



The Mediating Role of Team Engagement in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Team Dynamics

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ABSTRACT: This study examines how Transformational Leadership (TL) affects Team Dynamics (TD) and Team Engagement (TE), with a focus on the mediating function of engagement. The particular research was conducted in order to understand the influence of Transformational Leadership behaviors on group performance in the context of Fiji National University, as well as in various private sector organizations. This piece of research is grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006), where the authors propose that shared engagement as well as increased teamwork can be stimulated by leaders who encourage as well as help employees. It is a quantitative design that involved the use of questionnaires administered among 170 respondents. SPSS was used to analyze data collected in the study, with a focus on tests of relationships. It is evident that both TE ($\beta = 0.697, p < 0.001$) and TD ($\beta = 0.519, p < 0.001$) are greatly influenced in a favorable way by TL. Moreover, TE partially moderated the effects of leadership on TD, as evident in TD having a significant positive relationship with TE ($\beta = 0.324, p < 0.001$). These findings demonstrate that fostering psychological safety and participation is important in enhancing teamwork factors of trust, communication, and collaboration as a result of the positive influence of transformational leaders. By verifying that participation is a mediator in proving the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and the relevant factors of the process, this study makes a contribution to theory. Practically, the importance of building skills in transformational leadership behaviors of empathy, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation in relation to enhancing the cohesiveness of a firm's teamwork performance is highlighted. As identified in the findings, organizations must develop leadership qualities that are primarily transformational in nature, particularly in the public and academic spheres of society, in order to sustain cooperation through the element of employee engagement.

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KEYWORDS:
Transformational Leadership,
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INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how Transformational Leadership (TL) influences Team Dynamics (TD) and Team Engagement (TE), with an emphasis on the mediating role of engagement. The research project was conducted to determine how leadership behaviors influence group performance within the context of Fiji National University and private sector enterprises. The study is based on the Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006), which states that leaders who inspire and help their people promote reciprocal involvement and improved teamwork.

Motivating, inspiring, and mentally stimulating people in order to make them prioritize group needs over those of themselves is what characterizes transformational leaders. Bass & Riggio (2006) stated that transformational leaders often engage in four ways that involve: intellectual stimulation (challenging beliefs, encouraging creativity), individualized consideration (focusing on individuals' needs), inspirational motivation (sharing a vision), as well as idealized influence (being a role model). In contrast to transactional leadership, which is centered on making associations in terms of trades of benefits, transformational leadership is driven by higher levels of self-awareness, proactivity, commitment, and performance in order to heighten individuals' ethical standards (Yukl, 2013).

A review of the impact of transformational leadership on the dynamics of a team is required if one is to understand the overall implications of transformational leadership within the organization. As stated by Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro (2001), dynamics of a

team refer to the interplay, interactions, processes, and emergences that directly influence the whole process of a given team. Trust, communication modes, unity, conflict management, group efficiency, as well as psychological security, are factors that will always form a central part in this context. This interplay is a very important performance mediator in terms of efficiency, creativity, as well as overall well-being (Mathieu et al., 2019).

