

## **Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles in Community Schools of Lalitpur District**

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### **Abstract**

*This study is conducted to investigate the transformational leadership (TL) dimensions of head teachers of community schools. To fulfill the objective, the study adopted quantitative research design followed by the survey method. The data obtained from 36 head teachers working in the various community secondary schools in Lalitpur district was processed using SSPS and then analyzed employing descriptive statistics. The findings concluded that the head teachers are practicing transformational leadership styles properly. It contributes to the development of an educational institution by encouraging head teachers to practice transformational leadership. It helps to ensure teachers' commitment leading to a more effective and viable school environment and helps to establish cordial relationship among the stakeholders for academic enhancement. This study also contributes to school leaders to ensure better academic performance, commitment, and demonstrate their transformational and pedagogical leadership capacity.*

**Keywords:** head teachers, transformational leadership, community schools, administration, academic issues

### **Background**

The role and importance of leadership in any organization is vital. Chuang (2013) expressed that managing and leading an organization is a global challenge. Within this dilemma, Smith and Bell (2011) stated that in challenging situation, TL style is the most successful leadership style in regulating educational institutions which is based on involvement, cooperation, and commitment to support their staff wherever possible, assisting professional improvement for institutional betterment. Similarly, Allen, Grigsby, and Peters (2015) found that TL does have a strong positive association with learning outcomes. In a study, Dharel et al. (2013) argued that teachers' professional organization leaders also realized that some of the teachers were not discharging their duties and ethics but were taking benefits from their political parties which affect teachers' regularity in school duty, accountability, and professional commitment, and so forth. In this context, Mathema (2007) highlighted that teachers' morale in community

inefficient school administration, insufficient resources, and incompetent leadership styles of head teacher. Furthermore, head teachers, school management committee (SMC) members, and school supervisors are key persons but they seem less responsible and they lessen the feeling of belongingness of teachers to the school ultimately making them unaccountable for quality and performance. In addition to this, Wagley (as cited in Shah, 2004) pointed out some issues of teachers' irresponsibility towards their job as most of the teachers in community schools of Nepal do not perform their duties and responsibilities appropriately. Sharma (2003) criticized that community schools of Nepal are like playgrounds of political parties where they divide teachers into various political functions. Though, according to Ling and Imrahim (2013), transformational leaders can influence as well as impact their stakeholders for the betterment of the school. A head teacher can play the role of transformational leader as s/he is the most powerful, impressive and influential individual in school. However, In the Nepali context, very few studies have been carried out related with school leadership, teachers' commitment, and job satisfaction as mentioned by (Sharma, 2003). Therefore, considering the importance of leadership for the betterment of teaching-learning environment, this study focused on the TL styles of head teachers of community schools locate at Lalitpur district, Nepal.

### **Literature Review**

As mentioned by Leithwood and Jantzi (2009), TL as decentralization and restructuring the appropriate leadership, which was also discussed since late 1980-s to change completely (transform) in composition as well as structure of educational institution. In addition, Huruduzu (2015) highlighted that people with TL styles are constructive, enthusiastic and trustworthy leaders who are emotionally intellectual, inspire teamwork and set high opportunities with numerous improvements to increase the administrative performance. Smith and Bell (2011) stated that in challenging situation, TL is the most successful leadership styles in the regulation of educational institutions. Furthermore, they emphasized the skills of TL such as participation, collaboration, and commitment to facilitate professional development for institutional advancement. TL incorporates several aspects of the followers like priority on cooperation and harmony, awareness of moral values, inspirational motivation, establishing ethical culture, proper reasoning based working activities, individual guidance and feedback, essential motivations and development, ownership of their own work, and so on (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Ibrahim et al. (2014) studied about transformational vs. transactional leadership theory where they stated that factor analytic studies done by Bass and Avolio (1997) which identified two main factors such as idealized influence and inspirational motivation as the main components of TL and highlighted the performance of leaders such as role models,

