

The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Service Quality In United Arab Emirates (Uae) Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

In recent years, transformational leadership has gained popularity, especially in the context of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Transformational leaders have the potential to improve the quality of services and, ultimately, education, which improves the student experience. The HEIs in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) like those in other countries, confront numerous obstacles, such as competition from international peers. Some challenges concerning the management and maintenance quality in higher education. This situation reveals the need to implement transformational leadership on a large scale in the higher education sector in the UAE. Students are satisfied and significantly advance their knowledge when the institute provides a high-quality education service. The review of the literature reports a significant relationship between transformational leadership and service quality in the higher education domain. To increase the quality of services afforded by HEIs, transformative leaders have the desired skills to foster the quality of service in higher education because those leaders use their profession that fulfills the mission of the institute. To improve service quality and ultimately benefit their students, it is recommended that HEIs and policymakers in the UAE give priority to transformational leadership and establish the standards for leaders in higher education based on these leaders' traits, such as idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Service Quality, Higher Education Institutions.

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are regarded as a pillar of development throughout the world due to their vital role in economic development, as well as providing skilled workers who contribute to national economic progress. Adequate quality in higher education is critical to long-term progress in scientific research and delivering competent workers and professionals for the market (Aldaweesh, 2018). Today's workplace is dynamic and ever-changing, both in the short and long term. Organizations that can adapt to change and transition will maintain success at all times (Awaru, 2015). A successful institution requires an effective leadership style. According to Hera et al. (2021), a successful leadership style in higher education can alter characteristics that determine educational quality and students' academic achievement. The impact of transformational leadership on service quality should be assessed from various perspectives to understand how those leaders establish transformation in the educational process. Those leaders are thought to influence the educational culture in UAE institutions, which will need to be examined and investigated (Fleenor & Bryant, 2002).

The UAE is home to lots of public and private universities, as well as international universities. In a very short time, the UAE has created an excellent and diverse higher education system. Furthermore, the UAE government has paid special attention to accelerating the educational process since it is deeply committed to raising a well-educated generation capable of keeping up with the pace of scientific development and technological revolution that has swept the entire world. As UAE universities, like those in other countries, confront numerous obstacles, such as competition from international universities, they must appoint the right leaders who are capable of maintaining service quality comparable to that found in Europe and the United States (Barth-Farkas et al., 2014; Fatima et al., 2019; Wan Salmuni et al., 2021). Despite the fact that the UAE's higher education systems score in the top Global Competitiveness Index Rankings (2015, 2016, 2017), UAE academics have been accused for low educational achievement in recent years. In this regard, HEIs in the UAE are striving to overcome the obstacles of preserving service quality (Udriyah et al., 2019). While these challenges may be controlled using some strategies, the fact the role of leaders remain decisive and critical to maintain education quality at peak level. For this reason. This paper demonstrate the main characteristic of transformational leadership and measure its effect of service quality of HEIs in UAE.

The challenges of higher education in UAE

As UAE universities, like those in other countries, confront numerous obstacles, such as competition from international HEIs, for this reason they must appoint the right leaders who are capable of maintaining service quality comparable to their peers in other countries. The UAE academics have been accused for low educational achievement in recent years. In this regard, HEIs in the UAE are striving to overcome the obstacles of preserving service quality (Udriyah et al., 2019). For example, the

absence of transformational leadership in some universities in UAE make it difficult to implement total quality management which affected education qualities of these institutes (Alzoubi & Ahmed, 2019), and HEI leaders should have a real desire to work and execute the ISO standards of TQM in educational environments (Hanaa et al., 2020). Some difficulties concerning the management and maintenance quality in higher education (Soomro & Ahmad, 2012). This situation reveal the need to implement transformational leadership in a large scale in higher education sector in the UAE.

These concerns are still unresolved until the present time (Nadim & Al-Hinai, 2016). The impact of ISO TQM principles on higher service quality has not been recorded on public universities in the UAE, and it is unclear how the department of quality operates. TQM is vital for achieving service quality in HEIs (Zanqar et al., 2019). Because the success of any higher education system is assessed by the quality of its graduates and their subsequent labor market placement, the UAE must remodel its higher education system to reflect its cultural, economic, and institutional surroundings service quality (Ashour, 2020). Hence a lack of transformational leaders with the ability to address the aforementioned difficulties is the main issue facing HEIs in UAE (Hebah & Safiah, 2020). According to the Global Competitiveness Index, the UAE remains the most competitive country in the Arab World, but its rating fell back to 2015-16 levels in 2017-18. This was primarily owing to other countries' relative improvements, particularly in the educational system. As shown in Table 1, the decline in global competitiveness rankings underlines the need to expedite change in higher education strategies. Because HEIs are a significant driver of competitiveness, enhancing the service quality of HEIs in the UAE could help them rise to a higher level.