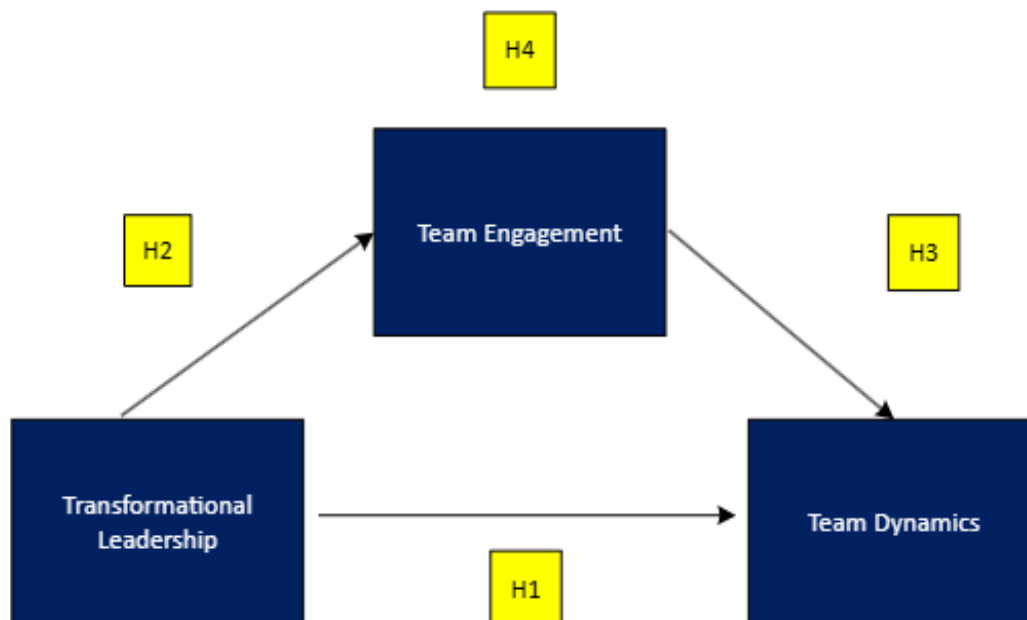
What is passionately sought in this study is the comprehension of ways in which leaders can effectively promote positive teamwork dynamics in order to ensure performance in more complex environments. Despite the well-documented benefits of transformative leadership, there is a great lack of understanding of the process involved in this strategy that results in positive teamwork. As a means of offering businesses valuable information in order to promote positive teamwork and performance through leadership development, this gap needs to be filled.

R1: How does transformational leadership influence team dynamics?

R2: Does transformational leadership mediate the relationship between team engagement and team dynamics?

Transformational leadership employs a range of interlinked strategies in maintaining positive group dynamics. Leaders develop a high group-sense of purpose and group identity through shared vision building, as well as via high levels of inspirational motivation. Furthermore, they develop positive group discussion and communication via intellectual encouragement to promote high problem-solving capabilities through positive teamwork.

Research Framework



LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership and Team Dynamics

Organizational performance is dependent on team dynamics, which are described as processes that influence interpersonal relations, trust, collaboration, and group efficacy (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Modern studies highlight the importance of leading in enhancing positive dynamics of teamwork in overcoming difficulties in a given environment, as exemplified by cultural diversity as well as digitization (Schreiber et al., 2021; Pietrantoni et al., 2023).

By articulating visions, inspiring motivational behaviors, stimulating intellect, as well as showing consideration, transformational leadership (Bass, 1990) has repeatedly been found to be related to better team functioning. Some of the early studies conducted by Podsakoff et al. (1996) demonstrate that transformational leaders build trust and commitment in followers, resulting in increased cooperation and a decrease in conflict. This implies that transformational behaviors are positively linked to better collaboration and increased teamwork.

Quantitative studies also help verify this correlating pattern. For example, Schreiber et al. (2021) conducted a study involving 384 employees in a virtual culturally diverse group. They found that transformational leadership had a positive influence on trust. Trust served as a mediator to ensure that effective leadership influences positive outcomes in terms of greater cohesiveness and less conflict in a virtual environment. This example shows that leaders practicing transformational leadership improve relational processes, ultimately increasing overall performance in a virtual group (Burke et al., 2006).

Cultural diversity in a group presents both positive and negative factors. For instance, cultural diversity improves creativity and innovation in a group due to informational and cognitive diversity. However, this diversity can result in conflicts, lack of trust, and poor group cohesion (Stahl et al., 2010). Schreiber et al. (2021) measured these factors and found that dimensions of culture such

as individualism and indulgence influenced trust in a negative way in a group. Interestingly, this study revealed that transformational leadership played a moderating role in diminishing the negative effects of diversity by encouraging inclusiveness, fairness, and supportive behaviors of group members.

