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Nadeem Yousaf,

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# A case against transformational leadership

## Empirical examples from political history of South Asia

Nadeem Yousaf

*International Business Department, Niels Brock, Copenhagen, Denmark*

Transformational  
leadership

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – Transformational and transactional leadership have become a fascinating issue for research since the work of Burns (1978) and Bass (1990). The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the usefulness of the concept of transformational leadership using examples of political leadership from South Asia. It is argued that the construct of transformational leadership is practically non-existent. And, if the concept of transformational leadership exists, it cannot be specifically applied to the leaders who gain popularity and achieve their goals. It is also argued that positive and negative connotation with transformational and transactional leadership, respectively, is false. The popular leadership may be good for “one-point agenda,” but not necessarily transform the system.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Qualitative methods, historical analysis, and discourse analysis have been employed to understand the leaders’ actions and behaviors.

**Findings** – The discussion around the empirical examples show that the popular-successful leadership does not necessarily a transformational leadership even though the leadership achieves the goals.

**Originality/value** – The popular or so-called transformational leadership may be good to achieve one-point agenda, but it may not bring the required change and fruitful results to all stakeholders if it is not backed by a transactional strategy. Future research may turn the attention in three directions: whether or not the achieved goals were transformational or transactional; evaluation of leaders’ behavior from the perspective of consequential leadership; and the role of transactional leaders in the growth and strengthening of micro and macro organizations.

**Keywords** Leadership, Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, Jinnah, Consequential leadership, Gandhi

**Paper type** Research paper

### Introduction

This paper does not attempt to provide a comprehensive review of the research on transformational leadership, but a limited coverage of the previous research that will help to evaluate how far the concept is a valid construct and applicable in the real world. In this work, Bass’ views and his four dimensions of transformational leadership will be critically evaluated. It will be argued that some important factors have been overlooked in the discussion of transformational leadership. For example, popular or/and successful leaders are not necessarily transformational; they can rather be consequential leaders. The role of *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the time), as discussed in the empirical section of this paper, is completely ignored by the proponents of transformational leadership. Shamir’s (1999) proposition that charismatic or transformational leaders emerge in a weak psychological situation will be contended. This research will further substantiate the argument of other researchers that the role of transactional leadership in the literature is unnecessarily lowered.

Contending with the proponents of transformational leadership, it will be argued that transformational leadership is, to some extent, a non-existent concept. And, if it exists, it has been specifically applied to popular-successful leaders who achieve their one-point agenda by creating a euphoria among their common followers – that achieving one-point agenda would automatically transform the system and bring benefits to all stakeholders. However, there is no surety that a real transformation takes place after achieving the goal. Besides, it is a false



assumption in the literature that transformational leaders nurture the competent followers to take the position of leadership. These arguments will be substantiated by using four empirical examples of renowned leaders from South Asia, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Zulfqar Ali Bhutto, and Mujib-ur-Rehman.

A useful implication of this study is that it is important to analyze the achievement and outcomes before determining someone's leadership style. The proposition of this work is that a popular or transformational leadership may only be good to achieve a specific goal(s); however, change and growth of an organization may not sustain without transactional leadership.

### **Transactional and transformational leadership**

According to Vroom and Maier (1961), the concept of leadership has been used in many ways. Due to the voluminous literature available on the topic, it is indeed difficult to evaluate the concept of leadership (see Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 1989). Leadership constructs and theories have not only generated numerous debates, but also a confusion because of overlapping information. In the contemporary leadership literature, the work of Burns (1978) and Bass (1990) on transformational and transactional leadership have gained excessive popularity (Conger, 1999) and obscured other leadership theories by encompassing the characteristics of different leadership concepts. The two constructs are not completely unique, but an extension of relationship and task-oriented leadership and other leadership theories (Fleishman and Harris, 1962, 1998; Likert, 1958; Rowold and Borgmann, 2013; Rowold *et al.*, 2015). The literature also shows that the transformational leadership is very close to charismatic leadership and authentic leadership (Banks *et al.*, 2016; Bass and Riggio, 2006; Shamir, 1999; Weber, 1978). Whereas transactional leadership is seen more or less a routine (see Read and Shapiro, 2014), initiating-structure or task-oriented leadership, which maximizes the gains through bargaining and satisfying the basic needs of the followers (Burns, 1978).

Transactional leaders follow the existing rules and only intervene when there is no other choice available (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1991). Burns (1978) further argues that the relationship between the leader and the followers is based upon a rational calculation of cost-benefit without appreciating that human life is governed by such calculations. Tangible and psychological cost-benefit analysis is a normal part of human interaction as indicated by equity or inequity theory (Adams, 1963) and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964 in Miner, 2015). It will be argued later that a cost-benefit analysis is applicable to transformational leadership, as well.

Despite researchers accepting that the qualities of transactional leadership are required (e.g. Oberfield, 2012; Bass, 1995) in organizations, the connotation of transactional leadership is derogatory (Conger, 1999), because negative elements, such as laissez-faire leadership, are mixed under this leadership style (see Bass and Riggio, 2006). It is seen as an ineffective, inferior, insignificant, and inconsequential style of leadership, consequently everyone wants to be in the category of a transformational leadership without appreciating the fact that transactional leadership makes a significant and useful contributions to the growth of an organization.

Organizations need different types and styles of leadership depending on the context and the stage of the organizational life cycle (Shamir, 1999; Greiner, 1972). Therefore, transactional leadership should not be undermined. Organizations need it to strengthen or freeze the values that have been introduced by transformational leaders. Transactional leaders play a key role in developing and designing the practices that align with the transformational change. Without a proper planning and implementation of transactional practices, an organization cannot grow. Taylor (1972) has been criticized for communicating transactional practices to improve productivity in micro organizations; nevertheless, his views laid the foundation for corporate welfarism. Similarly, organizations do not necessarily need transformational leaders to appreciate the core elements of humanistic

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views, starting from the investigations of Human Relations School emphasizing on relationships (Roethlisberger *et al.*, 1939; Hedman and Valo, 2015), and the theory of job design (Hackman and Oldham, 1976) emphasizing on meaningful work to gain commitment and engagement of followers in organizations. The recent research on transactional leadership also shows that transactional leaders have a positive influence on the development of organizational commitment (Afshari and Gibson, 2016).

Compared to transactional leadership, transformational leadership is seen as a superior type, which provides a direction to devotees and disciples. It promotes desirable behavior by inspiring and creating a learning environment, sacrificing self-interests and understanding the needs of the followers (Boies *et al.*, 2015; Bass, 1990, 1995; Burns, 1978).

