



The Role of Micro Mentoring in Boosting Transformational Leadership for Greater Productivity in the Digital Era

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Abstract: Organisational dynamics have been redefined by the speed at which digital transformation is occurring, highlighting the necessity of creative leadership strategies to increase worker engagement and productivity. Through its emphasis on inspiring, motivating, and empowering teams, transformational leadership has demonstrated efficacy in managing such shifts. However, micro-mentoring, a targeted, individualised, and short duration mentoring approach which can increase its influence even further. This study investigates how, in the digital age, micro-mentoring might increase the impact of transformative leadership. It looks at how these ideas operate together, emphasising how micro-mentoring improves relationships between leaders and employees, encourages lifelong learning, and tackles the particular difficulties brought on by digital transformation, like remote work and technological disruption.

Micro-mentoring is a brief yet effective encounter that offers focused advice and input in accordance with the developmental goals set by transformational leaders. In the era of digital transformation this study examines employees across a range of industries to determine how transformational leadership influences micro-mentoring practices and, in turn, enhances productivity outcomes and emphasises how crucial it is to strategically incorporate micro-mentoring into leadership practices in order to optimise the performance of organisations.

Key Words - Micro Mentoring, Transformational Leadership & Employee productivity

I. INTRODUCTION

The workplace has seen unprecedented changes in the age of digital transformation, which has radically changed how organizations operate and how team leaders engage with their subordinates. Businesses are constantly searching for innovative and creative ways to increase employee productivity in today's competitive and ever-changing business environment. Businesses are facing new difficulties in sustaining employee engagement and productivity as they use cutting-edge technologies more frequently to promote innovation and improve operations. Organizational success increasingly depends on leadership strategies that can adjust to these shifts and capitalize on the opportunities that come with the digital era.

These shifts call for leaders who can handle the particular difficulties of the digital workplace in addition to motivating and directing their staff. Productivity is largely dependent on effective leadership, and among the various forms of leadership, transformational leadership has garnered a lot of attention. The capacity to inspire and empower staff members is a hallmark of transformational leadership, which has been shown to be successful in increasing output and stimulating creativity. Their tailored support, employee empowerment, and encouragement of creativity lead to higher levels of engagement and performance. With its focus on inspiring, motivating, and empowering staff members, transformational leadership has become a major performance enhancer in such dynamic settings. Transformational leaders are well known for their ability to inspire and motivate employees, fostering a sense of purpose, commitment, and inner motivation. Innovative approaches that complement the digital environment are necessary for measurable results.

Despite the positive effects of transformative leadership on employee efficiency are well known, little is known about the mechanisms underlying this link. Micro-mentoring, a type of mentoring that entails quick, targeted, and goal-oriented exchanges between a mentor and a mentee, may be one such technique. Employees can get focused advice and feedback on certain problems through micro-mentoring, which may improve their abilities and self-assurance and eventually boost output.

Micro-mentoring is becoming a growing trend in contemporary organizations, but little research has been done on how it fits within the framework of transformational leadership. Although transformational leaders are frequently seen as important facilitators of employee growth, it is yet unknown how their leadership styles impact the uptake and efficacy of micro-mentoring initiatives and how these exchanges ultimately impact worker productivity. This gap in the research offers a chance to investigate how productivity outcomes, micro-mentoring, and transformational leadership interact.

The following are the research questions that the study aims to address in order to close this gap.

- How does transformational leadership affect employee productivity at work?
- How does transformational leadership encourage micro-mentoring?
- How does micro-mentoring affect employee productivity?

By addressing these issues, the study will offer insightful information about how businesses can maximise employee performance by utilising mentoring and leadership techniques. Furthermore, the study's conclusions might influence the creation of leadership development initiatives that incorporate micro-mentoring as a tactic to improve worker results.

2. Research Objectives

- To investigate the direct relationship between employee productivity and transformational leadership.
- To examine how micro-mentoring may act as a mediator in the relationship between the employee productivity and transformational leadership.
- To investigate how micro-mentoring techniques are encouraged in the workplace by transformational leadership.
- To examine how micro-mentoring and transformational leadership work together to increase employee productivity.