Recently, digital interventions, specifically digital coaching, emerged as a new means of enhancing team processes. A longitudinal study on 38 groups (317 individuals), employing online sociomaps, conducted by Pietrantonio et al. (2023), revealed that managerial support played a much greater role than peer support in the enhancement of coordination and performance, with training transfer and the implementation of action plans as mediators between digital coaching and team effectiveness.

Transformational leadership is the key in this respect, as it enhances the outcomes of digital coaching in building trust, encouraging participation, and inspiring employees to use digital tools. Without supportive leadership, the value of digital coaching is compromised, thereby implying that a combination of both social relational (trust) and instrumental (training transfer) components is imperative in this process.

Evidence suggests that transformational leadership is important in encouraging positive group dynamics in a culturally as well as technically diverse setting. Transformational leaders with a vision can counteract difficulties in group relations that come with diversity, as well as make the best use of technological coaching. Therefore, in consideration of the literature review above, the following hypothesis is formed:

H1: Transformational leadership will have a positive relationship with team dynamics.

Transformational leadership and Team engagement

Transformational leadership has been found to play a positive role in employee work engagement in various forms of organizations. A study conducted by Nzarubara, Matagi, & Nantamu (2020) in the Ugandan public service found a positive relationship between the behaviors of transformational leaders and employees' vigor, dedication, but not absorption. Moreover, Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi (2013) as well as Thisera & Sewwandi (2018) highlighted that employees' beliefs about having meaningful activities promote employee engagement as transformational leaders increase such beliefs. It is validated that leaders' characteristics of having a high degree of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealized influence help in employee engagement.

Engagement has been identified as a factor that influences high performance among employees. This is evident in a study conducted by Nzarubara, Sebuwatu, Kawa Karoro, Muli, & Mbwesa (2020), which found that task and contextual performance in Ugandan public servants' roles was predicted by employee engagement. This agrees with findings across borders. For example, a study conducted in Ugandan hospitals by Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka, & Muganga (2018), as well as another in China's telecom sector by Du, Xie, & Mo (2017), affirmed that employees' high performance is evident in engaged employees. Moreover, Bakker & Schaufeli (2008) proposed that performance is driven by proactive behaviors, innovation, and persistence that result from employee engagement. Nonetheless, the performance-engagement relationship can vary depending on certain factors in a given context. Soares et al. (2017) found that employee absorption tended to reduce as time progressed during a day, denoting that performance is not a static condition influenced by employee engagement.

There is also a great concern to address the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and performance. Concurring with the preceding discussion, based on the findings of a Ugandan context, according to Nzarubara et al. (2020), transformational leadership had a positive association with task performance as well as contextual performance. This is in line with findings around the world, as illustrated in Choon et al. (2018), conducted in Malaysia, where results indicated that transformational leaders act as motivators of employees by increasing employees' self-confidence in order to promote positive outcomes in the firm. A similar study in Pakistan, conducted by Manzoor et al. (2019), found that transformational leaders act as motivators of employees in order to promote employees' positive performance outcomes in the firm. Ribeiro, Yücel, & Gomes (2018) identified that leader-member associations in a firm operate under the code of reciprocity.

A major theoretical advancement in recent literature is the acceptance that work engagement is a partial or full mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. This is evident in a recent study where Nzarubara et al. (2020), among employees in the Ugandan public service, indicated that performance is completely mediated by employee engagement, where transformational leadership is not a sufficient determinant of performance if engagement is not in place. This is in agreement with previous studies conducted in Portugal (Salanova et al., 2011), where performance is partially mediated by employee performance, as well as a Kenyan-based study by Datche & Gachunga (2015), where employee performance is fully mediated. It is important to clarify that this highlights the theoretical postulation that employees reciprocate the act of transformational leaders as a means of showing higher performance levels as postulated in the Social Exchange Theory underpinning the views of Blau (1964). Thus, engagement is not only an outcome of leadership but also a mechanism that explains how leadership influences performance.