Table 1: UAE higher education in Global Competitiveness Index Rankings
 (Sources: World Economic Forum, HSBC Expat Explorer, PwC Middle East Economy Watch, S& Investment opportunities in the GCC education sector, YouGov Omnibus Research 2018)

	Change from 2016-17 to 2017-18	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Overall	↓	17 th	16 th	17 th
Quality of primary education	↓	16 th	12 th	13 th
Quality of higher education	↓	12 th	10 th	12 th
Primary education enrolment, net %	↑	87 th	100 th	94 th
Secondary education enrolment, gross %		NA	71 th	67 th
Tertiary education enrolment, gross %	↑	94 th	96 th	99 th

It is evident that HEIs in the UAE do not rank among the top 100 universities in the world. They seek to replicate the steps of well-known colleges around the world, such as those in the United States and Europe (Ashour, 2020). One of the most typical concerns associated with service quality in the UAE is a lack of adoption of ISO quality management certificates. For example, Abdel and Ahmed's (2021) addressed numerous barriers, such as the absence of ISO 9001 in Sharjah University. Similarly, Fatima et al. (2019) proposed that universities in the UAE should build a quality framework for the country's long-term plan. The creation of this framework will assist policymakers in the Ministry of Higher Education in updating the rules for the country's HEIs, particularly the quality management department. A background for formulating these principles will be provided by reported evidence. In summary, the literature presents few number of studies that focus on the obstacles that public and private universities in the UAE face while implementing transformational leadership and service quality of HEIs in the UAE (Sidaoui, 2007; Litz & Scott, 2016; O'Sullivan, 2017). In the same way, future research in service quality domain must overcome these limitations, adopt a more holistic perspective, and take a more inclusive and complete approach to hire the leaders in HEIs (Nasim et al., 2020).

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is one of the most prominent leadership theories and has been considered as a critical leadership topic for more than 20 years (Long et al., 2014). The fact that transformational leadership develops positive, superior connections with subordinates, commitment, performance motivation, and effective leaders has provoked their interest (Masa'deh et al., 2016). Transformational leadership is gradually replacing instructional leadership as a concept (Noor Azizah et al., 2020). Transformational leaders evaluate each subordinate's capability and potential to carry out their responsibilities by assessing future opportunities to extend and empower subordinates (Bastari et al., 2020). In this regard, transformational leaders use their abilities to transform organizations by recognizing the need for change, developing a vision, and mobilizing resources to put that vision into action (Manurung, 2020).

Transformational leadership is one of many different forms of leadership that help employees perform at their best. As a result, those leaders assist the organization in understanding the need to launch a development vision, positive transformation, and organizational commitment (Pongpearchan, 2016). They have the ability to inspire innovation and change, as well as prepare their followers for work and life. Bass (1985, 1995) was the pioneer scholar who attempted to quantify transformative leadership. According to Bass and Avolio (1991, 1997), transformational leadership has four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. As a result, transformational leadership will be viewed as a multidimensional variable that can be quantified using

Bass and Avolio's (1991, 1997) leadership model. The following are the four basic dimensions of transformative leadership.

Idealized Influence

It is a leader's ability to instill pride, faith, and respect in his or her followers (Sladjana, 2017). Idealized influence is a component of modifying followers' behavior; it consists of idealized traits and idealized acts (Budur & Demir, 2019). Motivating followers' dignity and pride, as well as their loyalty to the organization's aims, are among the most visible idealized traits of a leader (Ali et al., 2020).

Inspirational Motivation

Motivation, according to Bass (1985), is a fundamental feature of transformational leadership, while Bass and Avolio (1991, 1997) stated that inspirational motivation is a method through which a transformational leader motivates his or her followers to attach themselves to their work and to be a member of the organization. In order to encourage and inspire people, transformational leadership develops transformational communication skills that make the leader seem like an idol to the followers (Prabowo et al., 2018).