Bass (1990) articulated four elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Conceptually, idealized influence and charisma are more or less identical twins (Conger, 1999; Weber, 1978; Bass, 1995; Tims *et al.*, 2011) and the researchers have argued deficiencies in the construct of charismatic-transformational leadership (Van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013; Yukl, 1999). It is due to charisma or idealized influence that a leader serves as a role model for the followers by appealing to the goal(s) of the group or organization rather than individuals' goals. It is charisma that injects inspirational motivation among the followers (Tims *et al.*, 2011); therefore, they listen to and believe in their leaders. Despite charisma being an important factor, the charismatic leaders do not necessarily bring positive change in the system (Yukl, 1999; Conger, 1999; O'Connor *et al.*, 1996). They can also abuse their power by employing different tactics, such as self-serving attribution about others, taking undue credits for success, undermining views and initiatives of the followers and so on (Sankowsky, 1995). They can be attention-seekers by showing the ability to attract people more than the ability to make the right decision (Drory and Gluskinos, 1980; Dewan and Myatt, 2008). The leaders holding negative attributes are termed as personalized charismatic leaders who serve their own interests more than the stakeholders (see O'Connor *et al.*, 1996). Individualized consideration refers to paying attention to people's needs and demands for their growth and development. This may be possible when one has a few followers, but it may not be possible when having a large number of followers (see Conger, 1999). The fourth dimension of transformational leadership is intellectual stimulation, which is a source to challenge the existing status quo and values, and stimulates thinking about the future. This means that transformational leadership not only carries a mission, but also a vision for the followers and the organization (O'Connor *et al.*, 1996; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2015), which will be debated later in this research.

### Critical evaluation of transformational leadership

Relatively, quantitative rather than qualitative studies advanced the concept of transformational leadership and developed a hype and fascination for it. The purpose of this section is by no means to debate the effectiveness of the quantitative method of the studies, but to point out some of the pitfalls of the quantitative approach, which have also been indicated in contemporary and classical research work, for example Vroom and Maier (1961).

The statistical business researchers mostly use self-reporting instruments (e.g. Bass, 1995; Boerner *et al.*, 2007; Den Hatog and Belschak (2012); Tims *et al.*, 2011) and in some cases, experiments (e.g. Boies *et al.*, 2015; Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996). A self-report method can be distorted due to conscious/unconscious and favorable/unfavorable biases, and faking or answering in a socially desirable way (Tims *et al.*, 2011; Brown and Lord, 2000; Brown and Keeping, 2005; Rowold and Borgmann, 2013). Irrespective of conscious or unconscious faking, statistical analysis cannot register small variations in human behavior that have significant influence and consequences because human life is not governed by a mathematical calculation (Yousaf, 2017). It is hard to measure respondents' valence as indicated by expectancy theory

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(Vroom, 1964 in Miner, 2015) because perception of valence and equity are primarily psychological in character (Adams, 1963).

Exploring a relationship through questionnaires does not guarantee that the individuals have understood the question perfectly. For example, asking respondents (such as doctors or teachers) whether or not they like their job can be interpreted differently by professionals. A respondent can interpret “liking a job” as liking the organization, the manager or a profession. Den Hatog and Belschak (2012) have accepted the limitations of self-reporting questionnaire while discussing the reasons for differences in results in their studies 1 and 2.

Moreover, evaluating someone is a dynamic process rather than a static process. Depending on the time, a mental rating about a person can be changed. The same person can be rated differently at time “a” and time “b” depending upon the relationship (Yousaf, 2017). A similar criticism has been made by Brown and Lord (2000). Likewise, it is not possible for researchers to control the manner in which respondents filled out the questionnaire. The surveys are generally filled out hastily and casually. Respondents may or may not deeply ponder the intent of the questions. In an organizational survey, some respondents answered questions without a clear understanding of the concept of a line-manager and without comprehending properly the intent of the questions.

The surveys, at times, may be filled out by the people who should not be part of the survey; for example, in one of the employee surveys, even those employees who joined the organization very recently rated the performance of the manager. Similarly, limitations of the experimental research are indicated by Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996). These methods, however, provide little access to observe and experience actual behaviors and styles of leadership or the leaders’ espoused theory and theories-in-use (See, Arygris, 1976), which are essential to understanding behaviors, intentions, and styles of leaders (Yousaf, 2015). Without evaluating espoused values and practices, it may not be possible to categorize leaders into transactional, transformational, personalized charismatic, socialized charismatic, or consequential leaders.

The statistical studies generally seek to establish a narrow relationship between the variables, but they do not provide information about how a positive or a negative relationship affects processes or organizations (Conger, 1999; Yukl, 1999; Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). Moreover, statistical data can be influenced by the method that is applied (Rowold and Borgmann, 2013). For example, Oberfield’s (2012) one of the analyses showed a slightly better, though not significant, influence of transformational leadership; however, he argues, cross-sectional analysis undervalued the effects of leadership.

Brown and Lord (2000) recommends that methods other than surveys should be adopted in studying the transformational leadership to enhance the credibility of statistical findings; therefore, qualitative studies such as this are important. The qualitative studies help to improve the theoretical construct, survey instruments, and practical application. Referring to the work of Keyston and Silver, Hedman and Valo (2015) argue that qualitative methods are more effective in capturing and providing unique insight about the phenomena. Qualitative studies help to explore and enhance understanding about the complex issues, which may not be possible by employing statistical analysis (Creswell, 2007).

The adherents of transformational leadership, such as Ewen *et al.* (2013), must appreciate that subordinates are employees of organizations, and not volunteered followers. Subordinates’ organizational life is governed by many other factors than the immediate superior’s behavior. For example, whether a leader is transactional or transformational, employees have to execute the duties for which they are hired irrespective of the type of commitment they have – affective, continuance, or normative commitment (see Meyer and Parfyonova, 2010; Meyer and Allen, 1991). The previous research also bears out that commitment does not guarantee an increase in performance (Sherman, 2016) and the importance of context has been noted by many researchers (see: Ewen *et al.*, 2013;

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Den Hatog and Belschak (2012); Morrell and Hartley, 2006; Conger, 1999; Shamir, 1999). Considering the context, transformational leaders can be a source of frustration if there is no autonomy in the system to take initiatives (Den Hatog and Belschak 2012).

The positive relationship between transformational leaders and followers is automatically seen as a consequence of leadership and beneficial to the organization without acknowledging the fact that there are tons of organizations which are successfully running under a transactional leadership. Research shows that transformational leaders may have an influence on the individual level, but not necessarily at the organization level (Banks *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, a number of investigations depict that transactional leadership is more successful in developing countries than transformational. The admirers of transformational leadership have ignored followers' reciprocal influence upon leaders (Yukl, 1999) and the type of followers or subordinates (Howell and Shamir, 2005). Some studies have divided the followers into two types: personalized and socialized. Personalized followers associate with the leaders and not with the organizational values, which is very common in high power distance societies. For example, Khan and Zafarullah (1990) argue in relation to Bangladesh's politics that it revolves around personalities rather program and policies. Consequently, leaders sacrifice national interests for personal gains.

Another important issue is that the concept of transformational leadership is not very clear. Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) argue that the leaders who fall on the dimension of adult stage 3 can have elements of transactional and transformational leadership and the exchange relationship can be of high and low quality. Likewise, the studies on charismatic leadership contend that it may not be possible to access the deep understanding of transformational leaders' personal value system (see Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). The researchers characterized charismatic leaders into two categories, personalized and socialized, which is also applicable to transformational leaders (see Bass and Riggio, 2006). Personalized leaders are more concerned about their self-interests, whereas socialized leaders demand change in the system for a betterment of stakeholders and a growth of the organization (O'Connor *et al.*, 1996). Of course, personalized charismatic leaders will not reveal their true intentions as indicated by the previous research that individuals promote their personal interests in the name of the organization (Selznick, 1984; Sankowsky, 1995; O'Connor *et al.*, 1996). Similarly, we cannot ignore qualitative statements and observation, such as Goleman (2014), that political and business leaders typically make decisions for short-term gains, not the long-term reality.