behavior of respect, trust, and so forth which provide sufficient facilities, power and self-confidence to the followers. Furthermore, they found that there are two components of idealized influence as leaders' behaviors and the components which are associated with the leader by followers. These two components can be measured by separate factors of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Idealized influence behavior more focuses on collective sense of mission, team work, capacity of bearing risks, and sincere in moral and ethical behavior. Sample MLQ components of inspirational motivation are those in which the leaders seem sincere in vision of future. In addition, Odumeru and Ogbonna (2013) stated that transformational leader is a person who stimulates and inspires followers to achieve extra ordinary outcomes. They change followers, are attentive to individual developmental issues of followers, and inspire them to achieve common goals. Furthermore, Leithwood and Jantzi (2009) derived the seven discrete characteristics of transformational leaders as constructing school vision and launching goals, academic encouragement, fruitful school culture, personalized care, high performance and opportunities, modeling best practices and important institutional values, and increasing structures to foster contribution in school assessments. These features of transformational leaders help to support the leadership quality of head teachers which might be beneficial for institutional development.

In Nepal, the Education Regulation Act 2017 (MOEST, 2017, 9<sup>th</sup> amendment) had mentioned the functions, responsibilities, duties and powers of SMC and head teachers. The policy review came with some considerable gaps related to educational policies for school and head teachers. For example, the act has remained quiet on the conditions of the head teachers' skill and capability to improve good relationship with community. Fully authorized SMC has a right to select the person of their choice as the head teacher. Head teachers do not have the authority to take action against any teacher. The act is soundless with regard to the role of head teacher in building public relation, teacher development, resource mobilization, making school development plans, and setting performance criteria except to recommend to the school management committee. Thus, it seems that regulation of act has made head teachers more as an administrator than the idealistic (transformational) leader. The education act is silent over the head teachers' role concerning the physical advancement of school but the reality reveals that head teachers have been using most of their time and energy in the physical development of school as well as generating economic funds. Ministry of Education MOE (2009) has taken different actions for the betterment of existing educational services. The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) has given more emphasis on quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in school educational services for strengthening teachers' competency, leadership skills, commitment and focuses on strengthening teacher licensing practices.

It had given more emphasis on minimum basic qualification of head teacher as B Ed and M Ed for basic and secondary level schools respectively. According to MOE (2016), the major goals of education are equity, equality, efficiency, governance, management, and resilience. School Sector Development Plan ([SSDP], 2016-2023) also focuses on performance-based teachers' management, strengthening inclusive education, building human and institutional capabilities, decentralized management and institutionalization of an improved Education Management Information System (EIMS), and so forth which will provide and analyze the real situation of educational institution with proper leadership. Recently, the country is functioning under the agenda of SSDP (2016-2023) to promote educational activities which are supportive administratively as well as leadership point of view to enrich the quality education. But, policies could not function as per their objectives due to difficulties in implementation. As a result, there is gap between objectives of plans and implementation.

MOEST (2019) report pointed out the effectiveness of school regulation and coordination among stakeholders as head teachers, school management committee members and teachers to create better educational environment. The report mentioned that the community schools are declining day by day in quality as well as overall management due to ineffective and incapable leadership (head teacher) in most of the community schools. Furthermore, it emphasized that head teacher is the one of the supervisors of every school; their effective leadership styles can uplift each component of the school. However, government is unable to manage qualified, capable, and cooperative head teachers for the betterment of school education. According to MOE (2016), school management committee, locally elected political leaders, and intellectual personalities are accountable for the overall management of school. School management committee supports day to day internal functions, Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) also involves in the internal evaluation and monitoring of schools. Head teachers focuses on internal technical functions and day to day regulations, particularly teacher's regularity, performance, time management, capacity building, classroom regulations, educational achievement, and so forth. For the above mentioned facts, head teachers might have proper knowledge and ideas of leadership. Therefore, separate positions for head teachers are looked for strengthening school management along with administrative, financial and educational conditions of school. Furthermore, community schools might be aware of the key dimensions of head teachers' TL styles to enrich better teaching and learning environment. Very few studies related head teachers TL practice were found, among them most of the studies focused on different types of leadership practices as well as job satisfaction in promoting academic advancement on particular constructs of school leadership styles. Moreover, most of the research studies

were from the developed countries. Considering this gap in research, the practices of head teachers' TL styles captured the relevance in the context of Nepali community schools.