3. Statement of the Problem

Increasing employee productivity is a major challenge for organizations in the fast-paced workplace of today. It has been demonstrated that transformational leadership, which is typified by inspiration, motivation, and individual consideration, improves employee outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006). However, little is known about the exact processes by which transformative leadership results in increased productivity. The growing idea of micro-mentoring, or brief, targeted encounters, has not yet been investigated in relation to leadership and productivity, despite the fact that traditional mentoring has been thoroughly researched. Empirical research demonstrates how well micro mentoring works to improve performance and skill development (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2014). However, its role as a mediator between transformational leadership and productivity is unknown. Closing this gap is crucial for both theoretical development and real-world implementation particularly in the context of digital era. The purpose of this study is to look into how transformational leaders encourage micro-mentoring and how these exchanges affect worker productivity. Organizations looking to maximize staff development and leadership techniques in more competitive and agile workplaces will find great value in the findings.

4. Review of literature

Lin Chunhui et.al., 2024 In addition to demonstrating the relationship between the transformative leadership and teachers' work performance, this study asserts that leadership plays a crucial role in shaping organizational culture. Additionally, this study emphasizes the significance of leadership training for educators and focusses more on organizational culture as the mediator between transformational leadership and job performance. The organizational culture under transformational leadership will be upbeat, democratic, agreeable, trust-based, and supportive of future gains in organizational efficacy.

Faiza Manzoor et.al. 2019 This study investigated the mediating role of corporate social responsibility and observed the transformational leadership which affects job performance. A cross-sectional design method was used in this study to gather data from workers in Pakistan's small and medium-sized companies. The relationship between the variables was examined using regression analysis for 300 samples. The results showed that CSR efforts significantly mediated the associations and suggested that transformational leadership traits and CSR tactics could improve workers' job performance.

Hsinking Chi, Thinh-Van Vu 2023 This study looks at how financial and non-financial rewards affect the relationships between transformational leadership and job performance as well as job satisfaction and job performance in private companies in Vietnam. It came to the conclusion that managers could use a combination of transformational leadership and financial rewards to inspire workers and boost output. According to this study, the impact of particular kinds of monetary and non-monetary rewards might be investigated further.

Kebe, I.A. Kahl, C. Liu, Y 2024 The study's findings showed that organizational citizenship behavior has a mediating effect between leadership styles and employee performance. It also looked at the impact of both transformational and transactional leadership styles on the performance of employees in the banking sector of Sierra Leone. Employee commitment, on the other hand, mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and employee performance but not between transformational leadership and employee performance. According to this research, training programs for both leadership styles can motivate staff to exhibit positive behavior and dedication to achieving organizational objectives.

Haleema Ikram, Zohra Shahzad, Abdul Rashid 2023 This study looked at how different leadership philosophies affected telecom workers' productivity. The article's findings indicated that employees favored flexible leadership styles and that autocratic and transactional leadership styles had little effect on employee productivity. Employee productivity was not impacted by incentive-based leadership style, nor did they express a preference for managers who acted inflexibly and rigidly.

Shivangi Singh and Nirmala Chaudhary 2022 The researcher examines several studies on employee productivity in this article and claims that different authors have defined the term in accordance with their research. Even though there were many research on productivity, only those that showed how employee productivity was related to various variables were included. Additionally, this study found a number of factors that influence worker productivity. One of the factors in this study is leadership.

Zyl G and Mpho D. Magau. 2024

In this paper the researcher has studied the effect of Employee productivity that are created by the adoption of various incentive programs in South African workplaces, although they may vary by industry and region. In order to help managers to make decisions on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, this study set out to identify the industry and geographic distribution of incentive-induced employee productivity. They came to the conclusion that implementing incentive programs in the workplace effectively is a key way to generate positive employee productivity outcomes, and that this practice is typically implemented by all businesses, regardless of sector or region.

