

Transformational Leadership behaviours, Public Policy and Policy Actors: A Theoretical Perspective

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Abstract

Public policies are a medium through which governments solve problems of the people, society and nation. Public policies are universally used to promote the objectives of the state. They essentially originate from the political executive but can also be promoted by bureaucracy, judiciary and various interest groups. The process of how policies are made includes: issue identification, policy making, policy implementation and evaluation, and monitoring. Public policies, through their inception and evaluation, face a very complex environment and various forces that influence how policies are shaped. Policy actors are the prime movers of policies and carry them to their conclusion. This paper envisages a significant role of transformational leadership behaviours in managing the convoluted policy process. Transformational leadership (TL) has acquired a preeminent position in leadership studies. Transformational leaders portray a clear vision, build consensus among participants, promote innovation and are effective in managing change. This study asserts that attributes of transformational leadership would be effective in tackling policy challenges, and policy actors - political executive and bureaucracy - should adopt these attributes. It calls for harmonization of policy studies, transformational leadership studies and state action.

Key words: Public policy, transformational leadership, policy process, policy actors.

Introduction

Public policies are most fundamental in nation building. "Public policies in a modern, complex society are indeed ubiquitous" (Anderson, 2003). Public policies solve problems that societies face in the present, future and very distant future. They are an instrument of state intervention to solve public problems. As Torjman (2005) asserted that policy is formulated in relation to perceived problems or needs in society, and hence, may be precautionary /proactive or reactive. Policies pursue objectives that are considered suitable to the society. They operate in the public realm and as Anderson (2000:5) pointed out, public policies "are those developed by governmental bodies and officials". The significance of public policy can be cited from the observation that the major acclaim for post-World War -II Japanese economic marvel is attributed to systematic and well-implemented policies [Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific, 1995].

The process of policy formulation is both complex and integrates various organs of the state, the influence of interest groups, civil society and media, which also plays a critical role in shaping policies. Over the years, policy implementation has acquired centre stage with the process of "translating policy into action" (Barrett 2004) which gained criticality as policies failed to deliver on expectations.

Peters & Pierre (2006) advocate that complexity in public policy necessitates bringing together a wide array of academic and analytical aspects to advance better understanding of the nuances in the policy arena. They also assert that the 'process' of policy making has attracted most attention, being one of the most important aspects of policy. Policy design, instruments, implementation, monitoring and evaluation have also been studied. Peters & Pierre (2006) observe that the new policy style is a change from 'government to governance', often called 'new governance'. They claim that this "new governance" is more circumstantial and disordered than most past models of governance. This presents a cogent challenge to policy making and public policy.

Chief Executive, Professor Martin of Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), a leading public policy think tank, asserted the importance of effective leadership style for making and executing policy. Martin & Taylor (2013) praise the leadership of Hawke and Howard (both ex-PM of Australia) in foreseeing problems and having the ability to "engage and persuade people to adopt reforms".

Successful public leaders devote great time and energy in managing the political environment (Denhardt 1993; Bryson and Crosby, 1992). They focus on their ability to communicate the values of the goals being pursued (inspirational motivation) to the

stakeholders, but their personal charisma also plays an important role in shaping the political environment (as with former Indian PM Mr Vajpayee's ability in creating consensus across party lines).

Vandenabeele et al. (2013) have called for public management research to integrate leadership theories critical in the public sector context. This study attempts to add an important but hitherto ignored aspect of effectiveness of transformational leadership behaviours in adequately managing the complex public policy ecosystem. This study does not see transformational leadership in its restrictive aspect of influencing subordinates alone, but in its wider behavioural aspect in interacting and influencing people, systems, situations and environment. It locates transformational leadership behaviours in terms of nature and characteristics of public policy, and role of policy actors. This study proposes that transformational leadership behaviours like (not restricted to these) setting clear goals, influencing people to look beyond their own self-interests and reaching for higher goals (Warrick, 2011), emphasizing on collective purpose (Simola et al. 2012), projecting self-assurance, assuring followers of their competency (Behling and McFillen, 1996), inspirational communication (Rafferty and Griffin, 2004), raising greater awareness about the issues of consequence (Bass, 1985: 17), enunciating clearly a vision of the future, understanding differences among people (Yammarino & Bass, 1990a), taking a stand on difficult issues (Bass, 1995), "question assumptions, traditions, and beliefs", have a multi-dimensional perspective (Bass, 1997) etc. are very critical and effective in the complex and uncertain policy environment that the policy actors face.

As public policy requires a long term vision, is the outcome of collective action and breeds on consensus building, transformational leaders are best suited to tackle and manage policy environment and go through the labyrinth of the policy making process. Public policies are futuristic in nature and face uncertainties from various quarters (political adversaries, economic situation, and social upheavals); policies and policy actors confront major resistance because they break the status quo, so managing change is the most vital element in the policy arena. Transformational leaders develop a culture which embraces change (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997). Pawar & Eastman (1997) have also drawn a linkage between transformational leadership and effectiveness during change.