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation is the behavior of leaders that enhances employees' ability and motivation to think about problems in new ways (Sladjana, 2017). By employing innovative processes from a different perspective, Caspi and Roccas (2013) revealed that intellectual stimulation equips leaders with breakthrough creative judgment that is already in the hands of their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders' ability to create an environment favorable to innovation and invention, such as the empowering of followers or employees to tackle difficult issues, is referred to as intellectual stimulation (Buil et al., 2019).

Individualized Consideration

Individual consideration requires paying close attention to each employee and addressing his or her particular issues. That characteristic reflects the level to which a leader considers and listens to individual difficulties, as well as providing appropriate support to suit the demands of followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The leader's behavior is to view each worker as a team member, to admire each individual in the workplace, and to help him or her enhance their capacity to operate in a group.

Transformational leadership in higher education

Higher education institutions have recently witnessed huge alterations in the education scene, beginning with a growing interest in a unified and capable administration to support, reinforce, and enhance both research and service quality to previously unattainable goals (Saravanan, 2021). The competency and aptitude of HEIs' academic leadership is critical to their success and efficiency in carrying out

their tasks and succeed in higher education domain (Sawasn et al., 2021). In this regard, Noraini et al. (2014); Abd El-Hamed and Abd El-Hamed (2018) pointed out transformational leadership as playing a critical role in strengthening the educational process and substantial contribute to service quality in higher education domain. The changing character of institutions and the difficulties confronting higher education have mandated varied and updated duties for academic leadership in order to stay up with this transformation (Irum et al., 2021). Today, the leadership in HEIs are no longer restricted to traditional tasks such as hiring and firing staff, evaluating faculty members, managing financial resources, and representing the university in front of other peers in higher education market. Rather, the academic leader's responsibilities have shifted towards developing a strategy to define a new vision based on innovation, inspiration, and transformation, these visions become the drivers that encourages academic staff to rethink about the future and prepare for it, as well as focusing on developing initiatives and breaking down bureaucracy (Gerring, 2012). The review of literature demonstrated why adopting transformational leadership in higher education is necessary at the current era. The findings from prior studies are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Transformational leadership in higher education

The sources	Findings
Kouzes & Posner (2007)	University leaders who use the five transformational leadership practices will generate positive educational reform and achieve exemplary results
Knab, 2009	Leaders in high performing universities utilize transformational leadership practices more effectively than principals in low performing schools and performance is correlated with transformational leadership
Chegini, 2010	Lecturers' performance improves dramatically when the university leader is seen engaging in the institution's shared vision and goals
Nash, 2014	Successful leaders in educational environment use transformational leadership practices to improve teacher performance and student achievement.
Roby, 2011	Multi-performing principal leaders support their staff members frequently and inspire their teachers to become leaders.
Valentine & Prater, 2011	Transformational leaders motivate their staff and teacher leaders to initiate reform efforts and develop new approaches to improve educator and student performance
Turan & Bektas, 2013	Academic achievement is positively impacted by transformational leadership
Jeff et al., 2015	The leadership practices needed to improve academic achievement and generate positive change in school institutions

The sources	Findings
Fullchis et al., 2020	Successful transformational leaders used leadership approaches that are based on inspiring a shared vision among followers, empowering others to act in better way.
Antonopoulou, 2021	Leadership outcome has a strong positive correlation with transformational leadership which confirming that higher transformational leadership implies greater efficiency and satisfaction for university staff.
Owusu-Agyeman, 2021	Transformational leaders foster engagement, motivation, communication flow, communication utilization and decision-making strongly, and promoting innovation among administrative staff in the university.
Fareez & Norazah, 2021	Transformational leadership practice enhance the level of job satisfaction among lecturers at professional colleges.
Cucun et al., 2021	The implications of transformational leadership increase the effectiveness of higher education quality, and transformational leadership traits should be used as a reference by higher education leaders in choosing a leadership style
Asmahan & Yuliya, 2021	Teachers reported a significant correlation between transformational leadership and successful online teaching.
Saravanan, 2021	Several industries recognize transformational leadership as an effective leadership style that succeeds potential performance, as well as strengthening and raising education quality to statures previously not attainable.
Asad et al., 2021	Transformational leadership has a significant effect on educational institutes culture.
Girish & Manish, 2020	Transformational style has a great impact on their followers. Thus, HEIs should adopt this leadership to drive efficiently and successfully achieve their educational mission.
Berna, 2020	Transformational teaching in higher education inspire academic staff and enhance students' self-efficacy for learning.

