

**Transformational leadership and its affect on the  
motivational behaviour and job performance of employees  
in small businesses in Malta:  
A grounded theory study**

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# Transformational leadership and its development

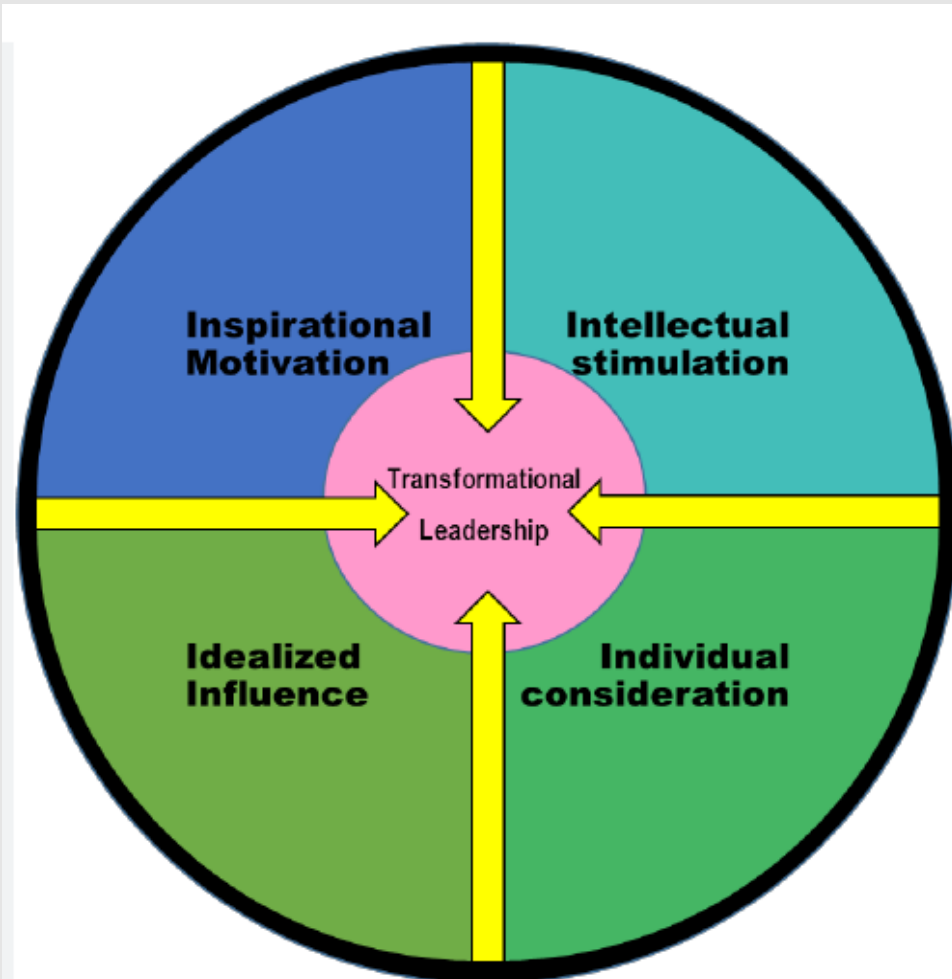
- Transformational Leadership is a new leadership approach/style that was studied and introduced by James V. Downton 1973, and subsequently advanced by Mc Gregory, Bass, Burns and Avolio in the mid 70`s.
- Bernard M. Bass, a scholar, further developed the idea in 1985 by adding metrics for evaluating transformational leadership achievement.
- James Burns, defined transformational leaders as **“those who seek to change existing thoughts, techniques and goals for better results and the greater good”**.
- Transformational leadership is all about motivating the staff, building expectations, inspiring, while build strong relationships.



# The Transformational Leader (TL)

- The transformational leader established characteristics are; a charismatic approach, a strong capability to identify the need of change and the ability to create a new vision in order to guide and transform the employees for the best of the organisation (Bernard Bass 1978).
- The TL has to challenge and motivate his employees, to engage them and drive them to achieve their desired goals in an effective manner.
- The TL role is to develop the employees into leaders so that they will achieve a level of performance beyond expectations (Burns 1980).
- A transformational leader needs to have particular art skills to study the change that is needed for the organization and also to continuously help the growth of communication skills by encouraging people to believe in a collective vision and to keep on adding value in the employees' performance to deliver the said vision till the end.