Megginson D& Clutterbuck D. (2004). This book aims to equip coaches and mentors with a broader array of tactics and methodologies for assisting others than often acquired through practical experience or formal training. The authors have compiled these strategies based on their own coaching and mentoring experiences, supplemented by the assistance of other seasoned industry professionals. Assisting another person represented and with a significant transfer of knowledge, thoughts, or work tasks is how mentoring is defined by the authors.

Victoria Kenny S (2019) examined the relationship between training, organizational performance, and worker productivity. The results show that training significantly affects organizational performance and employee productivity, which in turn affects return on investment. Employee performance is a key factor in determining the success of an organization since human resource capital is essential to its expansion and development. As a result, firms looking to improve performance, productivity, and overall competitiveness can reap significant rewards by funding training initiatives.

Soudabeh Vatankhah.et.al (2017) The effect of transformative leadership on employee productivity in teaching hospitals connected to Iran University of Medical Sciences is examined in this study. According to the research, implementing a transformational leadership style has several advantages, such as increased worker productivity and better organizational performance. The findings highlight how crucial it is to fund focused training and educational initiatives in order to foster and advance transformational leadership traits. By doing this, businesses may help their employees reach their greatest potential, which will boost output and enhance performance in general.

Cherono Vivian (2016) This study's main goal was to find out how leadership mentoring affected employee performance. The results indicate that implementing leadership mentorship programs within a business can greatly improve worker performance. This suggests that team members' work performance and general productivity can increase when leaders devote time and energy to mentoring them.

5. Theoretical Frame work and Hypothesis Development

Transformational Leadership

Leadership styles in an organization substantially impact the success of the organization and the productivity of its employees (Lin Chunhui.et.al.,2024). An organization's performance can be predicted by its leadership style. This is among the most significant factors influencing how organisational and employee performance develops (Faiza Manzoor et.al.2019). Since success depends on a leader's ability to inspire, motivate, congratulate, and even compliment their team, leaders must motivate others. Managers have an obligation to take into account each individual and make sure that workers are content and inspired to put in a lot of effort. By articulating a vision of change and cultivating an atmosphere of creativity and invention, transformational leadership inspires and encourages followers to accomplish amazing results. It focusses on maximizing team members' potential and coordinating them with the organization's long-term objectives, going beyond simply overseeing daily duties. Bass and Avolio (2003) define transformational leadership as a change-oriented style of leadership in which an organization's vision is not only developed but also carried out through two main channels: idealized influence and actualized influence. Transformational leadership interactively inspires followers and leaders to achieve, a higher level of morality and motivate justice and equality (Bass & Riggio, 2010).

Micro Mentoring.

Micro-mentoring emphasizes short, focused exchanges of information, counsel, and direction as compared to traditional mentoring, which frequently entails longer-term relationships and formal arrangements (Chazot, C. A., L'Etoile, M., & Sandland, J. G. (2023). Mentoring has been identified as a potent human resource development strategy that works as both on-the-job training and a means of giving inexperienced workers options for career advancement (Hamlin, 2011). Based on the social exchange theory, the organizational support theory suggests that when subordinate employees see their leaders in the organization supporting them, they will adopt positive attitudes and behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 2014). The relevance of non-monetary incentives in encouraging high levels of productivity among employees is also supported by studies that use data gathered in the United Kingdom. The respondents believe that three non-monetary motivators, acclaim from direct supervisors, leadership attention like one-on-one discussions, and the opportunity to lead teams or projects are just as successful as or even more so than the financial incentives they ranked highest (M. A. Bawa 2017). Mentoring is an interaction in which an older, experienced adult guides a younger person through the organization (Kram, 1988).