The aforesaid arguments and findings reported that transformational leadership is crucial in higher education as it can inspire and motivate individuals to achieve their full potential. This type of leadership style emphasizes the importance of collaboration, creativity, and innovation, which are essential in the academic world. Transformational leaders can create a positive and supportive environment that encourages personal and professional growth, leading to increased job satisfaction and retention rates among faculty and staff. Additionally, transformational leadership can drive organizational change and help institutions adapt to the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education. Overall, transformational leadership plays a vital role

in higher education by fostering a culture of growth, innovation, and collaboration, and empowering individuals to reach their full potential. Therefore, it is essential for HEIs in the USE to establish a positive and supportive environment that promotes academic excellence and organizational change, ultimately leading to the success of the institution and its members.

Service quality

Service quality has been widely disputed during the twentieth century, and its notion remains important in supporting today's organizations in creating distinction and obtaining a competitive edge in an era of borderless world and globalization (Ali et al. 2016). In this sense, Medberg and Grönroos (2020) defined service quality as the consumer's overall perception of the organization's and its services' relative inferiority/superiority. It reflects the customer's overall impression of the service provider, whether they offered great or insufficient service. Every educational institution's standards, values, and goals define educational quality. This is due to the rapid advancement of science and technology, which necessitates the improvement of educational institutions' quality. Graduates are the focus of the objective in the educational institution system; excellent graduates are not achievable without a quality education process. Without the proper school organization, it is impossible to provide a high-quality education (Meilina, 2010). In other words, if higher education students are provided with proper learning service, they can reach high standards and become quite satisfied with the service they get from their institute (Sam et al., 2020).

It is evident that service quality in higher education is crucial to achieve the highest levels of education and to reflect on the quality of learning they receive from the institute, as well as to keep pace with developments and transformations in the learning methods (Sam et al., 2020). Numerous studies are being undertaken to discover how to evaluate and quantify service quality in the educational environment, since service in education remains a hot research topic. In fact, service quality is a complex term influenced by a variety of factors (Crissien-Borrero et al., 2019). To measure this construct, it is required to determine the components that influence service quality and what are the indicators that explain service quality in higher education. Garira (2020) thinks that a coherent and practical conceptual framework for educational service quality is essentially based on the indicators of SERVQUAL model. To meet the demand for assessing service quality, Parasuraman et al. (1985) introduced the SERVQUAL paradigm, which is a methodology for measuring the quality of services provided by service organizations such as universities and colleges. They defined service quality as an organization's ability to meet or exceed the expectations of its customers. They defined ten service quality elements, which are as follows: responsiveness, tangibles, communication, credibility, reliability, security, courtesy, competence, understanding the customer, and access. Later, Parasuraman et al. (1988) utilized component analysis to narrow the original ten traits down to five:

which are tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, empathy, and assurance (see Table 3). Three of the original ten dimensions (reliability, responsiveness, and tangibles) were kept, while the remaining seven were consolidated into two (assurance and empathy). The review of literature reveal that the majority of studies in service organizations use the SERVQUAL model to analyze the gap between consumers' perceptions of the service they received which are the students in case of HEIs and their expectations of the service (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Table 3: The dimensions of SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988)

Dimension	Definition
Reliability	Ability to provide the given service consistently and accurately.
Tangibility	Actual evidence of facilities, equipment, and staff appearance.
Assurance	Employee knowledge and respect, as well as their potential to inspire trust and confidence.
Responsiveness	Willingness to assist clients and deliver timely service.

It is concluded that SERVQUAL dimensions are widely employed in studied associated with services such organizations in higher education sector (Faisal, 2016). In this context, Sherry et al. (2004) concluded that the SERVQUAL model provided useful understandings and was an appropriate starting point for measuring service quality in many circumstances, but that further research and empirical reporting are needed. Because the SERVQUAL quality assessment scale was created to examine the similarity and disparity between customer perceptions and customer expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1994). In other sense, the adoption of SERVQUAL paradigm in measuring the quality of education service in HEIs is based on that notion that measuring the services provided for students is not much different from the one offered for customers in the market (Faisal, 2016). The popularity of SERVQUAL as a quality evaluation paradigm shows that attempts to recruit and retain students by enforcing and publicizing quality practices put students' ideas of quality at the center of educational development efforts. The said claims also confirmed by Owlia and Aspinwall (1996) who developed and validated service quality assessments in higher education based on six elements of SERVQUAL paradigm.