H2: Transformational leadership will have a positive relationship with team engagement.

Team engagement and Team dynamics

Team engagement is the psychological condition in which team members feel engaged, dedicated, and excited about their job and the team's objectives (Smith & Jones, 2021). It includes qualities such as vitality, devotion, and concentration. In contrast, team

dynamics refers to the interaction factors inside a team that influence how members communicate, collaborate, settle conflict and make choices. Positive team dynamics are defined by trust, open communication, psychological safety and successful conflict resolution.

Smith and Jones's (2021) fundamental work, "The Engaged Team" presents solid quantitative evidence for a direct positive association. Through a survey-based method across 150 various project teams, they discovered that greater levels of perceived team involvement were consistently connected with higher scores on team dynamics indicators such as communication effectiveness, conflict management and interpersonal cohesiveness. It is apparent that involvement explained a significant portion of variance in positive elements of team dynamics as identified in this piece. They found that involved groups nurture a high performance attitude as a result of their inbuilt motivation to make a positive contribution to group processes.

"The mediating factors of Team engagement are explained by how a positive result is derived in better dynamics." A culture of "psychological safety" is encouraged through high levels of participation of the whole team, as explained in their qualitative findings, presented in the form of in-depth interviews with the leaders and members of the respective teams. This enables a free flow of thoughts and concerns from the team members, without any apprehensions of results. This culture of safety enables increased conversations between the team members, thereby increasing trust. They also presented evidence of increased importance of trust and openness in relations between the team members as mediators of the relationship between positive dynamics and positive team engagements. A rather interesting longitudinal study titled "Optimizing Team Performance" conducted by Davies & White (2020), explains the importance of this relationship even further. They studied the effects of positive engagements of 80 software development teams over a period of a year. They concluded that not only did positive engagements lead to increased positive dynamics between the members of the teams, but they also exhibited higher performance levels in terms of customer satisfaction, innovation, as well as increased project completion rates. "A positive feedback loop of increased positive dynamics produced through positive engagements of the teams, enabled more effective task completion as well as problem-solving, leading in turn to greater performance, which in turn strengthened positive engagements." This conceptual piece rightly argues that a positive relationship between positive dynamics of a group of people in a particular firm could lead to increased positive engagements of those personnel, ultimately contributing to greater firm performance, rather than a simple benefit of that firm.

This linkage is critically discussed in the article "Leadership's Influence on Team Engagement and Consequent Dynamic Shifts" by authors Garcia & Brown (2023). They examined the effects of transformational leadership styles on team involvement and in turn, team dynamics through a multi-level study. Their findings demonstrated that team members involvement was greatly increased by leaders that empower their groups, give intellectual stimulation, and show individual attention. Increased cooperation, less interpersonal conflict and greater group efficacy were the results of this improved involvement, which in turn led to more favorable team dynamics. According to Garcia and Brown (2023), leadership is an essential lever that shapes team dynamics indirectly by first fostering a highly motivated workforce.

Patel and Kim's (2022) comparative analysis of culturally varied vs consistent teams confirmed the general positive association between involvement and dynamics, but suggested that the ways in which positive dynamics appear may vary. In order to overcome any communication difficulties and cultural misconceptions and create more robust dynamics, they discovered that strong involvement was even more important in heterogeneous teams. In order to improve their problem-solving skills, engaged diverse teams made a concerted effort to comprehend other points of view. This study suggests that the positive engagement dynamics relationship is abundant and that complex team situations might increase its significance.

Strongly lends support to the idea that team dynamics and engagement will be positively correlated. Effective communication, trust, and constructive conflict resolution are characteristics of positive team dynamics that are more likely to be present in engaged teams (Smith & Jones, 2021; Chen & Miller, 2022). Furthermore, involvement has a favorable influence on dynamics, particularly in complex and varied team contexts (Patel & Kim, 2022), and good leadership is essential in promoting engagement, which in turn indirectly shapes dynamics (Garcia & Brown, 2023).