Harold Laswell's (1951) optimism of a "science of policy forming and execution," cannot be truly fulfilled without comprehending behavioural aspects of policy actors, especially with reference to their leadership behaviours. Behavioural insights in crafting potent public policy have not received adequate attention. Prewitt et al. (2012) acknowledge that behavioural science so far is lacking in applying its theories to governmental policies and programs. Leadership studies are an important part in the lexicon of behavioural sciences, and a transformational leadership style with its wide acclaim and acceptance could provide a much needed bridge to help policy actors effectively manage the conundrum of the policy arena.

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership: Concept and Dimensions

The leader as change agent was initially expressed as transformational leadership by Downton (1973) as cited in Barnett, McCormick & Conner (2001). The concept was later expanded by Burns (1978) along with transactional leadership in his understanding of political leadership. Conger and Kanungo (1998) feel that for Burns, the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership is with respect to offerings by leaders and followers to each other. Burns based his proposed construct of transformational leadership on the qualitative inquiry of the biographies of many political leaders. He also captured the concept from writings on traits, various leadership styles and leader-member exchange research. Judge & Piccolo (2004) acknowledged that more studies on transformational or charismatic leadership have been conducted in comparison to other popular theories of leadership (e.g., least preferred co-worker theory, path-goal theory, normative decision theory, substitutes for leadership) put together.

According to Geib and Swenson (2013), transformational leadership pursues positive transformations "in those who follow". Hoffman et al. (2011) contend that "Transformational leaders articulate a vision that emphasizes the way in which collective goals are consonant with follower values, causing followers to regard organizational goals as their own and submit extra effort toward goals and accomplishments."

According to Warrick (2011), a transformational leader is “a model of integrity and fairness, setting clear goals, having high expectations, encouraging people and providing support and recognition, stirring the emotions and passions of people, and getting people to look beyond their own self-interests and reach for higher goals.”

The work of Bernard M. Bass in the field of leadership opened a new dimension by elaborately conceptualizing and popularizing research in transformational leadership. According to Day and Antonakis (2011), “Neo-charismatic” approaches that comprise transformational and charismatic leadership, with some other models, comprise the most significant commanding leadership pattern over the past decade. Bass & Riggio (2006) contend that they view transformational leadership as the most positive leadership style. Bass (1985, 1990) identified a number of dimensions of transformational leadership including charisma (which was later renamed idealized influence, broken again into idealized attribute and idealized behaviour for measuring transformational leadership), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence / Charismatic leadership:

Leaders who demonstrate idealized influence/charisma according to Bass (1995) “display conviction, emphasize trust, take stands on difficult issues, present their most important values, emphasize the importance of purpose, commitment, and the ethical consequences of decisions. Such leaders are admired as role models generating pride, loyalty, confidence, and alignment around a shared purpose.” When followers see the leader as powerful, confident, ethical and steady in their targeting

of higher ideals, it is characterized as idealized influence (attributed). Idealized influence (behaviour) is the charismatic actions that encourage alignment between leader-follower values, beliefs and sense of mission (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sovasubramaniam, 2003).

Inspirational motivation:

According to Hughes (2014), a leader who utilizes inspirational motivation, develops an exciting image of the process and the results. Leaders who demonstrate inspirational motivation according to Bass (1997) “...articulate an appealing vision of the future, challenge followers with high standards, talk optimistically with enthusiasm, and provide encouragement and meaning for what needs to be done.”

Intellectual stimulation:

Transformational leadership, say Liang et al. (2011), induces creativity, and followers are inspired and praised to look at issues from a multi-dimensional perspective. Hughes (2014) asserts that even established assumptions are re-examined to look at their current significance. Conceptual ruts that are prevalent are cleared through a reformulation of the problem (Bass & Bass, 2008). According to Bass (1997), leaders who demonstrate intellectual stimulation “question assumptions, traditions, and beliefs; stimulate in others new perspectives and ways of doing things; and encourage the expression of ideas and reasons.”

Individual consideration:

Transformational leaders invest in the advancement of their followers. They also act as a mentor and guide and very intelligently assess and recognize the different needs and desires of individuals within a group (Liang et

al., 2011). The individually considerate leader caters to distinct needs for growth and achievement by personalizing interactions, facilitating two-way communication, delegation of work to develop shared leadership and recognizing qualities in each follower irrespective of cultural differences (Bass & Bass, 2008). Podsakoff et al. (1990) extended these factors by adding two dimensions - supporting followers to work toward goals and high cooperation among team members. Behling and McFillen (1996) identified six attributes of transformational leadership: Displaying empathy, dramatizing the mission, projecting self-assurance, enhancing the leader's image, assuring followers of their competency, and providing followers with opportunities to experience success. Rafferty and Griffin (2004) suggested five sub-dimensions of transformational leadership including vision, inspirational communication, intellectual stimulation, supportive leadership, and personal recognition.