Accepting Bass' (1995) argument that a transformational leader can be directive, participative, authoritarian, or democratic raises serious concern regarding the construct of transformational leadership. Treating them as four styles of a leader means that there is no significant difference between the theory of transformational leadership and situational theories of leadership (see Hersey and Blanchard, 1996). If we treat the four elements as types (personalities) of leaders, then it is not plausible to assume that the four elements will have the same cause-effect relationship. For example, the reason of inspiration and motivation will be very different under an authoritarian leader than a democratic one. The said argument is similar to the argument that the influence of intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation are not alike (Boies *et al.*, 2015). According to Boies *et al.* (2015), different dimensions of transformational leadership should be emphasized depending on the outcome that is sought.

It appears from Bass' (1991) work that success and fame are the only criteria to declare a leader as transformational, even though the tendency of a leader is transactional or authoritarian. The same tendency has been followed in later work when Apple success in selling I-Pod hurriedly linked to transformational organizational culture (Bass and Riggio, 2006). A success should not be seen as a criterion to declare a leader transformational because success may not necessarily bring positive outcomes for the organization and the

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stakeholders (Yousaf, 2015; Dewan and Myatt, 2008; Likert, 1958). Besides, success can be obtained by using unfair means and exploiting the system. Malik Riaz, a Pakistani real estate tycoon, can be a good example of a successful leader who has become a millionaire by using unfair means such as bribing, which he openly acknowledged in his telecasted interviews (Riaz, 2016, interview). In hindsight, it appears from Bass' views that if a leader fails, she/he would be transactional, which is not true. Studying political leadership, history provides many examples of leaders who had transformational programs and provided transformational leadership to their followers, but they did not gain the required success because they had not adopted the right political tactics, or their views did not align with the established and popular norms of that particular time (see Ammeter *et al.*, 2002). The two following examples from Pakistan may be sufficient to support the above argument: political scholars from Pakistan may disagree with the politics of Abul Ala Maududi (popularly known as Maulana Maududi), the founder of Jaamat Islami (Pakistan), and Inyat Ullah Khan (popularly known as Allama Mashriqi) the founder of Khakshar Tehrik (Pakistan), nonetheless few will deny the fact that they had not transformational ideology and vision. Maulana Maudaid successfully provided a system to the party, but never managed to win elections. Similarly, Allam Mashriqui managed to have devoted followers for his reformist views and gained respect among them (Yousaf, 2003; Hussain, 1991), but never achieved significant political success. At times, unpopular leaders can be more transformational than the popular leaders. For example, General Zia-ul-Haq, the Military Dictator of Pakistan, has transformed the society from religiously tolerant to religiously intolerant by appealing to the religious sentiments of the citizenry.

Bass (1991) ignored the fact that the quoted empirical examples in his work had adopted transactional practices more than transformational to achieve success in the business world. According to him, Roger Smith was a tough leader showing self-determination and self-confidence. Tough leaders are generally seen as authoritarian. The findings of other research show that transformational leaders are more open to communication and ready to discuss and debate than handling employees authoritatively (Yousaf, 2017; Boies *et al.*, 2015; Dunford *et al.*, 2013; Boerner *et al.*, 2007). He also ignores the findings of Milgram's classical experiments that authoritarian style, if unchecked, leads to adopting of coercive tactics. Surprisingly, Goleman (2000) praises authoritarian leaders as the most successful leaders and ignores Likert's (1958) findings that authoritarian leadership can bring success in terms of increased revenue and profits for a short term, but may not be good for a business in the long run.

Coming back to Bass' attributes of toughness, rigidity, self-determination, and self-confidence, they can be found in transactional leadership or any other type of leadership. Bass (1991) indicates that Wexner in discussions encouraged employees to share "his vision" and "his style," and he was a follower of "quasi-military management." It means Wexner had not shown much interest in incorporating the employees' views into his vision, which contradicts the attribute of "individualized consideration." It is not a very convincing example of individualized consideration when Bass associates Perot's personal involvement in the rescue of two of his employees who were trapped as hostages in Iran in 1979; it was a basic and expected human behavior. One of the business colleges in Denmark donated an amount to the earthquake fund for Nepal in 2015, so should we conclude that the leadership of the college was transformational? (The background of the donation was that Nepali students insisted the college to donate some amount to show the solidarity with Nepal because the Nepali students dominated the population in the higher education programs of the college. Some of them were very vocal and criticized the college on Facebook until the management showed willingness to contribute). Moreover, Ross Perot and Leslie Wexner were not employed managers, but businessmen. Businessmen's attitude is anyway different from that of the salaried earned managers or the employees at the lower echelon. If a type of

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structure and business can influence employees' behavior, it is plausible to expect entrepreneurs' leadership behavior will be different from that of the hired manager. Moreover, Bass (1991) and others add all sorts of positive adjectives with transformational leadership such as risk takers, quick in assessing situations, swift in taking decisions, self-confident and self-determined, flamboyant, benevolent, optimistic, dynamic and charismatic. Transformational leaders are very normal human beings and not saints to have all the good qualities.

Idealized influence only exists in a family leadership where a father, a mother or both parents become a role model for their children (due to genetics and socialization process). At the social level, celebrities, especially from show business, may exercise an idealized influence on their fans, who may copy and imitate them, openly or inconspicuously. In organizations, the idealized influence in the sense of "role model" is almost non-existent, and if it exists, it is to the extent that close lieutenants desire to have the same power and authority that their leaders enjoy. For example, Liaquat Ali Khan wanted to have the same admiration, power, and authority by claiming a true disciple of Jinnah (Yousaf, 2016). The distant followers (who are not in an immediate and close contact with the leader) can have inspiration for a specific idea, but they do not necessarily imitate the lifestyle or admire the ideology, especially if it needs cognitive or/and behavioral change (see Howell and Shamir, 2005). For example, the followers of Gandhi in India neither adopted his half-naked attire, nor completely accepted his ideology, though Burns (1978) and O'Connor *et al.* (1996) considered him as a transformational and a socialized transformational leader, respectively. In admiring Gandhi, researchers such as Godrej (2006) appreciated Gandhi's espoused theory than measuring its influence on distant and the closed followers. Even if we assume that Gandhi sincerely believed in and worked for the unity of Hindu-Muslim, he could not influence cognition, attitude, and behavior of his acolytes to reduce the differences between the two communities. While walking half naked in the streets to stop violence between Hindus and Muslims, Gandhi's idealized influence hardly reduced the tension between the communities, except generating a temporary truce between the communities (see Whitehouse, 2001). Gandhi in South Africa or India was not followed due to his transformational idea, but as a consequence of a cost-benefit analysis (transaction) of the followers. This cost-benefit analysis may not necessarily change cognition or internalize the value among followers. Chanting transformational slogans or espousing hallow transformational thinking does not mean people have also internalized the idea and ready to change. For example, leadership and people in Pakistan fiercely chanted transformational slogans in the three major citizen movements of 1967 (demand was democracy), 1977 (Implementation Islamic Shariah), and 2007 (restoration of Chief Justice and Justice for people); however, no significant change was found in the behavior of politicians, civil and military bureaucrats, judiciary and common people after achieving the goals of the agitations; all the movements proved to be more transactional than transformational.