Subedi (2017) concluded that Nepali head teachers have an enthusiasm to take risk for the betterment of school and take an initiative to complete difficult but needful tasks taking support from school stakeholders to some extent and they are rarely ready to accept tough feedback and provide clear directions in challenging situations. Similarly, Carney, Bista, and Agergaard (2007) expressed that head teachers of the community schools of Nepal are highly committed and have the same level of enthusiasm to achieve high performance. Also Subedi (2017) expressed that the leadership aspect of teachers and head teachers, their shared vision, and involvement of stakeholders in decision making were just observed in the developing phase in Nepal. In contrast he noticed that practices of appropriate team-work culture were lacking in Nepali schools, but is essential for effective regulations of school. Similarly, in a study conducted in Malaysia; Wahab et al. (2014) concluded that well performing schools were found under the leadership capacity of head teachers. Also, Adillo and Netshitangani (2019) claimed that teachers behaved with a high level of idealized influence from the head teachers' and they accepted the impression of idealized influence on upgrading teachers' commitment. Further, a study done by Rowold and Heinitz (2007) also revealed the similar findings that idealized influence behavior enables a leader to introduce self-respect, confidence and pleasure for the leader as well as make him/her a responsible and active model for the members. As highlighted by Ling and Ibrahim (2013) in a study of Malaysia, inspirational motivation behavior of head teachers encourages teamwork.

Likewise, Gorozidis and Papaioannou (2014) highlighted head teachers have better responses towards innovation in work; implementation of new approaches of teaching, positive motivation to the teachers and so forth which are essential for the betterment of school. Similarly, Wang and Degol (2016) concluded that head teachers' proper communicative skills are beneficial for the betterment of schools to improve unbiased behavior and deep commitment to improve the school climate. Regarding the fair attribute, head teachers are somehow careful about fair tasks and incentive distribution (Younus & Munir, 2019). In addition, they follow the procedure for unbiased decision making, and support to develop an interactional environment among teachers and staff. Likewise, Ibrahim et al. (2014) claimed that the strong influence of TL as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration helped teachers to bring positive change in attitude in their teaching profession and students' learning activities. Milner (2006) highlighted that head teachers seemed to be very honestly creating a peaceful environment, to solve the problems of

institutions in having negotiation with stakeholders, to identify and prioritize others' needs before their own needs as well as maintain close communication among the stakeholders. Transformational leaders focus more on values, emotions, sharing, and caring of their colleagues as a fundamental aim for the higher level of personal commitment to gain maximum organizational goals (Al-Kurdi, Haddadeh, & Eldabi, 2020). In addition, Huruduzeu (2015) highlighted that people with TL styles are progressive, confident, and honorable leaders who are emotionally intellectual, inspire teamwork and set high opportunities with various innovations to increase the institutional betterment. Similarly, contingency theory of leadership also explains that leadership might adopt a different policy and attitude on the basis of situation and environment (Greenwood, 1996). Subedi (2017) also mentioned that community schools of Nepal might focus on decision making process including stakeholders for the achievement of desired goals.

### **Methodology**

Quantitative survey method has been adopted for this study. The study area was Lalitpur district which is composed of three distinct geographical diversities such as remote hilly area, urban area and Kantharea. A total of 74 head teachers (EDCU, 2019) working in different community schools of Lalitpur are the target population of this study. Following proportionate stratified sampling method, only 36 head teachers are selected as sample for the study. To measure the level of head teachers' TL styles, the required questionnaires were modified as per our Nepali context from Komala (2016), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (1997). There were 20 items; which were suitable to measure head teachers' TL styles, among them 5 items for idealized influence, 5 items for individualized consideration, 5 items for intellectual stimulation and 5 items for inspirational motivation. The items were composed of 5-point Likert scale items such as: Strongly Agree-5, Agree- 4, Undecided-3, Disagree- 2, and Strongly Disagree-1. The collected data was processed through the statistical software SPSS. For the analysis and interpretation of the data, descriptive statistics like frequency distribution, percentage, means, and standard deviations were used to draw the ideas about the level of head teachers' TL styles.