Understanding Public Policy

McCool (1995) suggests that modern policy studies can be traced to political scientist Charles Merriam's effort to link the theory and practice of politics in understanding the essence of governmental activities in the 1920's. Parsons (2002) contends that Harold Lasswell is seen as the founding father of public policy as a field of study. Lasswell (1951) called for a multidisciplinary study to understand and guide the political decision processes and the role of “knowledge in and of the policy process.” Easton (1953:129) defines policy as “the authoritative allocation through the political process, of values to groups or individuals in the society”. Peters (1998) observes that, “Stated most simply, public policy is the sum of government activities, whether acting directly or through

agents, as it has an influence on the life of citizens.”

The era of “administrative state” (Waldo, 1984) saw expansion of government activities in wide areas of public concern. However in the 1980's, public policy as an instrument to solve public problems encountered a steep challenge in the name of Reaganism (after U.S President Ronald Reagan) and Thatcherism (after U.K Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher), which espoused the role of markets in solving public issues. Despite this philosophy gaining momentum all over the world, public policy making has acquired newer and important dimensions. It is still a very critical exercise in government dominated developing countries like India.

The policy process

Public policy encompasses identification of the problem, policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Scholars of public policy assert that policy is best envisaged as a process (Jenkins, 1978; Anderson, 1978). Gilliat (1984:p.345) supports the above assertion by advancing that policy decisions are not “something confined to one level of organization at the top, or at one stage at the outset, but rather something fluid and ever changing.”

The policy process involves a complex set of interacting elements over time. As per May and Wildavsky (1978: 10), the policy cycle approach: directs attention to the ways in which political actors identify problems for collective action, conceptualise issues and identify strategic points of intervention, mobilise support and enact policies, design institutions to carry them out, implement programs to achieve policy objectives, evaluate whether those objectives have been achieved, and modify, or

more rarely, terminate unsuccessful or outmoded institutions, policies, and programs.

The process stage of public policy has been explained differently by various authors. The versions advanced by Brewer and deLeon (1983), May and Wildavsky (1978), Anderson (1975), and Jenkins (1978) are the ones that are widely utilized. Scholars conventionally demarcate stages of the public policy process in these steps: agenda-setting, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation (including feedback).

Anderson (2003) views the first stage of agenda identification as identifying the problem and setting the agenda. It includes those issues which deserve the most attention. The nature of the problem is clearly stated and understood. Howlett & Ramesh (1995) and Hall et al. (1986) observe that in reality, the policy process largely originates from within the government establishment. Kingdon (1995) states that agenda is essentially “the list of subjects or problems to which governmental officials, and people outside the government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention at any given time.”

Policy formulation is the process of decision-making adopted in addressing the specific problem that has been determined (Hague & Harrop, 2004). Dye (2002) asserts that governmental bureaucracies, interest groups, legislative committee rooms, and think tanks are centres of policy formulation. Jann and Wegrich (2007) also suggest that though eventually decisions on policies rest with institutions (essentially cabinet, ministers, Parliament), it is preceded by a less formal consultation among the departments, organized interest groups and various actors in the political system.

The rational model of public policy perceives policy formulation as developing from a methodical pursuit in finding the most efficient mechanism of achieving expounded objectives (Hague & Harrop, 2004). Dror (1974) suggests that the rational model is usually conferred as a universally optimal model for decision-making. The incremental model by Lindblom (1980) advances that “people make a decision in relatively small increments rather than in big leaps.” Public policy is seen as an incremental process with minor alterations to existing decisions (Lester & Stewart, 2000).

Policy implementation involves a multitude of actors, institutions, practices and techniques, aggregating together in effecting policy to accomplish the policy intentions (Lester & Stewart, 2000). Policy implementation is broadly defined as “what happens between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of the government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action” (O'Toole, 2000:266). The implementation stage is critical because actions of politico-administrative machinery at the grassroots are less oriented by the objectives, programs and the laws set by the policy (cf. Hogwood and Gunn 1984). Therefore, policies and their stated goals may often be changed, delayed or thwarted altogether.

The underlying assumption of passing of laws by governments as the crux of policy-making was radically altered after the seminal study by Pressman and Wildavsky (1984 [1973]) on the implementation of a program in Oakland, California.

Initially, implementation was regarded from a perspective called the top-down approach. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) and Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) and others

representing the top-down school, understood implementation as the hierarchical execution of centrally-prescribed policy motives (Pülzl and Treib, 2007). This approach drew a direct connect between policies and noticed outcomes, and tended to show indifference to the role of implementers in execution of policies.

Scholars associated with the bottom-up approach, Lipsky (1971, 1980), Ingram (1977), Hjern and Hull (1982), advocate that implementation is an everyday concern and is managed by “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky 1980). Street-level bureaucrats have autonomous power that is derived from the immense discretion they command. Thinkers of this approach affirm that local bureaucrats, concerned target groups and private players have legitimate interest that should be acknowledged (Pülzl and Treib, 2007). Elmore (1985), Sabatier (1986a), and Goggin et al. (1990) have attempted to harmonize both the approaches.