Morrell and Hartley (2006) argue that the size of the constituency influence behavior of leaders so the same can be said regarding individualized consideration. Individualized consideration may be possible in small teams, but it is not possible when a leader has a high number of followers. The group dynamics of teams change as they grow in number (see Yang, 2006). In large groups, the followers accept the leaders' propositions and develop inspirational motivation due to cost-benefit analysis. In hindsight, all followers from different layers believe that supporting the leader will bring fruitful results to them. At times, they do not have any other choice except supporting the leader, as indicated by Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) and Meyer and Allen (1991) while discussing continuance commitment. For instance, Bengali and Sindhi leaders before the pre-partition did not support Jinnah because they were inspired by his leadership or/and the demand for an independent state, but they had left with no other choice, except supporting him (Yousaf, 2015; Jalal, 1985).



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The literature on transformational leadership spread more confusion than clarity; therefore, the construct has been criticized by many researchers (see: Rowold and Borgmann, 2013; Brown and Keeping, 2005; Rowold *et al.*, 2015). Transformational leadership is seen in terms of a “popular-successful leadership” and ignores the original definition of the concept. In the hype of transformational leadership, the researchers have not paid attention to the term “consequential leaders” that Burns (1978) has used. Consequential leaders are self-serving and appear to be transformational, but do not transform the system after gaining the position in the system. The closest concept to consequential leadership in the leadership literature is personalized charismatic leadership (explained above). Therefore, it is important to draw a line between a popular-successful leadership or consequential leadership and transformational leadership.

### Framework of the research

Transformational leadership is originally defined that transforms norms and values of the followers, and it provides a long-term vision to change or transform the system (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Conger, 1999; Yukl, 1989; Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). Burns (1978) sees the transformation of a system as the goal of transformational leadership, whereas Bass (1985) believes that the task of transformational leadership is raising the awareness about the issues of consequences and work harder to achieve the organizational goals. According to Goleman (2014), great leaders transform the system for the better, to benefit the widest circle. Transforming a system is more than merely sacrificing a few of desires to obtain transactional goals because such goals can be achieved through other practices. Transformation is not an incremental change, but a planned and radical change that needs a process of unfreezing-changing-refreezing as suggested by Lewin (1973). Similarly, it is not merely bringing a change in apparent structure, but it means bringing a change in the value system of the followers that influence the transactional practices. To transform the system, not only the leaders must negotiate, directly or indirectly, with devotees (see: Howell and Shamir, 2005), but also negotiate with the opponents (Ammeter *et al.*, 2002; Read and Shapiro, 2014), which means they must have qualities of a strategic hopeful leader. They must be ready to take risks in negotiating with the opponents without demanding or securing concessions before the negotiation, nor pursue the maximum satisfaction of the community to whom they are accountable because such behaviors ultimately dooms the efforts (Read and Shapiro, 2014).

The above elements of transformational leadership will be used as a yardstick to evaluate whether or not popular leaders are transformational leaders. The proposition of this work is that popular leadership may not necessarily be transformational. The four examples of leadership are taken from South Asia, who are deemed, from the current standard, transformational leaders. The four leaders are: Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Pakistan), Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (India), Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman (Bangladesh), and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (Pakistan). All of them were popular in their respective communities and achieved their goals successfully. Nevertheless, vital questions about their leadership are: were they transformational or popular-successful leaders (consequential or personalized charismatic)? Had they set the tone for the achieved change or their demands simply matched with the spirit of the time? They may have satisfied their respective followers by achieving their goals, but did they transform the system or was it a large-scale transaction, which ultimately proved more beneficial to them than the stakeholders of the system? Did they negotiate with their opponents as strategic hopeful leaders to achieve a variable-sum solution?

Various classical and contemporary studies accept that transformational leaders may be needed to achieve a specific goal(s) under certain conditions, but they may not be effective after achieving the goal (Shamir, 1999; Bass, 1990; Fleishman and Harris, 1998). Transformational leaders must have transactional qualities or nurture transactional leaders who can sincerely develop and implement a strategy corresponding to the goal of

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transformation, and it should be beneficial to all stakeholders. It will be argued that the three state organizations could not develop because transactional practices did not change, rather the quality of old practices further deteriorated. Consequently, the system did not transform, which could trickle down the advantages of change at all levels.

### Methodology

The technique of historical analysis and discourse analysis will be used. Historical analysis provides considerable useful information to understand who initiated the change, under what circumstances, and who gained the benefits of the change (Kieser, 1994). Only an analysis of history can reveal how actions influenced the culture and effectiveness of the organization. A critical historical analysis provides rich information about the repercussions of the actions (Yousaf, 2016). Understanding the influences of history through the comparative historical analysis helps to improve the theoretical constructs (Mahoney, 2004). Discourse analysis refers to understanding implied meaning and outside factors that influence an action (Denscombe, 2014; Halperin and Heath, 2012), which enhances our understanding of events, behaviors, and actions.

### Empirical evidence and discussion

While studying leadership, it is important to understand the spirit of the time what is termed *Zeitgeist* in German. *Zeitgeist* reflects that things will not happen until the foundation is laid down through past efforts. *Zeitgeist* provides the context for individuals to emerge as leaders. According to Creswell (2007), what people say (or do) cannot be separated from the context. Similarly, Bose's (1970) point is that the role which a man plays in history is partly determined by the needs of the times in which man is born. It is a function of a man and the environment (Vroom and Maier, 1961). Individuals emerge on the horizon because they are present at the right moment and advocate the agenda for which the ground has already been prepared. When the vision or the goal already exists, the style of leadership becomes less important (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996). Leaders do not articulate the vision that is contradictory to the values and motives of the followers (see House, 1995 in Ammeter *et al.*, 2002). According to Conger and Kanungo (1998 in Conger, 1999), the leaders may not be the sole nor the original source of the vision; however, their role in bringing clarity and working toward the vision cannot be ignored (Yousaf, 2016; Shamir, 1999).

Indeed, Gandhi, Bhutto, and Mujib escalated the existing public desires, but cannot be taken as the proprietors of the vision of independence or democratic form of government. However, Jinnah had an ambiguous vision. Jinnah had no desire for an independent country, but used Pakistan as a political card to win over his opponents to gain maximum economic benefits for Muslims, especially those living in Hindu-dominated areas, which he could not obtain and settle with an independent state (Wolpert, 1984; Jalal, 1985).

Neither "free India" nor an "independent Pakistan" was an original thought of Gandhi or Jinnah, but they worked toward the existing desire. Since invading India, the British had never been accepted among Muslims, Hindus, and all other communities. The independence war of 1857[1] (Yousaf, 2016; Whitehouse, 2001; Beg, 1986) is one of the examples of uprising against the British rule in the United India. Similarly, voice for an independent Muslim state was present in the region to resolve the Muslim-Hindu problems, which was not an initiative of Jinnah (Yousaf, 2015). Moreover, exogenous factors also played a significant role in getting independence from the British rule. The First World War and the Second World War had weakened the British position in India. Especially the Second World War proved to be the last nail in the coffin due to the UK's economic crisis (Yousaf, 2015; Ziring, 2003). Both factors made it completely impossible for the British to continue their rule in India (Morres, in BBC Documentary; Ziring, 2003). The idea of independent states might have not been realized if the Second World War had not taken place. Before the war, the local parties were

struggling toward having a share in the political power and not an autonomous sovereign state (see Bose, 1970). In short, the intellectual stimulation and inspiration for “free India from the British rule” had existed from the first day of occupation, consequently, credit cannot be solely given to the two leaders. If there had been no war, there might be no independence, consequently both leaders might have not shined so much as they do now.