# Bernard Bass Model



- The 4 different elements that the Transformational leadership model that Bernard Bass formulated by his theory specifies the following:
- Idealized Influence
- Intellectual Stimulation
- Inspirational Motivation
- Individual Consideration

## The aim of the Research

- This research focuses on the Transformational leadership style and about its impact on the motivational behaviour and job performance of the employees.
- It also seeks to answer the question of what are the affects that the employees within small organizations are facing with reference to the transformational leadership process.
- Transformational leadership and its affect on the motivational behaviour and job performance of employees in small businesses in Malta: A grounded theory study
- The objective of this research is to understand better the transformational leadership approach and the impact that is relevant in order to achieve what is best for the employee and for the organization.
- The idea behind this research is to discover the barriers and challenges that are impacting both the organisation and the employees and what are the initiatives that can be implemented in order to sustain the necessary development in relation to the motivation and job performance of the employee.



# What methodology was used for this research?

- This research study was carried out using the qualitative method of grounded theory.
- Face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted. The participants were from different organisations and open-ended questions about their leader, his/her leadership approach (in general) and other related questions were asked.
- This method of research aided the researcher to have a better understanding of the interviewees by observing their respective behaviour and the communication that developed.
- Theoretical sensitivity was sought by the researcher during this research process.

## Analytical process

- The researcher transcribed and listened to the recorded interviews several times
- Several memos were jotted down in order to remember the important moments of events that the participants narrated and the reflexivity of the researcher.
- The MAXQDA software was used in order to analyse the data and several invivo codes were created
- The interviews were coded and key themes were identified. Each theme was observed and examined in order to understand the participants` perception and motivation.
- Some of these keys identified amongst others were; communication, trust, negative approach, biases and partiality, rewards, different attitudes.

# Main Findings

- From the comparison that was made between the three interviews, it was evident that the participants specified that their own leadership style was built on trust.
- The three respondents were very successful on how they transmit their own vision at their place of work but on the other hand that push or that advise from their superior was eagerly anticipated in order to keep on doing their duties accurately.
- It also resulted that there were several times when the participants lost their trust at the place of work due to certain issues such as conflicts, lack of communication between staff and other related matters that may have already been raised and still remained pending problematic challenges.
- Respondents reiterated that they needed to learn from their misdoings and also that not everything is as easy as one describes in leadership. One needs to stay focused so as to avoid mistakes that might effect trust or wellbeing of the employee or organization.



# Findings

- The results showed that the participants faced barriers and challenges because of their leader and his/her leadership skills, hence it was evident that an impact on their job performance and their motivational behaviour was portrayed.
- Moreover the employees emphasised that they had to continuously go out of their way to make a huge effort in order to achieve the desired result.
- The data analysis showed that the level of expectations on the employees' motivation was sometimes at its peak and sometimes at its very lowest, thus effected their job performance. This showed that the leader was sometimes pseudo-transformational.
- It also resulted that there were several times when the participants lost their trust at the place of work since their leader was too power-oriented and self consumed.
- Integrity and communication were two concepts which were mentioned several times throughout the interviews together with the importance of honesty, consistency and transparency.
- The participants showed a clear vision of what needs to be done within their team in order to reach the goals and how it is important to encourage each other.