Evaluation follows policy implementation and consists of spelling out the degree to which goals framed by the decision-makers have been achieved (Lester & Stewart, 2000). As a stage in the policy cycle, evaluation feeds the available information back in the policy-making process (Wollmann 2003b). Evaluation studies specifically do not cater to any phase in the policy process and are done both *ex ante* and *ex post*.

Evaluation of policy is not restricted to the work of mandated official institutions; media debates, judicial pronouncements, audit reports and scholarly studies form part of the wider evaluation mechanism. Jann and Wegrich (2007) observe that evaluations may result in assorted takeaways which might have diverse implications with regard to feedback instruments and a probable renewing of the policy process. Evaluation may

also lead to termination of a policy. Behn (1978) included policy termination as an intrinsic part of the policy process. Sunset Legislation and Zero-Based-Budgeting (ZBB) are tools that are evolved for terminating preceding policies to allow for realistic possibilities to take shape.

Dye (1998) praises the utility of the policy cycle in understanding how policies are made. It is “fairly broad in scope” (Sabatier, 2007:8) and can be applied to diverse political settings. The policy process has its limitations. The stages in the cycle do not occur in a predetermined manner. Howlett and Ramesh (1995) point out that it does not explain what leads to the advancement of policies from one stage to the next. In real world scenarios, policy making is messy (Stone, Maxwell, & Keating, 2001).

Policy Actors and Institutions

Spandau (2012) suggests that the actors (official or unofficial) that are part of the public policy process are numerous and their acts and behaviours impact the success or failure of a policy. Considine (2005) has also proposed the critical role of actors and their involvement in the public policy cycle. The role and influence of policy actors may differ between countries due to different socio-economic environments and political systems.

According to Weaver and Rockman (1993) the significance of institutions in effecting policy outcomes is well stated. Institutional strife and decision-making peculiarities of a political system shape and drive the policy agenda. This is truly evident in India where legislature, cabinet, political parties, interest groups and others operate together in a constant tug of war on policy issues. Cahn (2013) divides actors into institutional (Congress, The President and the executive bureaucracy, Courts) and

non-institutional (public, media, political parties, interest groups, political experts) in the U.S and suggests that interplay between these actors fundamentally drives policy outcomes.

In parliamentary form of governments, the legislature has become almost a rubber stamp where the brute majority of the government and political alliances dictate the working of the parliament. The judiciary, especially the highest court, has a constitutional role in interpreting the laws, policies, acts and programs coming from the legislature and the executive. Policies and programs can even be struck down or altered by judicial verdicts, as was done by the supreme court of India in striking down the National Judicial Accountability bill, and back rolling the government's attempt to initiate reforms in the appointment of judges.

Chari, Hogan & Murphy (2010) say that interest groups impact policy through multiple mechanisms that include direct interaction with the government, participation in public hearings, preparing draft reports on specific policy areas, and propagation through media. They also lobby with various important stakeholders to push their agenda. In India, groups like Bhartiya Kisan Union (representing farmers), trade unions, Narmada Bachao Andolan, etc. are important interest groups that influence the political-bureaucratic led policy process. Also known as the fourth pillar of democracy, media plays a significant role in the policy process. According to Fischer (1991), mass media forms part of the external group that impacts the policy process. Media feeds public voices to the official policy actors and carries on extensive debates and discussions on major policy areas like economic and foreign policy.

Key Policy Actors: Political Executive and Bureaucracy

Political actors stake their claim to policy making on the grounds of representing the citizens (Dente, 2014) and possessing legal authority (Anderson, 1979). The Prime Minister/President, depending upon the political system, is at the epicentre around which policy issues take shape. The perspective and outlook of the head of government has great clout in policy proposals, discussions and acceptance. As a group, the cabinet is the highest policy-making body which is assisted by various committees. The Indian official 'handbook on writing cabinet notes' (2014) declares that "the decisions taken by the Cabinet and Committees of the Cabinet are fundamental to the governance of the country and form the basis of policy formulation as also for evaluating the impact of programmes, policies, plans, projects and schemes of the Government." Peters (1998) also affirms that in countries of European or Commonwealth heritage, the cabinet or Council of Ministers performs the pivotal role in policy formulation and regulation.

The Government of the day resorts to policy initiatives to accomplish the promises made during elections and also to push its core social and economic philosophy. Certain contingencies also demand policy action. It is at the political level that most complexities of policy making is experienced and sorted out. The classic complexity of managing policy making is evident in India where the government has to cajole their coalition partners in government and also opposition political parties to achieve consensus and pass important bills in the parliament. The Prime Minister and senior ministers meeting leaders of opposition,

corporate leaders and even chief ministers of states on crucial and far-reaching decisions, is not uncommon. Sometimes the ruling party also faces dissidence among their own ranks. Senior ministers in the cabinet may also have differing opinions that may hinder or alter policy making in a variety of ways.