Similarly, *Zeitgeist* was present for Bhutto and Mujib. The Military Dictator of Pakistan, General Ayub, had already ruled for a long period (1958-1969). People were tired of his ruling style because of the corruption, and the benefits of growth not reaching to the lower echelon, but concentrated in a few hands (Maniruzzaman, 1971; Baxter, 1970). Politically, people were suffocated under his regime and accusations were that he won the 1965 presidential election against Fatima Jinnah by employing unfair means. Moreover, the cease-fire to end the 1965 war and the Tashkent Pact with India decreased his popularity, further. The students’ uprising in East and West Pakistan, which was not an initiative of Bhutto or Mujib, further weakened his grip on politics (Baxter, 1970).

Bhutto presented Tashkent Pact as a failure of Ayub’s regime and construed it as selling of Pakistan’s interests to India, which hurt the Muslims’ pride of the people of West Pakistan, especially, in Punjab and Sind provinces (Gilani, 1994).

The relationship between East and West Pakistan was not satisfactory from the very early period of independence due to economic reasons. Before the Partition of India, it was the desire of the Bengali leadership to have a separate country rather than associating with Pakistan (Jalal, 1985). After independence, political mistakes and mishandling aggravated the dissatisfaction of the Bengali community. The political, economic, and social disparity between the East and the West wings were obvious, and Bengalis were dissatisfied with this relationship (Sayeed, 1972; Khaled, 2016). Bengalis protested a number of times against West Pakistan’s maltreatment. Mujib’s six-point agenda was not really unique, because a similar resolution was passed in the provincial assembly in 1958 (see Maniruzzaman, 1971). Moreover, it was students and workers who played a significant role in initiating the uprisings against West Pakistan (Bright, 1969; Baxter, 1970) though Mujib was part of those protests. Mujib’s six points were parallel to the student community 11 points (Baxter, 1970); therefore, the students had a natural alliance with him. Resentment in Bengalis increased when they felt that West Pakistan did not help in the 1970s cyclone, in which 230,000 people died (Saunders, 2014; Baxter, 1970). It was the economic distress and mishandling of public administration that created room for Bhutto and Mujib to come in the limelight.

The historical facts briefly mentioned above show that the intellectual stimulation and inspiration for one-point agenda had already been in the system on which Gandhi, Jinnah, Bhutto, and Mujib capitalized. A vital question is whether or not achieving a goal should be considered transformational change if the underlying objective(s) of the goal has not been accomplished?

Achieving a goal is not a transformation of the system if it does not bring benefits to its stakeholders. To achieve transformation, it is essential to have transactional plans matching with the transformational objectives. In reference to the four leaders, it is important to question what did they want to achieve after accomplishing the goal? Did they merely want to replace the ruling elite from white to brown, brown to another brown or military to civil regime? Did they have a transactional plan or blueprint to run the affairs of the state after achieving the goal if they wanted to transform the system of governance?

The main idea of having an independent state or a different form of government was to bring a change that would be beneficial for the grassroots citizens. Except for minor changes, the fact is that the grassroots level has not enjoyed the fruit of the change in any of the three countries because none of the leaders had a clear vision for state development. Yousaf (2016) argues that the state development should not be merely seen in term of GDP or growth in

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technology, but trickling down the benefits to the lower echelon. He further argues that the elements of state development are eradication of corruption and improvement in social and legal justice. The four leaders had not developed any plan in this direction.

So far, the achievements proved to be more transactional than transformational – ordinary citizens of the three countries only experienced a power-change from one hand to another. More than charisma of personality, the transaction was achieved by the four leaders due to suitable circumstances, situations and opportunities and the timely political tactics, which raised them to the position of leader in their respective communities. Gandhi, Jinnah, and Mujib stimulated distant followers by raising Indian, Muslims, and Bangali nationalism or/and religious sentiments, respectively, and Bhutto captured the leadership position by creating a fascination for Islamic-socialist democracy. All these leaders had capitalized win for their one-point agenda by using the existing intellectual stimulation and inspiration, and adopting the political tactics as indicated by Yukl (1999), for example, inciting, limiting access to information and intentions, limiting criticism, and isolating others from contacting outsiders. For example, Jinnah never liked that anyone else other than him talk to the leadership of the All India Congress (Yousaf, 2015).

Gandhi wanted a free and undivided India without reforming or transforming the relationship between Muslims and Hindus. Nor was he interested in building a trust and confidence among the Muslim community by addressing their fears and issues – though the South African Muslims contributed significantly to bringing him in the limelight (See Gandhi, 1927). According to Hodson (1969), he loved and worked for the Muslims within the ambit of United India. He was ready to accept chaos and anarchy to conclude the transaction. Gandhi answered affirmatively in response to a question that he would prefer free India even if there was a chaos (National Archives, 1939-1947b). Similarly, Jinnah wanted mouth-eaten independent Pakistan, but had no blueprint to transform the practices of the area (Yousaf, 2015). Bhutto wanted power in the name of democracy, even at the expense of disintegration. He willingly joined the alliance of the military, bureaucracy, anti-East Pakistani media, and other elements to rise to the stratum of power. The same goes for Mujib. He wanted to have a full plate of power with or without Pakistan to satisfy his community. Again, he might not be a winner if India had not played her role in the political debacle. None of them acted as a hopeful strategic leader to find the solution of the problem to avoid the disintegration of the region.

### **Consequential leaders**

Shamir's (1999) proposition is that charismatic leadership emerges in a weak psychological situation than a strong situation. The proposition does not fit on these four leaders, even if we accept temporarily that they were transformational or charismatic[2]. The emergence of leadership is not dependent on a weak or a strong situation, but it is more associated with political strategy or as Rokkan (1966) argued success depends upon the available resources. Contrary to Shamir's proposition, all the four leaders emerged as leaders in a strong psychological situation as indicated in the discussion of the *Zeitgeist*. Besides, their messages were interpreted differently in terms of a cost-benefit analysis by the members of different social classes. The poor hoped that the reforms would change their destiny by addressing the poverty issues; the capitalist class viewed the messages as a safeguard to their economic interests; and the middle-educated class supported the messages and hoped that the change would open the opportunities to get influential positions in the public bureaucracies. None of the leaders, in fact, contrary to what they proclaimed, strived to bring cognitive change in their followers to transform social norms and values. All the four leaders cried for democratic values and economic disparity, but these goals were ignored after achieving their desired transactions because they had either no will or plans to strengthen the democratic values or reducing the economic disparity. The following

discussion will further argue that Gandhi, Jinnah, Bhutto, and Mujib were not charismatic or transformational leaders, but popular-consequential leaders who advanced the existing demand and carried political transactions. The four leaders acquired the status of popular-successful leaders by virtue of political gimmicks, adopting appropriate political transactional techniques, manipulating the situations, advancing the existed limited intellectual stimulation for one-point agenda.