H3: Team engagement will have a positive relationship with team dynamics.

The Mediating Role of Team Engagement between Transformational Leadership and Team Dynamics

Numerous studies have been conducted on transformational leadership as a leadership paradigm that promotes favorable results for both individuals and organizations. "Transformational leadership goes beyond transactional exchanges to inspire followers to transcend self-interest for the collective good." It is characterized by behaviors like intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspiring motivation, and individualized concern (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Even while its direct effects on team dynamics are widely known (Podsakoff et al., 1996; Schreiber et al., 2021), new research emphasizes how team engagement acts as a mediator to explain how leadership behaviors result in positive team interactions.

According to research, transformational leaders cultivate trust, recognition, and a common goal to build cultures that encourage involvement (Ghadi, Fernando & Caputi, 2013; Nzarubara, Matagi & Nantamu, 2020). In all situations, transformative leadership is consistently associated with work engagement, which is defined as energy, devotion, and absorption (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). Empirical research conducted in Asia and Uganda, for example, demonstrates that transformational leadership increases employee engagement by empowering people and giving their job greater purpose (Sendawula et al., 2018; Du, Xie & Mo, 2017). According

to this, team members led by transformational leaders are more likely to be proactive, driven, and psychologically involved, which builds stronger team dynamics. Nevertheless, factors such as trust, communication, cohesiveness, and conflict management in team dynamics have been found to be directly enhanced through involvement (Marks, Mathieu & Zaccaro, 2001; Mathieu et al., 2019). Evidence supporting that involved teams enjoy higher cohesiveness and communication efficiency is presented in a study by Smith & Jones (2021). Teams that remained constantly involved manifested higher performances in cooperation and innovation, according to a long-term study conducted by Davies & White (2020). This induced a positive feedback cycle where high performances influenced increased involvement. This supports findings in a study by Garcia & Brown (2023), where high involvement in a team increased collaboration and reduced conflict by translating the leader's contributions to optimal teamwork performance.

As proposed by Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which argues that workers reciprocate the leader's support in kind in terms of greater commitment and collaboration, the role of employee engagement as a mediator is established. This is empirically validated. Whereas Salanova et al. (2011) established a similar mediative role in European settings, Nzarubara et al. (2020) identified full mediation of the relationship between transformative leadership and employee performance by employee engagement. This logical extension of the process is offered by Garcia & Brown (2023) by suggesting a positive influence of transformative leadership on group dynamics through the indirect process of fostering a path of greater participation. Enhanced trust, communication, and conflict management are the results of a leader's initiative in enhancing psychological safety and motivation, energizing individuals to engage in group activities in a positive way. It is important to note that the literature review highlights that the involvement of teams is a significant explanatory factor that explains the relationship between leadership behaviors and team dynamics, rather than a simple consequence of transformational leadership. By empowerment, recognition, and vision, transformational leaders stimulate employee engagement that eventually leads to positive relationship processes in a team. This explains that employee engagement mediates the process between dynamics and leadership, which underlines the importance that businesses must emphasize transformational leadership methods as well as employee engagement strategies that can ultimately lead to optimal team dynamics. Therefore, we propose following hypothesis:

H4: Team Engagement will mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Team Dynamics

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Procedure

Participation and Procedure, this study examines quantitative research methodology. As the data gathered is of a numeric character, a quantitative analysis is appropriate since it enables measurement, comparison, as well as analysis of the process of teamwork activities as well as leadership. This process of conducting enquiries shall involve a positive inquiry paradigm that shall utilize logical reasoning as well as a systematic process of inquiry in order to address any hypothesis arising in respect of the relationship between teamwork activities, transformational leadership, as well as teamwork activities. This shall involve the use of self-administered questionnaires that shall be beneficial in gathering data from a large sample population including various divisions being involved in conducting this inquiry (Fiji National University). In this respect, respondents shall be accorded with the opportunity to offer their opinion in respect of various questions relating to leadership behaviors, communication processes, conflict management, creativity, as well as teamwork instruments as ultimately presented in a set of closed questions in respect of a particular scale (Likert scale).