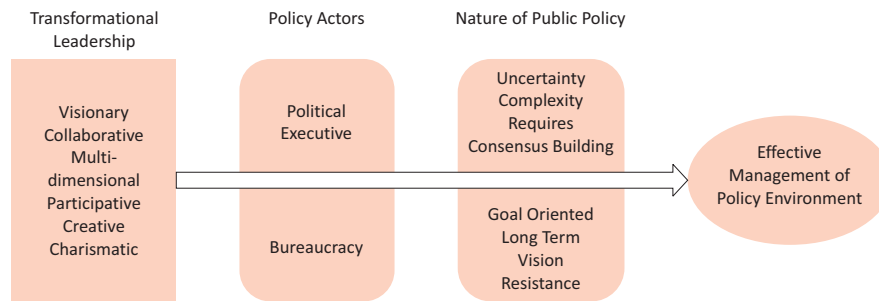
Agnihotri (1995) observes that bureaucracy in India has become very powerful in policy making with the rising power of Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Lately, PMO has become all powerful, dictating policy agenda and even closely monitoring implementation of important projects. Asmeron and Reis (1996, 8–9), highlighting the need, obligation and significance of civil servants in policy making observe that, "senior officials are professionally and morally obliged to provide their political leaders with the best policy alternatives based on sound arguments, relevant precedents, and suitability to the changing environment." Poocharoen (2012) argues that bureaucracy, due to its dexterity and long term institutional insight on public matters, often gets associated in the early phase of agenda setting. She further says that civil servants even pioneer policies and command reliability in specialized aspects of policies. This is due to their role as implementers of policy in which they have access to scarce data and information, which, in turn, is used as a feedback in policy making and evaluation. The author points out that they craft policy details by formulating the design and structure of programs. It is this formulation that would chiefly determine the overall policy outcome and stakeholders' impression of policy and government.

Peters (1995) has suggested soft and hard variants of agency ideologies. Soft ideology is when ministers get affected by bureaucrats' choices with regard to some policies, and hard

ideology is bureaucrats' activeness in initiating or changing policies. In the latter, the civil services are an operating partner in the political space of public policy. Brouwer (2015) sees bureaucrats as policy entrepreneurs and Peters (2015) views them as policy advocates, especially in countries where they remain in one department for their entire career, as they develop deep knowledge about their area, like in the U.S and Scandinavian nations. Peters (2015) goes further to contend that bureaucrats sometimes play a leadership role independent of other actors, including the political class. Wade (1990) and Henderson (2011) attribute the phenomenal development of Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong, known as four tigers, to the leading role played by bureaucracy in public policy. Japan has also seen its bureaucracy wielding great influence and performing a dominating role in policy-making post World War II (Ram Seyer & Rosenbluth, 1993). The term 'super bureaucrat' signifies the striking and bulging role of senior level bureaucrats in the policy process (Campbell & Szablowski, 1979).

Nature of public policy, policy actors and transformational leadership: A Synthesis

Proposed Theoretical Model Figure: 1



Public policy is “more art and craft than genuine science” (Wildavsky 1979). This study theorizes (see model in Figure: 1) that art and craft of public policy is very significantly related to the leadership qualities displayed by the policy actors, especially ministers and senior bureaucrats. Al Gore (2000) also asserts that public policy is about displaying leadership and reciprocating to changing situations. The nature and characteristics of public policy - which may have some distinction due to diverse political systems, societal norms and practices, awareness and participation of the citizens - have important similarities across countries. As behaviours and attributes of transformational leaders have direct and indirect impact on followers and organizational performance (Leithwood et al. 2004; Moolenaar, Daly & Slegers, 2010; Osborn & Marion, 2009), it is logically juxtaposed that leaders' behaviour would tactfully synchronize and meet multiple challenges in effectively negotiating the policy environment.

Participation, consensus building and management of conflicts

Baumgartner (2006) observes that policy conflict in Washington is ordinarily seen as a suggestion of change from one side and attempts

to maintain the status quo from the other. A strict policy in United Kingdom to cap immigration was strongly protested by the mayor of London, as it could have dented the cosmopolitan disposition of the city and its allure for global talent (Dente, 2014). Duyvendak et al., (2006) reported conflict in implementation of policies. Tummers et al., (2009) in Canada and White (1996) in Netherlands have also acknowledged the same. Ganguly (2015) talks about conflicts in the “narratives and discourses” of public policy making in India. With reference to environmental policy making in India, she advocates deliberative and participatory mechanisms for effective and acceptable public policy. The author observed a shift to “negotiated arrangements” with various actors; this also enhances the permissibility of the decision-making process.

El Sherif (1990) proposes that due to the presence of multiple stakeholders, public policy essentially involves resolving conflicts and building consensus. Goodin et al. (2006) inform that Richard Neustadt (1960) advised U.S President Kennedy that policy making is “mostly a matter of persuasion.” They assert that among all activities in policy making, policy makers should take people along with them if their conviction is to have “full force of the policy.” This is very often exhibited in systems that are pursuing liberal democracy (Etzioni, 2004). Political scientists

have contended that decision making not only involves processing and analysing information, but it primarily consists of conflict resolution within various institutions (Lindblom 1968; Wildavsky 1979). Efforts by the central government in India to ensure the passage of the Goods and Service Tax bill in the legislature by building broad consensus across party lines and winning over state governments and larger business community on matters of financial conflicts for broader legitimacy is a quintessential exhibition of harmonization in policy making.