Employees Productivity

The results of employee productivity are often the end, targeted outputs that correspond to the expectations of the employee (McNamara ,2018). Productivity is the result of combining performance with resource economy (Victor Barinua, Ibe, Uchenna Mabel. 2022). Enhancing employee performance is the primary objective of any organization in order to endure and thrive in a fiercely competitive environment (Haleema Ikram, Zohra Shahzad, Abdul Rashid 2023). The performance of employees has a direct impact on the success of the company, making it a crucial metric for assessing both the financial and non-financial performance of the enterprise (Anyango, 2015). When an employee's output increases while their input stays the same or when their input decreases while their output increases, their productivity can be assessed. Therefore, employee roles and responsibilities are strongly linked to performance, and a variety of factors affect employees' productivity and performance (Irwan et al., 2020). Employee productivity measures how efficiently and effectively a worker or a group of workers contribute to accomplishing organizational goals (Cole Stryker 2024). One of the factors influencing the employee productivity is the leadership style of a leader within the organization (Haleema Ikram, Zohra Shahzad, Abdul Rashid 2023). Employee Productivity can be significantly impacted by the actions of company leadership. The effectiveness of management and leadership techniques can have a big influence on employee productivity. Throughout the workday, hard labour is often motivated by effective leadership. A toxic business environment or poor management techniques might cause demotivation or poor communication, which will lower productivity (Cole Stryker 2024).

H1: There exists a positive relationship between Transformational leadership and employee productivity

Transformational Leadership and Micro Mentoring.

Transformational leadership and mentoring are conceptually different but the two concepts are closely related as the process and tactics of influence are the same (K Bodilenyane and K Mooketsane 2019). High quality relationships between supervisors and subordinates may evolve into mentoring relationships (Graen and Scandura 1987). Several research indicates that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee performance by fostering motivation, creativity, and engagement (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The mentor gives "his" candidate psychological support as well as support for advancement in the workplace, and on the other hand, the degree of self-esteem and emotional connection with the company in which he works increases for the mentor (Aleksandra Stoilkovska 2024). Supervisors are often the most salient source of social information. That is why leadership and mental health are two topics that must not be excluded by the mentor (Gulseren, Thibault, Kelloway, Mullen, Teed, Gilbert and Dimoff, 2021). Transformational leaders show personalized attention that links individual and collective interests resulting in commitment to the organization (Hambrick in Sosik et al., 2004). Transformational leaders are different from other leaders because they go beyond call for duty. They see subordinates even beyond the organisation, they make emotional investment on others, hence mentorship. The benefits of mentoring are like those of leadership, and the style that choose has a strong correlation with employee attitudes (Serang, Ramlawati, Suriyanti, Junaidi and Nurimansjah, 2024).

H2: There exists a positive relationship between Transformational leadership and micro mentoring

Micro mentoring and Employee productivity

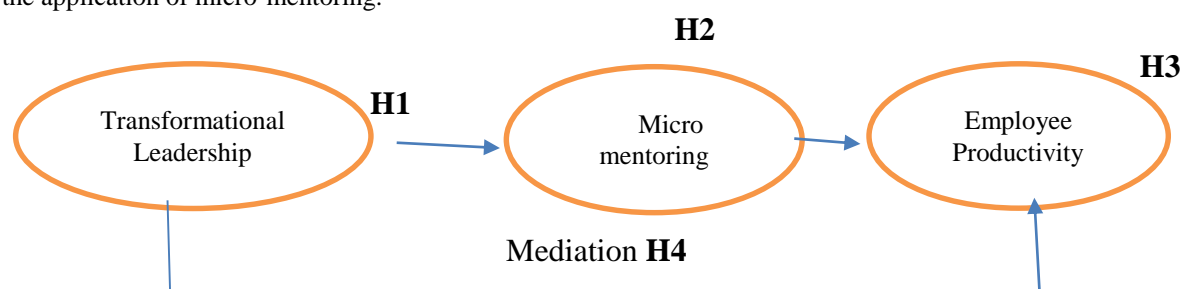
Mentoring is meaningful transmission of knowledge, thoughts or work tasks justifies the mentor's role by helping the employee do the right thing to direct his thoughts, to accumulate more easily and better knowledge, and through that to perform their work duties in a better quality (Aleksandra Stoilkovska 2024). The benefits of mentoring for an organization are employee engagement, employee satisfaction, employee happiness, retention rates, promotion rates, attracting talent, representation in leadership, inclusive culture, increased productivity, breaking down silos. According to research done by Aleksandra Stoilkovska (2024) states that in 2016 Millennials Survey, Deloitte found that 81% of Millennials stay 5 years or more at a company when they have a mentor (Aleksandra Stoilkovska, Marija Apostolova Nikolovska and Gordana Serafimovic. 2024). Mentoring could be effective for enhancing work engagement (Anaza, 2016). Mentoring play an important role in employee performance and are enhanced through knowledge transfer, career development. Mentoring relates with employee productivity in that career is a complex concept; it delineates meaning, sense of purpose and direction, which includes ideas of progression and development both at work and at a personal level (Wichey Amanda, Ernestina Amana Akpana. 2023).