The instrument's reliability was tested through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The reliability coefficient for the variables of head teachers' TL styles was 0.865. It is appropriate (excellent) as mentioned by George and Mallery (as cited in Subedi, 2017) on the basis of rules of thumb. Criteria for understanding the mean score level of head teachers' TL styles are determined on basis of Best's criteria (as cited in Joshi, 2017) which are as follows: (3.68 - 5.00) - High, (2.34 - 3.67) - Moderate, and (1.00 - 2.33) -

Low. In order to keep the research endeavor ethically sound, the researcher maintained different ethical issues with care. Firstly, the purpose of the research was communicated clearly, and in doing so, the research had been non-discriminative and unbiased as well. Secondly, in maintaining the secrecy of the respondents, they were asked not to mention their real name in the questionnaire. The collected data was used for the research purpose only. Thirdly, this study cared for the intellectual properties. In doing so, all the data sources were cited and referenced in proper format and the research report was being developed in a standard APA format.

## **Data Analysis and Findings**

### **Demographic Situation**

The findings reveal that 91.7 % (n=33) head teachers were male, very few in number 8.3% (n=3) of head teachers were female which implies poor participation of females in school leadership. The result on the basis of teacher type shows that majority number 97.23% (n=35) of head teachers were permanent, very few in number 2.77% (n=1) of head teachers were from relief quota, and no head teachers was from temporary teachers. The result showed that 44.4% (n=16) head teachers were of the age group of 51 and above years, very few in number 5.55% (n=2) of head teachers were of age group 31-35 years. On the basis of age, chronologically mature teachers were the school head. Likewise, head teachers were Master's degree holders and most of them graduated from the education stream. Though the number is few 8.4% (n=3), head teachers were with Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification. Similarly, 44.4% (n=16) of the head teachers were working less than 5 years in current school. There were 44.4% (n=16) head teachers with working experience more than 26 years and above.

### **Practices of Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles**

As mentioned in research question, among head teachers' TL styles components; the idealized influence behavior, the mean value of the statement "I treat teachers as respectful members of our school" was the highest (M = 4.42), whereas the mean value of the statement "I consider teachers' needs before my own needs" was the lowest (M= 4.08). In inspirational motivation behavior, the mean value of the statement "I have vision to work with a team" was the highest (M= 4.42), whereas the mean value of the statement "I create an inquisitive environment among teachers" was the lowest (M= 4.19). Similarly, in intellectual stimulation behavior, the mean value of statement "I motivate teachers to perform better in 21st century learning environment" was the highest (M=4.42), whereas the mean value of statements "I stimulate teachers to work with innovative approach" and "I emphasize to reframe problems in new approaches"

was the lowest (M= 4.22). In individualized consideration behavior, the mean value of the statement “I talk to teachers about their academic issues” was the highest (M= 4.42) whereas the mean value of the statement “I make teachers feel valued” was the lowest (M= 4.28). However, all the results showed high level of practices of head teachers’ TL styles. Among four components of head teachers’ TL styles, the mean value of inspirational motivation was found the highest (M= 4.44) among all average, whereas the mean value of idealized influence was found the (M= 4.25) least. However, they possessed a high level of TL styles behavior as mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1

*Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Styles Components*

Leadership Styles	N	Mean	SD	Level
Transformational Leadership (in Total)	36	4.31	0.676	High
Idealized Influence	36	4.25	0.967	High
Inspirational Motivation	36	4.44	0.969	High
Intellectual Stimulation	36	4.32	0.584	High
Individualized Consideration	36	4.32	0.669	High

The mean values of practices of head teachers’ TL styles components on the basis of different demographic variables were found as follows; idealized influence (M=5.00), inspirational motivation (M=5.00), intellectual stimulation (M=4.80) of relief quota head teachers’ were significantly high, whereas individualized consideration (M= 4.33) of permanent head teachers was significantly high (Table 2). The result showed that all head teachers possessed a significantly high level of TL styles practices according to teacher type.