Doherty et al. (2015), after their exhaustive and comprehensive studies of successful civic and political leadership from Bilbao, Detroit, Colombia, Rwanda, and Morocco, advance that to effect any policy reform, the leader should have the ability to forge courageous coalitions for collaboration. They proposed that a transformational leadership style possesses the “greatest opportunity” in finding acceptable ground undeterred by any cultural, geographical, and political asymmetry. Urban Transformation in Bilbao (Northern Spain) was achieved by building consensus between key institutions and political parties. Research by Leithwood (1994) suggests consensus building as one of the attributes of a transformational leader. Transformational leaders employ consensus as they are participative leaders and contribute to convergence (Braun et al.,

2013). Transformational leaders' attribute of empowering people (Hetland et al. 2007) and recognizing different needs and desires of people (individualised consideration, Bass, 1990) should stimulate participation in the process of policy making and implementation.

Ayoko & Konrad, (2012); Doucet et al. (2009) & Turan et al. (2015), in their studies, have observed that transformational leadership behaviours are more likely to manage and limit conflicts. Walter and Bruch (2010) & Wright and Pandey (2010) found a negative relationship between hierarchy and transformational leadership. Hierarchical disposition is a hindrance in reaching out to people, and vice versa. This could be especially limiting in a policy environment scenario which almost demands convergence of ideas, actors and processes. Therefore, a transformational leader, with his ability to forge alliances and empower people (Hetland et al. 2007), would be very effective in building consensus for smooth policy making and breaking deadlocks at multiple levels of the policy process.

Aligning the divergent perspectives of policy makers and people

Quite often, policy makers are ignorant, sometimes contemptuously aloof and careless about public opinion. They often believe that their own thinking regarding various policy decisions that should be taken are superior, as they are based on experience and expert knowledge. As a result, ironically, people's perceptions and opinions are not given due importance while solving their problems. In this context, Chettri & Groassman (2012) argue that largely the climate change policy deliberations are confined to an elite set of politicians, scientists, and special interest groups. The gap

among the citizens and policy makers on climate change is broadening. They emphasize that steps need to be taken to bridge this gap and empower ordinary people in feeling that they too have some role to play in the climate change policy and that their voices are important. They propose that the inability to pursue this course may result in people's indifference in actively engaging in behaviour changes that would be required to address climate change. Agarwal and Somanathan (2005), in the Indian context, draw attention to the problem of lack of any systematic structure and processes to have outside inputs, involving people or communities affected by a particular policy.

Holmes (2011) acknowledges that public administration, both in its theory and practicality, is increasingly putting people at the epicentre of policy makers' deliberations, and not just seeing them as passive recipients. The Participate, a global network of research organizations, in its report 'Work with us' (2014) demonstrated that policies can be very effective when they are made collaboratively by recognizing and valuing people's views and indigenous knowledge. The report illustrates how the goals of maternal health have gained success in Mexico due to the government's collaboration with indigenous community midwives.

With the above perspective it can be seen that Bass (1990) contends that transformational leaders, "generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission." Bass (1990a) also affirms that these characteristics of transformational leaders influence "group, organization, or society." A public servant with transformational leadership qualities would inherently reach out to people and work with them to understand and solve public issues. They would be more than willing to take people's perceptions

on board and jointly make relevant and practical public policies. As a transformational leader "seeks differing perspectives" (Bass, 1990), it is imperative that he would be very keen and appreciative of even contradictory ideas on various policy problems and implementation from one of the most important stakeholders, the people.

Policy makers as decision makers

Policy actors are at important leadership positions and are required to make decisions, both short term and long term, to achieve the desired results. Tatum et al. (2003) declared that effective decision making is one of the most critical features of an efficient leader. Kedia and Nordtvedt (2002), in their research, advocated that there is an association between leadership styles and decision making styles, and contend that transformational leaders adopt a comprehensive style of decision making. This, they explain, includes generating a large number of alternatives, extensive volume of information and a very high level of coordination of various inputs involved in decision making. Public policy at all the stages, namely problem identification, policy making and implementation, requires making important decisions. This necessitates whipping up multiple options and large amounts of information which leads to making a suitable choice.

Tambe and Krishna (2000) found that transformational leaders are rational decision makers, and they do not avoid decisions (Steplen and Roberts, 2004). Though better policy making looks at various options, there is always paucity of time, money and an indefinite collection of information, which can be counterproductive. Herbert Simons' (1982) concept of bounded rationality is very relevant to policy making, where decisions

taken cannot be all-perfect and have to be worked out within the given resources. This inherently means taking risk, which no policy maker can avoid. According to Bass (1994), transformational leaders are likely to “make decisions involving higher payoffs at higher risks.” As these leaders are “willing to look at a problem in a larger context” (Bass, 1990) and also at the same time are “proactive to incipient problems” (Bass, 1994), they are best suited in making their way through with best possible decisions.