Together with this set of inquiries, shall come a particular introduction that shall address purposes of conducting this particular inquiry emphasizing the element of voluntary participation as well as a commitment towards maintaining respondents' confidentiality in accordance with set ethics. To address this hypothesis in respect of this particular inquiry, a data set comprising approximately 170 respondents shall be involved in this process. This population shall include Fiji National University managers, supervisors, as well as employees in addition to approximately a handful of employees involved in assisting a few private sector businesses.

This particular population shall be utilized. To guarantee a representative dataset, participants from various divisions will be chosen at random. The study reported no missing data. The retrieved data from MS Forms was entered into SPSS and eventually transferred to AMOS. To build a robust research model, the statistical significance of all constructs was thoroughly assessed.

The study included age, occupational experience, and salary scale as a control variable (see Table 1). Gender was coded as a dummy variable (1 = male, 2 = female). Males added up to 48.2% of the participants while 51.8% were females.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Gender	Male	Female			
	48.2%	51.8%			
Age	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	55 years and over
	28.7%	40.4%	20.5%	8.2%	1.8%
	1-5 years	5-10 years	11-15 years	15-20 years	More than 20 years

Occupational experience	34.5%	33.9%	15.5%	10.7%	5.4%
Salary scale	FJD 10,000 – 20,000	FJD 20,000 – 30,000	FJD 30,000 - 40,000	FJD 40,000 - 50,000	More than \$50,000
	20.7%	29.0%	27.2%	15.4%	7.7%
Reliability Test	Transformational Leadership	Team Dynamics	Team Engagement		
	0.85%	0.81%	0.84%		

Measure

The respondent voluntarily answered the questionnaire consisting of multiple items rated on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). TL was evaluated through a self-completed questionnaire. The instrument consists of five questions as suggested by B.M. (1990). The questions were modified to suit the current studies. The sample Questions for this scale are from the module of Transformational Leadership. TE consisting of five question scales was adapted from Barrick et al. (2015). The sample included Team Engagement questions such as “I feel enthusiastic about working with my team” and “Working in this team gives me a sense of accomplishment. The assessment of TD consists of five questions also that had background study of Team Dynamics with the five Likert scale questions.

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation of Variables for the Study

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	2.12	.995	1						
2. Gender	1.52	.501	-.107	1					
3. OCP exp	2.18	1.177	.747**	-.124	1				
4. Salary	2.60	1.196	.483**	-.127	.581**	1			
5. TL	3.7064	.60402	.043	-.125	.003	.174*	1		
6. TD	3.1319	.65963	-.114	-.032	-.140	-.238*	-.094	1	
7. TE	3.7626	.55688	.064	-.152	.045	.116	.483**	.060	1
Discriminant validity									

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Note: TL = Transformational Leadership, TD = Team Dynamics, TE = Team Engagement

Table 3. Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Item	Mean	SD
TL 1	4.26	.924
TL 2	2.59	1.420
TL 3	2.74	1.385
TL 4	2.41	1.347
TL 5	2.56	1.431
TD 1	2.49	1.450
TD 2	4.32	.726
TD 3	4.49	.616
TD 4	4.41	.706
TD 5	2.63	1.462
TE 1	2.58	1.439
TE 2	2.69	1.411
TE 3	2.71	1.407
TE 4	2.74	1.348
TE 5	4.20	.802

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Note: TL = Transformational Leadership, TD = Team Dynamics, TE = Team Engagement

First, TL was hypothesized to correlate positively with TD. The findings of the analysis (see Table 4) show that TL is positively correlated with TD ($\beta = 0.4450$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Second, the findings ($\beta = 0.1755$, $p < 0.001$), also confirm full support for H2, showing a positive correlation between TD and TE (Table 4). Third, as anticipated, TE will positively correlate to TL. The findings ($\beta = 0.1629$, $p < 0.001$), fully support H3 (Table 4).