Gandhi was a loyalist of the empire and adopted the British style of living (Whitehouse, 2001; see also Gandhi, 1927); however, he reverted to Indian dress and nationalism after entering politics. Personal humiliation in South Africa, the availability of financial resources, and the support of the South African Muslim's capitalist class were among the factors that contributed significantly for him to seize the position of a superior leader from an unknown mediocre lawyer (see Gandhi, 1927). Interestingly, he represented more the Hindus' interests than Muslims after coming back to India from South Africa. Except bringing Hindu-Muslim communities closer to each other temporarily during the Khalafat movement (Sayeed, 1970), his half-naked walks in Hindu and Muslim areas did not help to build trust between the communities. Furthermore, he publicly espoused secularism, yet he never took serious steps to implement his espoused value in practice. For example, the All India Congress was deemed a Hindu party and remained the same when he entered into politics. Gandhi had no intention to change the fiber of the Indian National Congress, though he had a strong hold of the party (see Hodson, 1969), for he served the party as per the vision of the followers. His control over the party is evident from the fact that Subhas Chandra Bose had to leave the presidency of the Congress because Gandhi did not want him in the position (National Archives, 1939-1947a). Similarly, Gandhi did not approve of the intention of Maulna Abudal Kalam Azad, who was a Muslim, to run for presidency of the All India Congress in 1946 because the president of the party was expected to be the first prime minister of India (Singh, 2015). He indeed espoused that real politics must consider social and moral progress and social justice without prejudice and discrimination (see Gandhi, 1927); nevertheless, his espoused theory carried little influence on the second-level leadership of the All Indian Congress. Gandhi hardly appreciated that superficial gestures are not sufficient to transform the system, rather they can generate ills in the system. For example, walking around with women, hardly improved the status of women in India, but rather caused it to deteriorate.

His half-naked walks and an emphasis on a simple vegetarian diet were all self-promotion tactics in giving the impression of an educated "sadhu" (a holy man) to influence Hindu followers. The changed attire and lifestyle in India after entering into politics made him unique, which helped him to be closer to the people (Bose, 1970), particularly Hindus, and to develop an image of a transformational leader. Gandhi's (1927) autobiography is excessive in its emphasis of his vegetarian diet during his stay in England, escaping from beautiful English girls and remaining fastened to his Hindu values under the pressure of English Christians who tried hard to convert him. These claims were all political tactics to impress the Hindu community. His values and practices have advanced Hinduism more than a unity among people of different religions. Consequently, after independence, India turned more into a Hindu-dominated religious state than a secular state where minority religious communities do not feel comfortable.

According to the British, Gandhi rose to a leadership position by having two-faces and a hypocrite attitude. A few realpolitik examples may be sufficient to substantiate the two-face attribution. Despite Gandhi apparently promoting the politics of non-violence, the unconstitutional non-violence calls (Bose, 1970) for public agitation had always ended in violence (Whitehouse, 2001; Hodson, 1969). He was well aware of the consequences of such political calls. Apparently, he adopted the attire as a symbol to challenge the status quo, but he nonetheless enjoyed a superior title of "Mahatma" (Saint). In hindsight, he wanted the title to

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be used for him. It is a serious concern why he neither objected nor intervened when his followers in the public meeting chanted against Jinnah because he refused to use the word "Mahatma" for him (see Beg, 1986). Although he had a greater power in the affairs of the All India Congress, he always took refuge by asserting that he had no power over the Congress whenever he did not want to accept any proposal. It is also not comprehensible why he did not make the offer, if it was a genuine, directly to Jinnah to become the first Prime Minister of United India instead of communicating through the then viceroy, Lord Mountbatten. The offer supports the two-face attribution. If he had made the offer seriously, it would have been the most ridiculous offer because he knew it was not a viable. He could easily retreat back from the offer using the second tier level leadership of the Congress. Besides, he knew that accepting such an offer would finish Jinnah's political career forever. Gandhi also changed his principled stand regarding industrial civilization to gain support from the upper capitalist class that helped him to raise funds (Whitehouse, 2001). According to Whitehouse (2001), the ideological shift gave hope to the Indian capitalist class that they would become Indian Rockefellers when the British would leave the country. According to Burns (1978), he was keen to attract English women; however, Gandhi (1927) in his autobiography tried to give the impression that all the English families introduced their young daughters with ulterior motives from which he successfully escaped. Framing the families in such a negative way was purposeful to impress the Indians, especially the Hindus.

Until Jinnah took the leadership of the All India Muslim League, he was against the communal politics and in favor of strong center and weak provinces. He changed his stance on both points after taking the leadership of the All India Muslim League and developing differences with Gandhi in the Indian National Congress (Jalal, 1985; Umer, 1973; Bose, 1970). In order to remain alive in politics, he was left with no other choice except accepting the offer to lead the All India Muslim League (see Jalal, 1985; Bolitho, 1954). Interestingly, he became a leader of the Muslim community with whom he had no meaningful contact. After joining the All India Muslim League, Jinnah did not gain support from Muslims by transforming the political culture, but by adopting political tactics and following the political culture of the Indian politics (Yousaf, 2015). In the quest to be a popular Muslim leader, he extensively advanced the existed two-nation theory, mixed religion with politics and actively got busy in making and breaking coalition in Punjab, Sindh, and Bengal provinces (Yousaf, 2015). By escalating Muslims' enmity toward Hindus, he created a fear among Muslims that they would become slaves of Hindus the day British transferred power to India (Blood, 1994; Jalal, 1985; Sayeed, 1970; Callard, 1957). Moreover, the researchers have indicated the role of the British in promoting the stature of Jinnah's leadership in Indian national politics (Naqvi, 2014; Ziring, 2003; Callard, 1957). Interestingly, Jinnah accused Gandhi of being an authoritarian leader. He was no less different than Gandhi in controlling the party with an authoritative hand. According to Sayeed (1970), Jinnah's conception of a political party was like a military institution in which once orders were given by a leader they should be executed. He kept his authoritative style after becoming the first Governor-General of the independent and sovereign Pakistan (Yousaf, 2016).

Bhutto was a feudal lord whose lifestyle was no less than European. After entering into politics, he changed his attire and started to wear a local dress in public meetings to gain support from the public. As mentioned above, Bhutto was a strong cabinet minister of Ayub's regime from 1958 to 1966. After the war of 1965, Bhutto was no more the blue-eyed boy of the general, so, Bhutto accused the same military government for nurturing corruption that he served for several years (see Bhutto, 1968a). More than Bhutto's accusation, the fact is that General Ayub's army rule had lost its charm in the public, which paved the way for Bhutto's rise in politics. The demand for democracy was on fire. Bhutto took the advantage of the students' movement and exploited Indian and Hindu enmity after the 1965 war. Since pre-partition politics, the general public has always emotional enmity

with India especially in Punjab and Sindh, which Bhutto exploited to win the hearts of the people. In this changed environment, he lured the nation by raising the ambiguous slogan of “Bread, clothing and shelter” and linked it to Islam, socialism, and democracy[3] (see Bhutto, 1968b) to attract people from different social classes.