# COMPARABILITY BETWEEN THE METHOD OF BERNARD BASS AND THIS RESEARCH

## Model of this research outcome

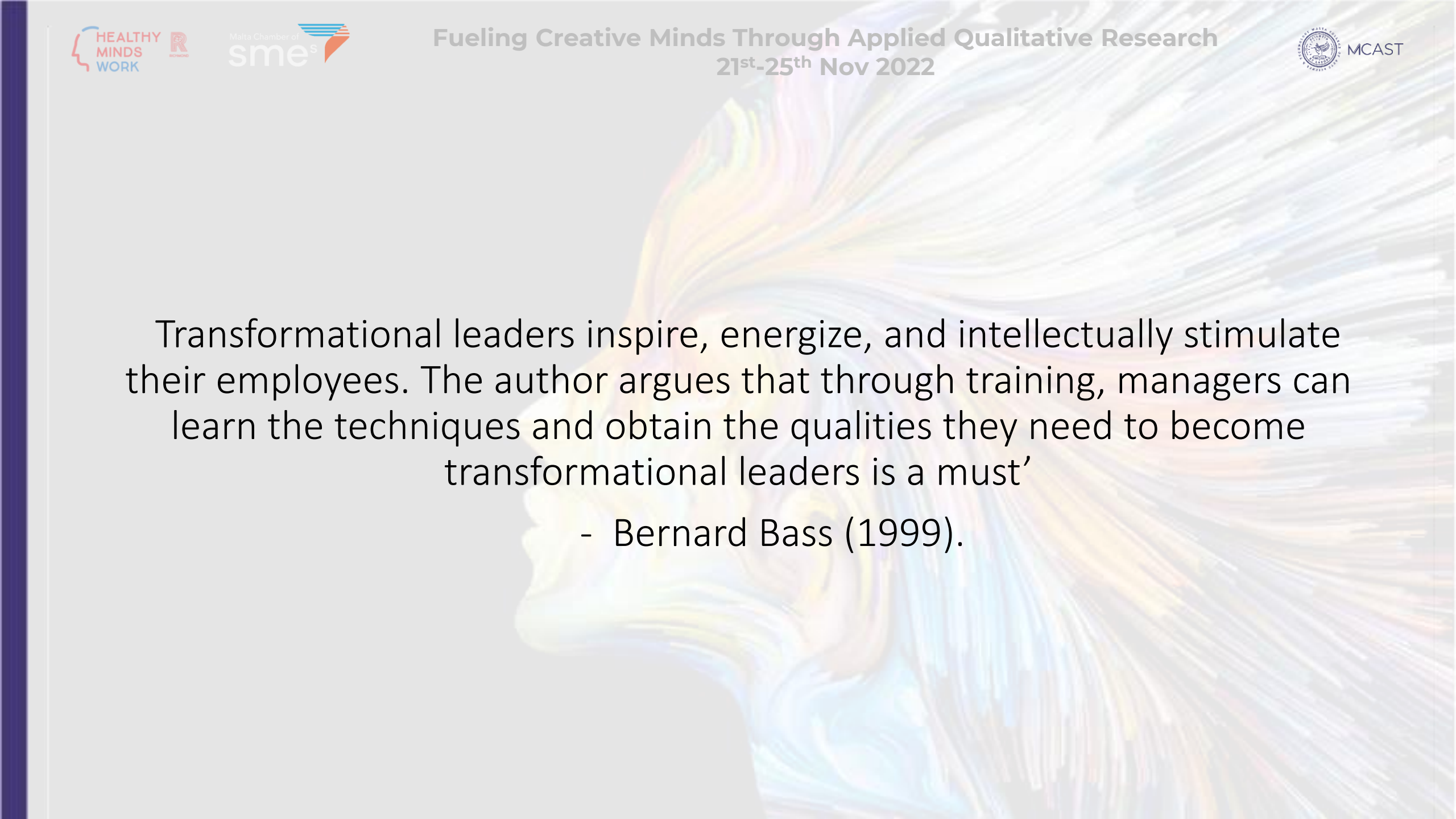


## Transformational leadership

- The below model was created by the researcher via the analysis that was conducted.
- This model indicates a step-by-step process which needs to be followed in order to have a correct function of transformational leadership compared with the model introduced by Bernard Bass.
- The model indicates that communication is the first step that the organization needs to focus on in order to gain trust with the subordinates. Trust cannot become a potential bias in order to avoid preferences between employees.
- Hence based on the findings, the model addresses the categories that need to be followed by both the leader and the employees, in order to have equality and fairness at the place of work.
- This model will also aid the employees to reach their aims and work for a common goal rather than abiding with the usual mindset. Such model will aid to diverge from acts of self interest to bring about trust and further communication at the place of work.

# Recommendations arising from this research.

- Communication is the focal theme that incorporates with it the values of trust, respect and loyalty. Hence one of the recommendations that stems from this research is the need to have genuineness, meaning that leader and the team may communicate and shed light on what is going on in the organisation, in order to succeed together and for the collective wellbeing.
- From this research it is evident in the work place favouritism may be present. Thus the leader is to avoid partiality between employee at all cost. The analysis showed that one of the main drawbacks of Transformation leadership is that the leader tends to always select his most trustworthy employee. Hence this may lead the leader to introduce bias amongst employees. Such bias effects the motivation and the job performance of the respective participants that were interviewed.
- Furthermore, one of the main advantages in TL is that every employee deserves a **reward** once the task is completed successfully. Bias would transform transformational leadership into transactional leadership which is not positive for both the employee and the organisation. Thus the researcher recommends that in order to build a strong basis of TL it is crucial that the leader grants an opportunity for each and every employee to participate in certain important tasks. Once partiality between employees is eliminated, equality would be more present and intern motivational behaviour of the employees



Transformational leaders inspire, energize, and intellectually stimulate their employees. The author argues that through training, managers can learn the techniques and obtain the qualities they need to become transformational leaders is a must'

- Bernard Bass (1999).



THANK YOU!