Theoretical background

This study's conceptual model is based on path-goal leadership theory. House (1996) extended the original path-goal theory significantly and proposed correlations between leadership styles and path-goal theory reflecting distinct boundary constraints between leadership behavior and employee outcomes (Cho et al., 2019). The concept of Path-Goal theory explains how transformational leaders steer work toward organizational goals. The Path-Goal theory is used to explain how transformational leaders contribute to the quality of services provided by HEIs. Furthermore, path-goal theory (House, 1971) interprets the influence of leadership

on subordinates. Through the path-goal concept, leaders are normally accountable for giving vital job-related information that helps subordinates operate more competently and responsively (Pahi et al., 2020).

In 1970, Martin Evans proposed the Path-Goal Model as shown in Figure 1. This idea was initially influenced by another motivating theory known as Vroom Expectancy theory (Evans, 1970). Evans investigated the effects of supervisory behavior on the path-goal connection in 1970 in order to explain how a leader's behavior affects an individual's path-goal instrumentalities. Path-goal instrumentality occurs when the path is perceived to help or hinder the person in reaching their goals. According to Evans (1970), path-goal instrumentality is “the individual's perception of how his action or behavior (path) may be related to the individual's idiosyncratic outcomes (goals)”, and “path-goal instrumentality is the extent to which the path is seen as helping or inhibiting the individual in attaining his objectives”.

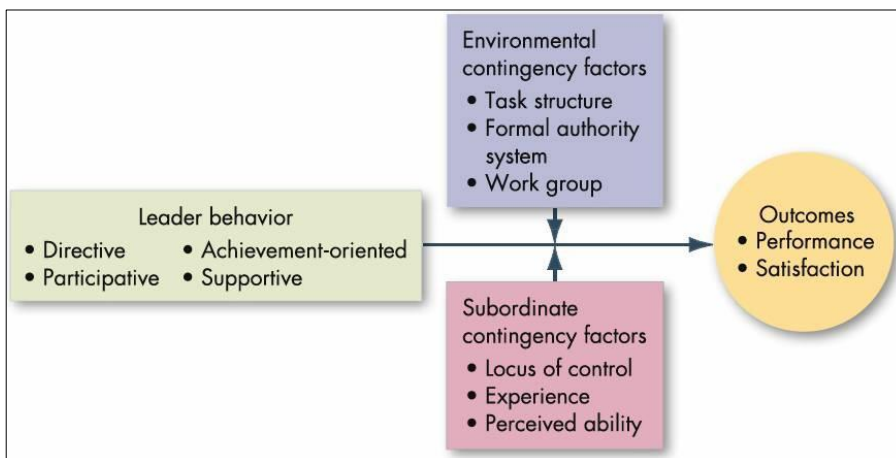


Figure 1. Path-Goal Leadership Theory (House & Mitchel, 1975)

The Path-Goal theory can be used to specify a leader's style or behavior in order to achieve goals that are most suited for the employee and work environment, which in turn add to the quality of services provided to customers (House & Mitchell, 1975). This strategy aims to increase employee motivation, empowerment, and contentment so that they can become productive members of the organization. As previously stated, the Path-Goal theory is founded on Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which states that an individual would perform an action based on the expectation that the action will result in a specific outcome and the attractiveness of that individual as a result. Martin Evans developed the path-goal theory in 1970, which has since been expanded by House (1971) and further examined by House and Mitchell in 1975.

Academics House and Mitchel (1975) coined the phrase "Path-Goal" to describe the many ways leaders lead for the first time. According to them, a leader must demonstrate to his or her followers how to achieve certain goals and explain how to

successfully finish the work to completion. The path-goal theory is a framework in place that allows leaders to select specific metrics that are best suited to the demands of their employees while also fostering a healthy company culture. This theory can also aid in quality management efforts by assisting employees in seeing a clear path to meeting their daily job objectives (Northouse, 2013). This is why the theory is known as path-goal.

In sum, understanding how does path-goal leadership theory explain the relationship between transformational leadership and service quality in higher education is based on the notion that the leader's role is to help followers achieve their goals by providing guidance and support. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their full potential. In the context of higher education, transformational leaders who use path-goal theory may create a clear vision and goals for their institution and provide the necessary resources and support to help their faculty and staff achieve those goals. This can lead to an increase in service quality as faculty and staff are more motivated and engaged in their work. Additionally, transformational leaders who use path-goal theory may be able to identify and address any obstacles or challenges that may be hindering their team's performance, which can further enhance service quality in higher education. By utilizing the principles of both transformational leadership and path-goal theory, leaders in higher education can create a supportive and motivating environment that fosters excellence in service quality and overall organizational success. For example, a university president who is a transformational leader using path-goal theory may set a goal of increasing student satisfaction with academic advising. They would provide resources such as professional development for advisors and technology to improve communication with students, while also offering guidance and support to advisors. The president would also inspire and motivate advisors to go above and beyond for their students, creating a culture of excellence in advising. As a result, student satisfaction with advising would increase, leading to higher retention rates and overall success for the institution. Therefore, it is crucial for leaders in higher education to adopt transformational leadership and path-goal theory to improve service quality and achieve organizational success.