Erroneously, some researchers consider him the most popular leader of Pakistan (e.g. Gilani, 1994) though he emerged as a popular leader only in the two provinces of Pakistan (won 62 seats from Punjab and 18 seats from Sindh, *Dawn* Internet Edition, 2012) in the 1970 election, and he did not contest election in East Pakistan. To gain power, Bhutto conspired with the army generals for not handing over power to Mujib, who won the election. Do transformational leaders get involved in illegitimate conspiracies? Was he a transformational leader who hardly objected when military dictator General Yahya Khan arbitrarily disqualified 76 elected members of the Awami League in 1971 (see Rizvi, 2013) by declaring them traitors? The purpose of the move was to bring Mujib’s political strength at par with Bhutto (Mehdi, 2016).

After gaining the power of the disintegrated Pakistan, Bhutto tyranny could be seen in all spheres of life – he replaced military dictatorship with civilian dictatorship. He espoused democratic values, but he was typically an authoritarian leader. Bhutto throughout the ruling period was busier in strengthening his personal authority. According to Niese wand (2016), he ignored parliament and inclined to introduce laws by decree. He established a notorious para-military force, the Federal Security Force, to control and eliminate the opposition. He hardly introduced viable reforms that could reduce the social class system or improve the social and legal justice. Nationalization of industry did not improve the economic conditions of the poor, but destroyed the industry and economy. It is the media and the family financial resources that played a crucial role in turning him as a World statesman in Pakistan by propagating that it was he, who gave confidence and respectability to Pakistan (see: Niese wand, 2016). His family (Nusrat Bhutto and Benezir Bhutto, his wife and daughter, respectively) strengthened this image when he was hanged during General Zia’s regime.

As mentioned earlier, Mujib capitalized on the old Bengali nationalism. Economic disparity aggravated the negative feelings of Bangalis toward West Pakistan. It was the hollow slogans that helped his party win 98 percent of the total seats in the 1970 election (see *Dawn* Internet Edition, 2014). To gain support, he boasted before independence that he would sell rice at half the price, which he could not achieve. Rather, the actual price was inflated to 1,000 percent by 1974 (Lifeschultz, 1979). The rejection of accepting the election’s result by West Pakistan power holders, and his successful negotiation with Indra Gandhi’s regime helped him to achieve his goal of separation from Pakistan. According to Jahan (1973), Mujib was a front face of the leadership, whereas the actual leadership was in the hands of Mukti Bahini, known as freedom fighters. They considered Mujib and the Awami League as a do-nothing-group (Jahan, 1973). However, according to Jahan, Mujib managed to control the freedom fighters after the independence.

Mujib had not fulfilled the espoused value of establishing true democracy and eradication of nepotism and corruption. Mujib spent most of his time in controlling the opposition and strengthening his power (Lifeschultz, 1979) to the extent that he added the word Mujibabad (standing for nationalism, socialism, secularism, and democracy) in the constitution of the newly independent state (Jahan, 1973). He added the provision in the constitution that a member would lose the national assembly seat if she/he loses the membership of the party in order to establish the hegemony of his party. To concentrate power in his own hands, he abrogated the constitution of 1972 (Rashiduzzaman, 1979; Khan and Zafarullah, 1990; Hakim, 1998). Following the footsteps of Bhutto, Mujib also formed a para-military force, Jatiya Rahki Bahini or the National Security Force, to confront and eliminate the growing opposition against his government. He proclaimed state of emergency in 1974, which suspended all basic human rights and introduced an amendment

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in 1975 in the constitution to have one party rule (Hakim, 1998; Lifeschultz, 1979). Except strengthening his power, there were no actions taken to transform the system to serve the citizens of Bangladesh.

The excessive popularity and personalized type relationship with followers infused dictatorial style in the four leaders. The repercussion of authoritarian style was that they, directly or indirectly, damaged the concept of a leader's accountability, though the fear of accountability is important to control leader's behavior because it makes individuals more thoughtful in making decisions (Ammeter *et al.*, 2002). They wanted the unfettered power, which they gained successfully. The later politics showed that the successors accepted this "idealized influence" gladly, consequently the concept of accountability in all three countries remained weak. It has become a political culture of these countries that the leaders bend the rules according to their own convenience without fear of accountability.

They did not nurture their immediate subordinates to take the leadership and follow the mission. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, was a sycophant and a toady of Jinnah but without having a vision to run the country (Yousaf, 2016). For Jinnah, the submissiveness of followers was a discipline (see Bolitho, 1954). Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, was a son of prominent Indian leader, Motilal Neru. Jawaharlal Neru had also a strong hold on the party even without accepting the tenets of Gandhism (Bose, 1970). Due to his strong position with the left group of the All India Congress and relationship with Mountbatten's wife, Gandhi had to support him to be the first Prime Minister of India. According to Singh (2015), Nehru gave a clear signal to Gandhi that he would not play second fiddle. Gandhi recognized that Nehru had a potential to cause problems in the way of independence by splitting the congress if he was not supported. Gandhi violated the canons of democracy, which he espoused so much, by favoring Neru over Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was supported by 12 out of 15 members of the All India Congress Committee and no support for Neru (Singh, 2015). Bhutto and Mujib hardly nurtured their subordinates who could replace them. The daughters of both leaders capitalized on their deaths and became leaders of their own countries. The examples contradict the transformational leadership theory that leaders nurture their replacement. Leaders do not nurture strong candidates unless they build their base independently as Neru did. Alternatively, they may only nurture sycophants and flatterers, and consider capable individuals a threat, as Jinnah did. This phenomenon has been observed by this author in micro organizations, as well.

None of them acted as a strategic hopeful leader because they were scared of losing their popularity within their own community. Therefore, they conducted negotiations with their opponents without taking risk. During negotiations, they adopted a style which is termed as bad faith or a surface style negotiation, which means negotiating parties do not take a serious interest in reaching an agreement or adopt a "take-it or leave-it" approach (Mandelman and Manara, 2006). Gandhi and Jinnah and Bhutto and Mujib have, indeed, communicated to each other through the media, written correspondence, and face-to-face meetings, but they were not ready to take risks as strategic hopeful leaders. Gandhi kept pretending that he did not understand the demands of the Muslim League, though they were not as unclear as Gandhi pretended. He remained busy in rationalizing communal problems on the grounds that both communities lived together for centuries (Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence in Pirzada, 1977) without appreciating the fact that British rule aggravated the differences between the communities, which is generally termed as "divide and rule." The Muslim League simply wanted to secure excessive economic and political rights of Muslims, especially of those living in the Hindu-dominated areas (Yousaf, 2015; Yousaf, 2016a, b). Jinnah employed a strategy of threatening to break up India if demands were not accepted (Ziring, 2003) instead of negotiating a variable-sum solution. Both Gandhi and Jinnah kept their enmity in the later politics, which they developed while working together from the platform of the All India Congress. They never strived to build trust in each other.