Long term vision and goal orientation

By its very nature, public policies desire a long term perspective, understanding of the big picture and clear goal orientation. Tony Blair (former Britain PM) observed that “politics is actually in the end about policy; and the best long term politics is the best long term policy” Hallsworth & Rutter (2011). According to Anderson et al. (2000), “Public policy is purposive, goal oriented behaviour.” They are not random acts that just happen. These are formulated and implemented with objectives in mind which the government wants to achieve.

Martin & Taylor (2013) suggest that public policies are used to work out current and prospective problems, and they require a vision that can foresee the future. Enumerating the need for long term policy planning, they emphasized that short term political goals should be avoided for long term policy gains. Illustrating the role of Roger Owen Douglas (former New Zealand finance minister) who is known for radical restructuring of the New Zealand economy, Martin & Taylor (2013) praise his clear vision and meticulous preparation in achieving far-reaching results in a short span of time. They assert that Australia's long lasting national prosperity is also due to its public

policy ecosystem. But they also warn that “quality of public policy debate” in Australia is seeing a significant decline as there is a dearth of long term vision.

Singapore has become a global attraction for trading, finance and transportation. Singapore's transformation from a third world nation to a first world country in one generation is an illustration of long term policy vision of its legendary former Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew. Mahbubani (2002) notes that Singapore was one of the first nations among the developing countries that had a far reaching vision for economic development and adopted free market economic policies, and encouraged foreign investment. Chye (2015) has emphasized the contribution of long-term plans with precise targets as the key in making Singapore a top tourist destination.

An OECD (2015) report prescribes that governments should have a long term vision for the future and should be able to fulfil the goals set out in the vision. The OECD document observes that trust and communication are two essential elements for the vision to be acceptable to the people. The report also states that leadership is critical in driving policies contributing to a strategic vision.

Transformational leaders have a “clear vision of the future” and also gain trust by clearly articulating that vision (Northouse, 2001). Leaders demonstrating inspirational motivation according to Bass (1997) “articulate an appealing vision of the future”. To fulfil that vision, transformational leaders develop an exciting image of the process and the outcome (Hughes, 2014). Some researchers believe that transformational leaders have the ability to increase the commitment level of members, and enhance their capacity and engagement in fulfilling

goals (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Chew & Chan, 2008). Transformational leaders create awareness and acceptance of the goals and mission of the organization (Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership behaviours have a direct correlation with long-term high performance (Cameron, 2008) which in the domain of public policy is the core of any policy exercise. Transformational leaders, in having a long term frame of reference, emphasizing trust and purpose (Bass, 1985), setting clear goals (Warrick, 2011) and exhibiting inspirational communication (Rafferty and Griffin, 2004) would be an asset in issue identification, energizing the policy ecosystem and comprehending the policy direction for a long term wider goal realization.

Change management and innovation

Hallsworth & Rutter (2011) observe that the new Policy Skills Framework for civil services in U.K indicates that policy is about “making change happen in the real world.” In context of change in the public policy area, Bennett and Howlett (1992) talk of “new and innovative policies.” Greener (2002) asserts that change is difficult as institutions are inflexible and actors are not willing to give away the old ways of doing things. Folger & Skarlicki (1999) also suggest that if individuals' status and security are challenged they would resist and would act to maintain the status quo. The significance of leadership to change management is very well understood. Transformational leaders display abilities that are needed to achieve change successfully (Eisenbach, 1999).

Public policies are formulated and implemented to break rigidities, thereby solving problems by pushing for newer mechanisms and processes. They break status quo and introduce new and fresh perspectives

in multiple areas of public interest. How to bring about change, dealing with resistance to change and breaking new ground through innovative thinking are some of the challenges which policy makers face.

Policies of governments can be seen as responding to change and also becoming an inception of change (Gornitzka, Kogan and Amaral 2005: 9). The core of public policy is the reframing and readjusting of economic settings and environment (Bromley, 2009). This indicates clearly that policies have social and economic equality as their agenda, especially in developing countries. The necessary changes through the medium of policy face several hurdles due to vested interests of entrenched classes and institutions. Lewin's (1951) change model depicts how driving forces for change need to be strengthened, breaking the status quo and convincing actors about the suitability and benefits of change.

The green revolution in India in the 60's to achieve food self-sufficiency, opening up of the Indian economy in the early 90's and massive poverty alleviation programs are illustrations of how state policies elevate the status of people and are instrumental in transforming a nation. Managing change requires conviction and positivity. This was in full display by Indian leadership when faced with tough economic problems in the 1990's and also with establishing Indian nuclear capability. Bass (1999) asserts that transformational leaders recognize the need for change, institutionalize change, display conviction, and take stands on difficult issues. An individual policy actor's (especially critical ones - ministers and senior bureaucrats) self-confidence could be very potent in pushing for bold policy changes leading to transforming of the policy area, that could be community, sector or geographical in nature. In this context, House and Howell's (1992)

thinking that charismatic leaders (crucial dimension of a transformational leader) are full of a high level of self-confidence, is significant.