H3: There exists a positive relationship between Micro-mentoring and employee productivity.

H4: Micro-mentoring mediates and influences the relationship between transformational leadership and employee productivity.

6. Materials and Methodology

This study's main goal is to find out how micro mentoring influences the transformational leadership towards the employee productivity in service industry, and how it acts as a mediating factor. A theoretical framework was created to investigate the intricate interactions between employee productivity, micro-mentoring, and transformational leadership, guided by the body of existing literature and hypothesized correlations. The study specifically looks at how managers may increase employee productivity through the application of micro-mentoring.



7. Research Design

7.1 Samples and Data collection

A cross-sectional research design was used in this study to gather primary data from employees in a range of service industries. Potential responders were given a self-administered questionnaire with confidentiality guarantees to promote open communication. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed using convenience sampling. A response rate was obtained from the 90 completed questionnaires that were received.

7.2 Variables

Transformational leadership: A dynamic and motivating strategy, transformational leadership inspires people, promotes teamwork, and propels organizational success by developing a compelling shared vision, promoting creativity and intellectual curiosity, developing individuals and groups to accomplish strategic objectives and integrating morals and principles into the culture of the company. This variable consists of six item items designed by Wang et al. (2005)

Micro Mentoring

Micro-mentoring is a contemporary mentoring approach that uses brief, very effective mentoring sessions to offer people opportunities for growth, support, and direction. The questionnaire, which contains 10 items is a researcher's self-developed questionnaire and 5-point Likert scale from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree" was adopted to measure the variable.

Employee Productivity.

Employee productivity is the effectiveness and efficiency with which an employee accomplishes tasks, meets objectives, and adds to the success of the company as a whole. It gauges how well an employee uses their time, abilities, and assets to accomplish their objectives and support the success of the company. To measure this variable 6 items 5-point Likert scale questions were used based on the dimension's knowledge, organizational support, motivation, performance feedback, reliability and environmental compatibility Soudabeh Vatankhah et al (2017).

Table -1 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.879	0.880	22

Table 2

Particulars	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational leadership	6	0.818
Micro Mentoring	10	0.822
Employee Productivity	6	0.788

Table 3 Mean, Standard deviation & Correlation

	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	TL	MM	EP
Transformational Leadership (TL)	23.50	15.309	3.913	1		
Micro Mentoring (MM)	40.43	17.147	4.141	0.610	1	
Employee Productivity (EP)	25.32	6.468	2.543	0.313	0.446	1

Table 4 Regression and Mediation

Variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	B Value	F statistics	T statistics	P values
MM -> EP	0.492	0.533	0.133	0.515	12.576	3.693	0.000
TL -> EP	0.281	0.318	0.116	0.159	5.474	2.432	0.015
TL -> MM	0.669	0.68	0.067	0.340	52.516	9.955	0.000

Table 5 Full Mediation effect

Particulars	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
TL -> MM -> EP	0.308	0.345	0.054	5.739	0.000