The same happened during the debacle of West and East Pakistan after the elections. Bhutto wanted the lion's share in forming the government after the 1970s election by claiming he had an overall majority in West Pakistan by virtue of a larger share of Punjab and Sindh provinces. According to Wali Khan (Khan and Ahmed, 1972), Bhutto was not a leader of whole West Pakistan because he won significant national assembly seats only in Punjab and Sindh (Punjab: 113/180; Sindh: 28/60, NWFP: 3/40; Baluchistan: 0/20). Bhutto and the army Generals were well aware of the grievances of Bengalis regarding economic disparity and charges of discrimination, nevertheless they wanted to settle the issue on their own terms. Bhutto had not shown significant understanding toward Mujib's six points and he had no clear response to them (Dunbar, 1972). According to Dunbar, he wanted power even at the expense of disintegration; therefore, he suggested two constitutional assemblies. Similarly, Mujib was also aware of his strength and was not ready to budge from his six points. He wanted to use the power of his absolute majority; therefore, he took the oath from his supporters and the newly elected members that they would uphold six points in drawing the constitution (Dunbar, 1972). To achieve his goal, he made a deal with India to disintegrate Pakistan. According to Dunbar (1972), there was no broad spirit of cooperation to bridge the gap between the contended leaders.

They resolved the problem more or less in a manner in which collective problems were ignored in predilection for personal and political gains. They all feared if they bent from the existed position, they would lose power within their own community. The solution that they achieved, the division of India and the division of Pakistan, was a zero-sum transaction and not a variable-sum solution. In the business world, such transactions happen frequently, when one big firm buys another or a big firm splits itself into several divisions. Having such transactions should not be attributed as a transformational success.

The post-independence history shows that the transaction turned to be more beneficial to the leaders than the citizenry of the three countries. Gandhi turned into *Bapu* (Little father), Jinnah became *Quaid-e-Azam* (The great leader) and father of the nation, Bhutto gained the position of father of democracy and the title of *Quaid-e-Awam* (the leader of people) and Mujib became the father of the nation and *Bangabandhu* (Friend of Bengal). The four leaders built their leadership by employing political tactics and gimmicks.

People were galvanized by developing groupthink against the common enemy and creating a dream in them that their life would be transformed if one-point agenda or a goal achieved. Consequently, they achieved a cosmetic change, which did not deliver fruits of the change to the ordinary stakeholders of the state. The achieved success merely changed the leadership from the British to Indians and Pakistanis, and from Pakistani to Bangladeshi. In comparison, the British might have been more successful in transforming the social values in India than these four leaders. Whitehouse mentioned that members of the All India Congress Party remained Indian in color, but willing to adopt British taste, dress, speech, and values to improve their status in the community, which is overall applicable to all these countries.

Transformational leadership and the system should be assessed depending upon how those people are furthest from the power corridors are being treated. Except for a superficial development, the concept of state development, as defined above, has not been implemented in any of the three countries. Overall, these countries are suffering from extreme poverty and corruption, except a small expansion of an economic middle class. Over time, the political and social cultures of the three countries have deteriorated. Human rights violations are common phenomena in all of them. Discrimination and intolerance toward others' religion and ethnic groups have increased.

These four leaders had shown a limited mission, but no transformational vision for the independent states. Systems do not change merely by espousing transformational ideas unless appropriate transactional practices are adopted for which systems need qualities of

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transactional leadership. Except for lip servicing, they were steeped in their hollow “transformational idea” without devising a transactional strategy to eradicate corruption, unfairness, injustice, and poverty from the system, which they had been complaining about under the oppressive regimes.

The above short analysis of the outcomes of the achievement does not support that they were transformational leaders. Rather, they were, more or less, popular-consequential leaders who had shown the qualities of a personalized charismatic leader rather than the socialized. It is the personalized leader-follower relationship, which let them accumulate unfettered power and authority in the name of the transformation. The goal was transactional and its grounds had already been ready; therefore, the leaders did not need a cognitive change in distant and closed followers. There is no evidence that they have left a positive idealized influence on the followers. If there was an idealized influence, it was negative, which weakened the concept of leader’s accountability.

### Conclusion

The examples employed in this research question the concept of transformational leadership. The argument is that if these four world-renowned personalities cannot be transformational, the researchers must consider the veracity of the concept of transformational leadership, especially in relation to micro organizations. Viewing popular or successful leadership as transformational leadership has distorted the concept of transformational leadership. In this work, it has been argued that the popular or/and successful leaders are not necessarily transformational. A leadership that gains popularity under certain conditions may be useful for achieving a specific goal, but does not necessarily bring a paradigm shifting or lasting change in the norms and values, which is ultimately essential for transforming a system. Excessive popularity induces authoritarian tendency in leaders, which eventually weakens accountability and transparency in the system and hurts positive transformation.

The quoted examples were examples of popular-consequential leaders. They did indeed achieve their goals, which proved to be more transactional than transformational. Therefore, achieving goals should not be seen as sufficient to declare that someone is a transformational leader, rather outcomes of the achievement should be analyzed before attributing a style of leadership. It has been indicated a long time ago that goals can be accomplished by initiating-structure type leaders, but aftermaths of achievement would be different (Likert, 1958) and this argument has been supported in contemporary research as well.

While measuring success or achievement, it is important to assess how the whole organization and its stakeholders have been influenced by it. So far, the achievements of the four leaders have hardly proved to be beneficial for the citizens of the three countries, except a small class of the society.

### Implications for research and recommendations

Transformational leadership has become an attractive concept; however, it is necessary to revisit the concept and make a clear distinction between transformational, popular consequential, and transactional leadership. It is important to evaluate the condition and spirit of the time to understand the role of leadership. The role of transactional leadership should be further studied to understand its importance for the growth of an organization. The literature review of Afshari and Gibson (2016) indicates that various researchers have not found the significant difference between transactional and transformational leadership, which invites the researchers to evaluate the value of the transformational leadership construct. Similarly, meta-analysis of Rowold *et al.* (2015) shows that leadership constructs, including transformational and transactional leadership, converge toward each other. According to Rowold *et al.* (2015), the understanding about leadership is not progressing because the same phenomenon is studied by using a different name. One of the reasons for

that could be that researchers are excessively interested in reading and citing the latest research and ignoring the old. Moreover, over reliance on statistical methods and ignoring qualitative research methods may be a hindrance in improving and refining the concept of transformational leadership.

Another area which should be explored is sacrifice. Do leaders sacrifice more or the followers in achieving the organizational goals? Generally, it is assumed that top-level managers in micro organizations work hard to gain maximum authority in the change process, but hardly reduce their own contingent rewards. Conversely, they demand sacrifice and reduce extrinsic rewards for operative-level employees. Examining Gandhi's conditions before and after entering into politics show that he was afraid to appear in the court to represent his clients in India (see Gandhi, 1927) before entering into politics; however, he not only earned decent money after entering into politics in South Africa, but also eminence. Further research, statistical or historical, may throw useful light in this direction.

### Notes

1. British called it mutiny.
2. Comparing the four, Ghandi operated in a more structured situation and gained higher political stature than the rest of the three leaders. Among the four, Mujib might be more charismatic than anyone else because he played the role in a weak psychological situation; he managed to get Bangladesh when separation was not even on the agenda.
3. Islam is our faith; democracy is our polity; socialism is our economy (Bhutto, 1968b).

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### About the author

Nadeem Yousaf is a Management Consultant and an Associate Professor at Niels Brock, Copenhagen, Denmark. He has published research in the areas of leadership and communication. His teaching and research interests fall within the area of leadership, conflict management, communication and organizational developments. Nadeem Yousaf can be contacted at: [nad@brock.dk](mailto:nad@brock.dk)

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