Methodology
The research focuses on studying the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational change and further the role played by organizational development for enabling transformational leadership for successfully implementing change. For the purpose extensive review of literature as a method of exploratory research was utilized and the sources that we relied on were relevant journals, books on the subject matter, reports, and various other published and unpublished sources to acquaint ourselves with the variables of the topic. Further we broke down all the variables into different components for better understanding and clarity which gave us a well-defined view of connect and linkage between these variables.

4. Objectives
The present paper while showcasing the role of transformational leadership on change implementation substantiated by the literature review, has carved the underlying objectives as under:
1. To explore the role of transformational leadership for organizational change.
2. To identify the organizational development interventions for organizational change process.
3. To study the mediating role played by organizational development interventions for organizational change.

5. Theoretical Underpinnings
1. Transformational leadership boosts and supports organizational learning and drives organizational development.
2. Transformational leadership meditated by organizational development plays an important role in organizational change.
3. Organizational development Interventions are vital for producing desired organizational change.

The systems, cultures and structures encouraging and supporting the adaptation, incorporation and usage of knowledge created by organizational learning environment are produced by the leadership for any particular organization (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Employees are empowered and made self-sufficient with the support and guidance provided by transformational leadership for absorbing and inculcating learning capacity among them. Transformational leaders endow the participants of an organization with information, skills, abilities and responsibilities which might be utilized by them for attaining, executing, transforming and applying a fresh policy and for reducing barriers to enhance communication within the organization for further creating an environment inductive to learning, knowledge creation and sharing thereby improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of an organization which are essential for organizational development (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Van den Bosch, Volberda & de-Boer, 1999).

A general vision of an organization is steered and induced by transformational leadership as employees are motivated to create and share knowledge (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Senge et al., 1994). A high level of innovation and effectiveness required for organizational development is attained by transformational leadership by creating learning and knowledge within an organization (Bass, 1999; Bryant, 2003). Traits important to learning like stimulation, individualized consideration and motivation are promoted by the transformational style of leadership which makes it a drive force and guiding light for organizational learning thereby leading towards organizational development (Sarros et al., 2002; Ulrich, Von Glinow & Jick, 1993). We can comment on the same lines that transformational leadership opens up the individuals working for an organization towards learning and attaining knowledge thereby creating an atmosphere apt for organizational learning to continuously take place and further establishing a learning organization which leads and steers that organization on the track of high levels of organization development.
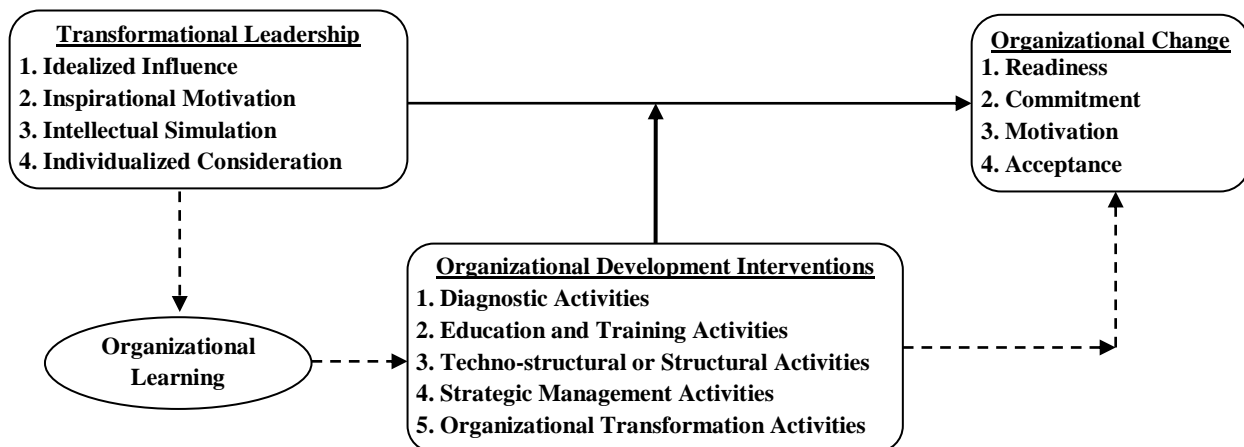
As evident from the available literature, learning, knowledge and readiness towards constructive and profitable change along with innovation are some of the important factors for development of organization and it is the leadership with its transformational style and characteristics which plays a critical role in generating all the above mentioned factors especially innovation (Tushman & Nadler, 1986) as it helps in inhibiting atmosphere that promotes the capabilities, systems and practices fostering innovative conduct with an organization (Van de Ven, 1986).

An outlook regarding the goals of the organization is created by transformational leadership style which also allows leaders to mentor, steer and inspire the members of the organization and looks for new opportunities and challenges (Bass, 1999; Senge et al., 1994; Tushman & Nadler, 1986). As far as organizational change is concerned, it can be indirectly assumed that innovation is a type of anticipated and planned change which an individual or an organization assumes to be the better than

the status-quo and if successfully carried out could put an organization in a better position. Organizational development interventions are denoted by the systems and processes containing structured activities where the different components or divisions of the organization fit into place in a logical succession of tasks that will lead towards the organizational improvement.

Moreover OD interventions are the steps taken to create the required change for an organization and a lot of OD interventions assist leaders to remodel the formation of organization to improve the functioning of the organization as a whole. In simple terms we can propound that organizational learning is driven by transformational leadership which aims at producing organizational change with the assistance of learning, knowledge and innovation for organizational development which is a planned change in organizational context (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014).

6. Proposed Framework

Transformational Leadership
1. Idealized Influence
2. Inspirational Motivation
3. Intellectual Simulation
4. Individualized Consideration

Organizational Change
1. Readiness
2. Commitment
3. Motivation
4. Acceptance

Organizational Learning

Organizational Development Interventions
1. Diagnostic Activities
2. Education and Training Activities
3. Techno-structural or Structural Activities
4. Strategic Management Activities
5. Organizational Transformation Activities

*the hard lines here denote the direct linkage and role.
*the dotted lines here denote the indirect relationship.

7. Findings and Implications

From the study we have a clear understanding about the role of transformational leadership in bringing organizational change and also for effective change management. After exploring the literature of change we can say the when we talk about change in the context of organization, we categorically refer to it as planned change. The managers practicing organizational development regime identifies the situation demanding change, settles on the type of change essential for the organization and further brings the interventions aimed specifically at the factors of the organization responsible for producing the change so anticipated.

Also from the inventory of OD interventions, we found the categories of OD interventions which specifically supports and mediates the organizational change activities carried out by transformational leadership. They include diagnostic interventions, education and training interventions, techno-structural or structural interventions, planning and goal-setting interventions, strategic management interventions and organizational transformation activities (French, Bell Jr, & Vohra, 2014). Moreover a sound knowledge about how these interventions drive change can provide us a useful insight into the overall organizational development and change strategy which can be used by academia as well as industry. Further to make additions to the organizational learning literature, the study came out with the role of transformational leadership for organizational learning which creates knowledge, skills, abilities, innovation and aptitude for organizational development and there on OD interventions create environment for decision making and better behavioural control, helps in development of fullest potential of the individual and additional to the organizational potential and most importantly imparts motivation and inspiration towards greater good of the organization for achieving high performance levels.

It is also to be noted that the proposed framework showing the mediating role of organizational development interventions supported by organizational learning for bringing organizational change anticipated and driven by transformational leadership is just an illustration of the role played by OD interventions and it can be validated empirically to make more concrete understanding about it.

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