Findings

The review of studies that examined the relationship between transformational leadership and service quality reported a significant association does exist between them. As an effort to increase the quality of services afford by HEIs, transformative leadership have the desired skills to foster the quality of service in higher education because those leaders use their profession toward the educational goals of the institute (Ibadul et al., 2021). For exmample, transformational leaders have a considerable influence on lecturers' performance in higher education, which enhances educational quality (Angriani et al., 2020). This assertion is confirmed by Torlak and Kuzey's (2019), who stated that a transformational leader is expected to

play an important role in accomplishing organizational goals, inspiring subordinates to perform exceptionally well, and pleasing stakeholders. The three-dimension framework developed by Praetorius et al. (2018) indicates how good quality teaching service is strongly linked to transformational leadership (Anderson, 2017). Previous researches have reported that transformational leadership is associated with increased teacher commitment which in turn reflected on the service quality of the institute (Thomas et al., 2018; Li & Liu, 2020), and enhance effective classroom practices (Thoonen et al., 2011), as well as increasing student's academic achievement (Sun & Leithwood, 2012). In this regard, Transformational leaders encourage the use of positive approaches in the learning process and assist students in providing constructive feedback about the educational process and quality of teaching, as well as teacher behavior (Fauth et al., 2014; Buric et al., 2021). All of these criteria demonstrate the importance of transformative leadership in improving the service quality in educational environment.

The leadership style of a leader has been shown to influence an institution's ability to retain its success in higher education (Pantouvakis & Vlachos, 2020). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been allowed to affect subordinates and followers in a variety of methods, one of which is subordinate performance. Because individual success is based on competence, knowledge, and flexibility in the workplace, the quality of educators will also be reflected in lecturer performance (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). In this regard, it can be claimed that the performance of lecturers plays a critical role in shaping educational excellence and is a measure of educational service quality (Belsito, 2016). In other words, transformational leadership is responsive to advancements and changes in the workplace, and it can improve a lecturer's performance and education quality (Sihombing, 2020). According to Zainuddin et al. (2019), transformational leadership style pushes subordinates to work harder and assists individuals and organizations in achieving total transformation.

In higher education context, Pongpearchan (2016) proposed that transformational leaders can improve the effectiveness of the education service offered by the university, in particular the performance of teaching staff. While every leader is recognized to have particular characteristics and talents, transformational leaders are expected to undertake a variety of actions in order to influence the administration staff and lecturers to fulfil university objectives. For instance, Manurung (2020) asserted that transformative leadership has a positive and considerable impact on lecturer performance and the teaching service they provide for the students by inspiring them to use creative ways and depends on their talents to do the job as it is expected. Based on actual data and previous research findings. This research assumes that transformational leadership and service quality in higher education sector are related. In conclusion, transformational leadership and service quality in the higher education sector are closely related because transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to provide high-quality services to students. They create a positive work environment that encourages innovation, collaboration, and

continuous improvement, which ultimately leads to better service quality. Additionally, transformational leaders prioritize the development of their staff, which helps to enhance their skills and knowledge, resulting in improved service delivery. Thus, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring that higher education institutions are able to provide high-quality services to their students and meet their needs effectively.

Conclusions

Transformational leadership has become a popular topic in recent years, particularly in the context of higher education institutions. The concept of transformational leadership centers around inspiring and motivating followers to achieve a common goal. This concluded that transformational leadership has the potential to positively impact service quality and ultimately enhance service quality of education which enhance student experience with HEIs. By inspiring and motivating the lecturers and academic staff to achieve the vision and goals of the institute, the students are satisfied and substantially developing their knowledge. As such, it recommended for HEIs and policymakers in the ministry of education in the UAE to prioritize transformational leadership and set the criteria of leaders in higher education based on the characteristics of those leaders such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration in order to enhance the service quality and ultimately benefit their students.

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