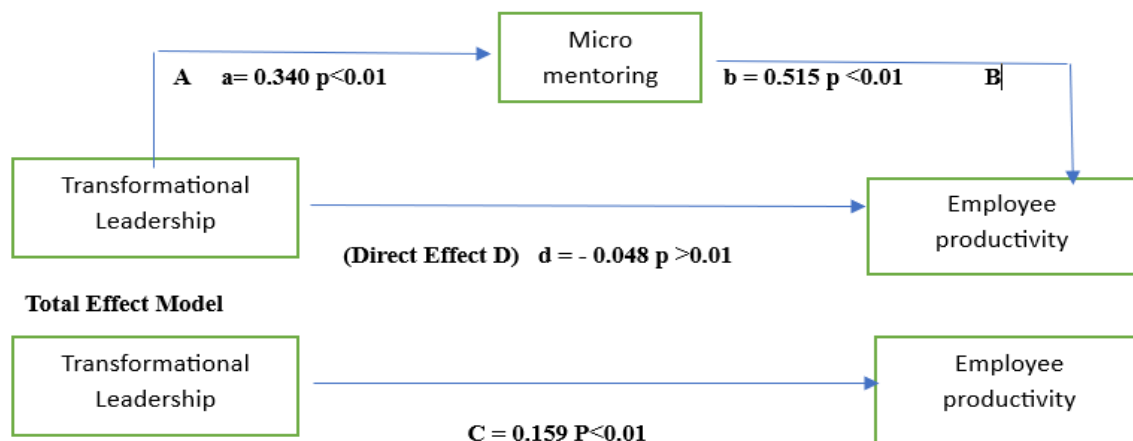
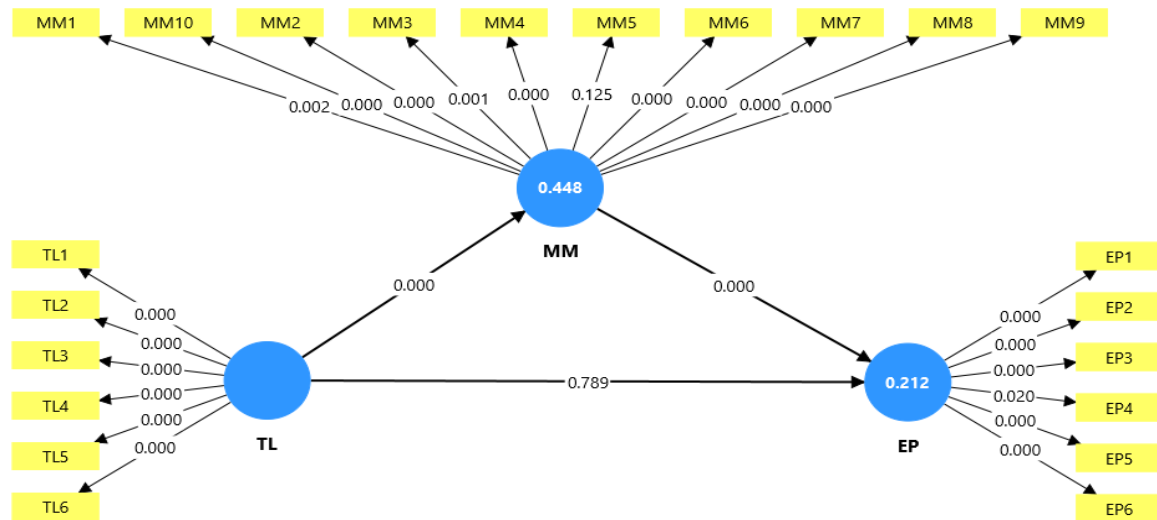
8. Mediation Model

Diagram 1 Mediation effect



Results

The most frequently used Cronbach alpha reliability test in SPSS is used in this study to assess the internal consistency and dependability of the questionnaire.

Table 1 shows the reliability statistics which provides the value of Cronbach alpha. It shows the Cronbach alpha value, which in this instance is **0.879**, indicating the great reliability of the questionnaire. Additionally, it shows a high degree of internal consistency for the particular sample and **Table-2** shows the reliability of the three variables of the study

Table 3 shows the mean standard deviation and correlation of the variables. In order to determine the direction and strength of the relationships between the study's variables, correlation analysis was performed. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used in this study. This test was carried out before regression analysis to determine whether the variables related in a manner that was linear. The result as presented in the table 3, shows that

- $r = 0.610$ and $P < 0.001$ indicates that the transformational leadership have positive correlation with micro mentoring.
- $r = 0.313$ and $P < 0.001$ indicates that the transformational leadership have positive correlation with employee productivity
- $r = 0.446$ and $P < 0.001$ indicates that the micro mentoring has positive correlation with employee productivity

The above results shows that the variables of interest that were to be employed in regression analysis to build the regression models of interest were found to have linear relationships with one another and the result of this study and the study's findings offer strong proof in favour of the main hypothesis. In particular, the results support the primary hypotheses by indicating a strong and favourable correlation between employee productivity transformational leadership and micro mentoring. Therefore, the hypothesis 1,2, and 3 is accepted.