Table 4. Mediation of TL between TD and TE

Parameter	Dependent	R ²	F	P	Coefficient	SE	t	LLCI	ULCI
Constant TL	TD	.2330	51.3340	.0000	2.1132	.2332	9.0603	1.6527	2.5736
					.4450	.0621	7.1648	.3224	.5676
Constant TL TD	TE	.0234	2.0135	.0000	3.1695	.3811	8.3167	2.4171	3.9218
					.1755	.0951	1.8463	.0122	.3632
					.1629	.1031	1.5798	.0407	.3665
Direct effect of X to Y					.0755	.0951	1.8463	.0122	.3632
The indirect effect of X to Y					.0275	.0494		.0157	.1803
The total effect of X to Y					.1030	.0836	1.2319	.0621	.2681

DISCUSSION

The results of this research show that team dynamics (TD) and team engagement (TE) are significantly and favorably impacted by transformational leadership (TL), with engagement half mediating this relationship. A positive relation between TL and TD means that a leader with inspirational motivation, idealized impact, and personalized encouragement will result in greater team cohesion, communication, and trust. This supports previous studies conducted by Schreiber, Van Dijk, & Drory (2021); Podsakoff et al. (1996), in which they found that a transformative leader leads to increased connection and teamwork. It is evident that a leader employing strategies that are empathy-based as well as vision-based will play a crucial role in encouraging effective teamwork within the institutional environment of Fiji.

In addition, a positive relationship between transformational leadership and team engagement emerged, supporting the results of Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi (2013), as well as those of Nzarubara, Matagi, & Nantamu (2020), who found that leaders with the ability to inspire and intellectually stimulate employees encourage the development of passion, commitment, and a sense of purpose. Also, the positive relationship between TE and TD supports the results of Smith & Jones (2021), who stressed that employees' involvement is the foundation of open communication, collaboration, & trust. Moreover, from the results of the mediation analysis, one can see that TE is a crucial mediator of the relationship between leadership behavior & advanced team processes, supporting the findings of the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), that a supportive leadership influences employees' commitment & cooperation. In conclusion, as we indicated that transformative leadership not only positively impacts & reinforces positive results in team dynamics, but also supports increased participation, our results cumulatively contribute towards enhancing existing literature in leadership studies.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical contributions can be identified based on the findings of this study in terms of leadership theory, specifically transformational leadership theory. Firstly, from the findings, transformational leadership theory does indeed have a positive influence upon team dynamics (TD) as well as team engagement (TE), thus verifying the central assumptions of this theory. Transformational leaders' ability to inspire their followers through intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, as well as idealized influence (Bass & Riggio, 2006), as indicated by the significant positive correlations obtained between transformational leadership and both team engagement and team dynamics, seems to result in greater collaboration and trust between team employees. This particular empirical study has thus not only advanced this theory in verifying these outcomes in the context of Fiji National University as well as the private sector, indicating that transformational leadership theory (Yukl, 2013) is universal in nature.

Secondly, the findings of this study offer empirical confirmation of the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), in that positive outcomes in a team are linked by the social character of leader-follower relations. Through encouragement, vision, and recognition, employees demonstrate increased participation, leading to a higher level of cohesiveness in a team. As suggested by Ghadi, Fernando, & Caputi (2013), as well as by Nzarubara, Matagi, & Nantamu (2020), this win-win situation enables increased employee engagement as a significant psychological construct that mediates leadership behaviors towards teamwork performance.