Table 2

*Head Teachers’ Transformational Leadership Styles across Teacher Type*

Teacher Type		HTs’ Idealized Influence	HTs’ Inspirational Motivation	HTs’ Intellectual Stimulation	HTs’ Individualized Consideration
Permanent (n=35)	Mean	4.22	4.42	4.3	4.33
	SD	0.97	0.97	0.58	0.67
Relief (n=1)	Mean	5	5	4.8	4.2
	SD	0	0	0	0



intellectual stimulation (M= 4.33), and individualized consideration (M= 4.30) of female head teachers were the highest, whereas inspirational motivation (M=4.45) of male head teachers was significantly high (Table 3).

Table 3

*Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles According to Gender*

Gender		HTs' Idealized Influence	HTs' Inspirational Motivation	HTs' Intellectual Stimulation	HTs' Individualized Consideration
Female (n=3)	Mean	4.33	4.33	4.33	4.8
	SD	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.34
Male (n=33)	Mean	4.24	4.45	4.32	4.28
	SD	1	1	0.59	0.67

On the basis of age group, the mean values of idealized influence (M=5.00), inspirational motivation (M=5.00), and intellectual stimulation (M=4.80) of age group 31-35 years were significantly high whereas the individualized consideration (M= 4.46) of age group 36-40 years was the significantly high. However, all mean values possessed a significantly high level of TL styles (Table 4).

Table 4

*Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles across Age Group*

Age Group		HTs' Idealized Influence	HTs' Inspirational Motivation	HTs' Intellectual Stimulation	HTs' Individualized Consideration
31-35 Years (n=3)	Mean	5	5	4.8	4.4
	SD	0	0	0	0.28
36-40 Years (n=3)	Mean	3.66	4.66	4.26	4.47
	SD	0.57	0.57	0.23	0.31
41-45 Years (n=4)	Mean	4.5	4.25	4.25	4.4
	SD	0.57	0.5	0.25	0.52
46-50 years (n=11)	Mean	4.09	4.45	4.3	4.42
	SD	1.13	1.21	0.28	0.41
51 and above (n=16)	Mean	4.31	4.37	4.3	4.21
	SD	1.01	1.02	0.82	0.91

(M= 5.00), inspirational motivation (M= 5.00), individualized consideration (M= 4.52) were significantly high among the head teachers with educational qualification B Ed. Likewise, mean value of intellectual stimulation (M=4.60) was significantly high among the head teachers with educational qualification Bachelor or equivalent with significantly high level of TL styles (Table 5).

Table 5

*Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles According to Highest Qualification*

Highest Qualification		HTs' Idealize Influence	HTs' Inspirational Motivation	HTs' Intellectual Stimulation	HTs' Individualized Consideration
B Ed (n=1)	Mean	5	5	4.4	5
	SD	0	0	0	0
Bachelor or equivalent (n=2)	Mean	4	4.5	4.6	4.3
	SD	0	0.7	0.28	0.14
M Ed (n=17)	Mean	4.29	4.52	4.44	4.47
	SD	1.04	1.01	0.36	0.35
Master or equivalent (n=13)	Mean	4.23	4.31	4.13	4.09
	SD	1.09	1.11	0.85	0.99
MPhil (n=3)	Mean	4	4.33	4.2	4.33
	SD	0	0.57	0.2	0.41

On the basis of working experience, the mean values of idealized influence (M=4.60) with working experience 16-20 years, inspirational motivation (M=5.00) with working experience 6-10 years 11-15 years, and intellectual stimulation (M= 4.60) with working experience 6-10 years were significantly high. Likewise, the mean value of individualized consideration (M=4.52) was the highest among head teachers' working experience 16-20 years was significantly high (Table 6).

*Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles According to Teaching Experiences*

Teaching Experiences		HTs' Idealized Influence	HTs' Inspirational Motivation	HTs' Intellectual Stimulation	HTs' Individualized Consideration
1-5 years (n=1)	Mean	4	4	4	4.4
	SD	0	0	0	0
6-10 years (n=2)	Mean	4.5	5	4.6	4.5
	SD	0.7	0	0.28	0.42
11-15 years (n=1)	Mean	3	5	4.4	4.2
	SD	0	0	0	0
16-20 years (n=5)	Mean	4.6	4.4	4.44	4.52
	SD	0.54	0.54	0.32	0.3
21-25 years (n=11)	Mean	4.27	4.36	4.43	4.4
	SD	1.19	1.21	0.29	0.42
26 and above (n=16)	Mean	4.18	4.44	4.18	4.2
	SD	0.98	1.03	0.8	0.92

Table 7

*Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Styles as per Tenure in Current School*

Tenure		HTs' Idealized Influence	HTs' Inspirational Motivation	HTs' Intellectual Stimulation	HTs' Individualized Consideration
Less than 1 year (n=3)	Mean	3.66	4.33	4.13	4.2
	SD	0.57	0.57	0.23	0.2
1-5 years (n=16)	Mean	4	4.18	4.22	4.2
	SD	1.26	1.32	0.76	0.91
6-10 years (n=8)	Mean	4.5	4.62	4.42	4.6
	SD	0.53	0.51	0.37	0.44
11-15 years (n=3)	Mean	4.33	4.66	4.33	4.13
	SD	0.57	0.57	0.41	0.11
16-20 years (n=4)	Mean	4.75	4.75	4.65	4.5
	SD	0.5	0.5	0.57	0.34
21-25 years (n=2)	Mean	5	5	4.3	4.4
	SD	0	0	0.14	0.28

( $M=5.00$ ) and inspirational motivation ( $M=5.00$ ) with duration 21-25 years in current school were significantly high, whereas the mean value of intellectual stimulation ( $M=4.65$ ) with working duration 16-20 years in current school was significantly high. Likewise, mean value of individualized consideration ( $M=4.60$ ) was significantly high with working duration 6-10 years in current school. On the basis of findings of demographic variables, all types as well as groups of head teachers showed significantly high.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The findings showed that head teachers in community schools of Lalitpur had implemented TL significantly. On the basis of findings, the situation of TL attributes of head teachers idealized influence behavior such as creating peaceful environment at school, set high academic standards and communication skill, treat teachers as respectful members, considering teachers' need as important component, respect and trust to each other, and solving any problems by making a compromise is adequate. Similarly, TL attributes of head teachers' inspirational motivation behavior such as vision of team work, motivate teachers to set high academic standards, skill of shared vision, supervisory skills, and collective sense of mission is also adequate. Likewise, TL attributes of head teachers' intellectual stimulation behavior such as stimulate for innovative and creative working approach, preparing and implementing effective plan and programs for school, risk taking behavior for the betterment of school, and motivate teachers for better performance is practised properly. Furthermore, TL attributes of head teachers' such as individualized consideration such as pay attention to school teachers, understand teachers individual difference, academic issues of teachers, pedagogical skills, get and ready to care for optimal standards of ethical and moral values is adequate. It is concluded that leadership styles of head teachers have a vital role for the effective regulations of schools. Additionally, teachers' duties, responsibilities, commitments, students' performance, and relationship between various components of teachers, students and head teachers are essential for the better achievement of school. Also, head teachers are committed to implementing TL styles in their day to day activities; which helped to motivate teachers towards their duties and responsibilities.

Analyzing the entire study, it could have some implications. In whole scenario, the study provides insights on various components like academic implications, practical use for head teachers, and support for school teachers in different dimensions. This study will provide conceptual framework with key components based on TL theory for enhancing teaching learning environment through head teachers' TL styles in Nepali community

role of head teachers. It will also be supportive to frame policy related to head teacher recruitment, selection, regulation, and training. It could be supportive for Educational Management and Training Department of Centre for Education and Human Resource Development to prepare effective plan for innovative instructional skills. The study might be helpful for Education Development and Co-ordination Unit (EDCU), municipalities in making local level plans, policies, and programs for head teachers' and teachers' management.

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