Mediation Analysis

Table 5, shows the effect of transformational leadership influences micro mentoring is significant as $a = 0.340$ $p < 0.01$. **Table 6**, Shows the effect of micro mentoring influences the employee productivity is also significant as $b = 0.515$ $p < 0.01$ and **Table 7** shows the total effect of transformational leadership influences employee productivity is significant as $c = 0.159$ $p < 0.01$.

The above results shows that the requirement of mediations are met as the effects a, b and c are all statistically significant. Further the result from table 6 about the direct effect D $d = -0.048$ for $p > 0.01$ indicating the direct effect is not significant which implies that the model has full mediation i.e. the total effect is significant and direct effect is not significant. Therefore, the effect is fully mediated and thus disappears when the mediator is added to the regression model. Finally, the results concludes that the hypothesis H4 is accepted that is micro mentoring mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee productivity.

Findings

According to the study, transformational leadership significantly boosts worker productivity by inspiring employees to align their own goals with the organization's mission. By fostering motivation, creativity, and adaptability, transformational leaders empower employees to achieve excellence in their work. Transformational leadership has a particularly powerful impact on improving productivity indicators like output quality, flexibility, and inventiveness in the service industry, where employee engagement and adaptability are crucial.

The creativity and vision of transformational leaders can be effectively transformed into measurable outcomes with the help of micro mentoring. The full mediation effect shows the influence of micro mentoring of transformational leadership towards employee productivity. Through customized, short-term coaching, micro mentoring ensures that staff members receive the exact support needed to align their work with the leader's goals. Additionally, by giving employees job-specific direction, skill development, and immediate feedback, micro mentoring increases task efficiency, output quality, and confidence. This immediate and useful support reinforces the effect of transformational leadership on productivity.

Together, micro mentoring and transformative leadership are more effective than they would be on their own. The managers or supervisors provide the tools and feedback that employees require to accomplish their goals on both a personal and professional level. This synergy significantly boosts output quantity, task efficiency, output quality, adaptability, and originality, among other characteristics of productivity.

Conclusions

According to this study's findings, micro mentoring significantly boosts the impact of transformational leadership on employee productivity, making it a crucial component of effective leadership practices in the service industry. While transformational leadership creates the foundation by inspiring employees, encouraging creativity, and creating a sense of purpose, micro mentoring acts as a bridge between vision and execution. With the short-term, targeted support that micro mentoring offers, employees are certain to be able to translate the leader's vision into concrete, high-performing actions in their everyday responsibilities.

Through addressing the unique requirements of each worker and providing immediate support, micro mentoring enhances transformational leadership and increases output across the board. Micro mentors ensure that employees have the skills, confidence, and feedback needed to meet the high expectations established by transformational leaders. In addition to improving output quality and job efficiency, this combination enhances workers' flexibility and inventiveness, which are crucial in the fast-paced digital age. In practice, companies in the service sector should adopt a comprehensive approach by creating formal leadership programs and developing leaders' short-term micro mentoring abilities. While leadership development programs should focus on enhancing leaders' ability to inspire motivation, communicate vision, and provide tailored assistance, mentoring programs should aim to give staff members task-specific, specialized counsel. Together, these tactics foster a culture of continuous improvement and excellence, which eventually increases employee productivity and organizational efficacy. By leveraging the synergy between transformational leadership and micro mentoring, service organizations can create a workforce that is not only highly talented and flexible but also engaged and motivated, ensuring long-term success in a competitive atmosphere.

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