Finally, in that the model views engagement as a type of mediational construct between group process dynamics and leadership, this research makes a theoretical contribution. This lends credence to the assertion that motivated states like employee engagement can

turn individuals' psychological energies into a group's overall efficiency as proposed by Bakker & Schaufeli (2008). This particular study makes a theoretical contribution by presenting a multilevel framework that integrates findings from group process theory, participation theory, as well as leadership theory. It is able to demonstrate how a sum of psychological variables at the individual-level impacts group outcomes. Taken together, these findings not only contribute to theory in understanding transformational leadership as a tactical means of group process dynamics influence, specifically in terms of maintaining efficiency in a variety of institutional settings.

Practical Implication

There are several key applications of the findings of this research in the realm of businesses, particularly those that aim to enhance performance as well as collaboration in the form of effective leadership practices. According to the findings, team engagement (TE) as well as team dynamics (TD) are directly influenced by transformational leadership (TL), implying that businesses today must emphasize leadership development programs that promote transformational qualities such as intellectual stimulation, empathy, as well as articulation of visions (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Schreiber, Van Dijk & Drory, 2021). Leaders need to focus on achieving high levels of employee motivation and commitment in consideration of the mediational role of employee engagement. This is achievable by means of recognizing people's involvement, encouraging independence, as well as fostering enriching work environments (Ghadi, Fernando & Caputi, 2013). Leaders need to develop techniques of employee engagement, which will help in enhancing employees' psychological commitment towards the job (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). Moreover, findings of this study are particularly imperative to such organizations as the Fiji National University, as administrative as well as academic success in these organizations is largely a result of collaboration between individuals. These organizations can promote employees' unity, communication, as well as trust, by making use of transformational leadership in staff development initiatives.

In conclusion, Organisations must implement a comprehensive leadership strategy because of the findings showing that engagement mediates the relationship between team processes and leadership. Putting money into leadership training, development and employee engagement programs works in concert to improve organizational performance, innovation, and adaptability which has critical outcomes in the fast-paced workplace of today (Yukl, 2013; Garcia & Brown, 2023).

Limitations and Future Research Direction

The findings depicted from the present study must be approached with certain limitations. Firstly, self-administered questionnaires were the main method used for data collection, which may contribute to common method variance and response bias. Future research could use mixed method approaches that combine quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or focus groups to improve validity and provide greater contextual understanding in order to reduce such biases.

Secondly, considering the current study is context-specific and focuses on a single organization such as Fiji National University and the private sector, it is not possible to generalize the findings to other organizational environments.

Lastly, the current study overlooked the possible impacts of other leadership philosophies, such as authentic or ethical leadership, in favor of concentrating solely on transformational leadership. These methods could be compared in future research to identify the leadership traits that improve team performance and engagement the greatest. Furthermore, investigating moderate elements including corporate culture, gender diversity, and digital transformation may enhance the theoretical comprehension and real-world implementation of leadership research.

CONCLUSION

With an emphasis on the mediating function of engagement, this research investigated the relationship among transformational leadership (TL), team engagement (TE), and team dynamics (TD). It is evident that having a positive impact on teamwork dynamics and involvement is ensured by transformational leadership, and that this is a process in which employee involvement is a mediator to a certain extent. A positive working environment where cooperation, interdependence, and psychological safety are encouraged is ensured by leaders' transformational qualities of articulation of visions, intellectual stimulation, individualized attention, and inspirational motivation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Through the inclusion of employee engagement as a psychological process that links leadership behaviors with group outcomes, the results benefit leadership theory (Ghadi, Fernando & Caputi, 2013; Nzarubara, Matagi & Nantamu, 2020). Theoretical insight of the process of employee motivation as a group performance factor is enhanced by this comprehensive model. This confirms that Transformational Leadership theory can be effectively and culturally adaptable in the Fiji National University as well as in the private sector. This concludes the discussion of this topic by pointing out the importance of transformational leadership in fostering a cohesive, engaged, and successful team. Organizations that strive to succeed in the long term should invest in cultivating a culture of workplace engagement as well as the skills of transformational leadership. This discussion highlights the importance of conducting further studies that explore this topic in greater depth.

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