The implementation stage is very important in transforming change oriented policies into action on the ground. Transformational leaders spend considerable time in coaching and guidance; therefore, affinity with people would be enhanced (cf. Liu & Batt, 2010). This would include mutual commitment, respect, confidence, and interpersonal help (Feldman, 2004; Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007), which would be very beneficial in bringing people together and accomplishing goals, and breaking resistance to change.

Having a vision for change and successfully managing that change requires creativity and innovation. Unconventional thinking is a must in the domain of policy making to provide for inventive solutions to the growing multitude of problems. World Bank (2010) in its report advocates adopting innovative policies to manage inclusive growth in developing countries. Stepp (2011), discussing the American energy policy, calls for making innovation the driving ambition of neglected energy and climate policy choices. Regarding British Civil Services, Hallsworth & Rutter (2011) note that Whitehall policy makers should negotiate with policy problems with innovation and flexibility.

Transformational leaders are well suited to foster innovation and creativity. Sookaneknun and Ussahawanitchakit (2012) advocate that transformational leadership is positively related to organizational innovation capability. Flexible leaders adapt to new circumstances and Cohen (1995) opined that flexibility is the essence of "transformational leadership" style. Transformational leaders, in creating two-way

communication, build an open learning environment (Berson and Avolio 2004) which fosters innovation.

Path breaking, dramatic and profound changes through policy demand looking at things from different perspectives. In their landmark article, Rittel and Webber (1973) put forth the term 'wicked problem' to social planning problems that are not solvable by adopting typical traditional linear approaches. The chairman of Australian Public Service Commission, John Lloyd (2011) says that a traditional bureaucracy, operating in silos, with power at the top cannot address the intricacies and uncertainty of wicked problems. He gives a call to activate and vitalize "innovation and experimentation" to tackle wicked problems.

With 'wicked problems' in our backdrop, it is vital to look at what Liang et al. (2011) observe about transformational leadership. They assert that TL inspires creativity, and followers are encouraged and facilitated to have a multi-dimensional perspective. Leaders also encourage non-traditional or out-of-the-box thinking for attaining objectives. Barbuto (2005) assert that TL constantly reviews the benchmark of operations so that novel and creative methods for attaining the mission can be explored. Hughes (2014) asserts that even established assumptions are re-examined to look at their current significance. Conceptual ruts that are prevalent are cleared through a reformulation of the problem (Bass & Bass, 2008). With these attributes, transformational leaders could be reasoned to play a very stabilizing role in managing crucial changes envisioned by policy makers at the highest level and also instil the culture of innovation throughout the policy chain.

Conclusion

Leadership behaviours have been studied extensively in the corporate world, both empirically and normatively. What kind of leadership attributes would best aid and induce better policy making and successful engagement with policy actors and the environment should make a very fascinating and dynamic area of research. Likes of Hammond & Knott (2000) have posed the question - Which "leadership strategies" function effectively for a political executive in attaining policy goals? In carving out leadership behaviours for a political executive that can be successful, Wilson (1989) contends that political executives who prevail are those who have a vision, are able to communicate that vision and motivate the bureaucrats to work on that vision. This is a clear assertion of adopting transformational leadership to achieve policy objectives.

Transformational leadership theory is a comprehensive theory with its well laid out behaviours and the ability in efficaciously administering in a given environment, and influencing people for higher ends. Bass (1990) has also

affirmed the universality of transformational leadership style. Jaskyte (2004) observes that transformational leaders develop allegiance to the organization's mission and vision, have a futuristic outlook, are open-minded, enterprising, become role models and encourage people to transcend their own self-interest for larger and higher interests. The characteristics of public policy, the complexity and rigidities, and the key role played by policy actors (political executive and bureaucrats) in public policy process aligns well with the conditions, peculiarities and mechanisms in which transformational leadership operates.

It has been an endeavour of this paper to wield a theoretical panorama to gaze at the relationship between transformational leadership behaviours and the ability of critical public policy actors to effectively transact the morass of public policy ecosystem.

Though some leadership traits are present in individuals, planned learning after careful assessment is

required to widely develop essential leadership behaviours. Political executives learn through the hustle and bustle of the political arena and usually they are quick in learning the craft of influencing people and managing work. Here, the development of leadership attributes is effected more through their upbringing, self-learning, their external environment, and also by their close coterie, which may include official as well as unofficial participants. Civil servants, on the other hand, work in an institutional framework and form a permanent part of the governmental system. Any broad based leadership development and advancement inculcating transformational leadership behaviours could be undertaken with them. There is need for effective collaboration between government, public policy centres, schools and leadership schools to develop a robust mechanism to continuously exchange ideas and practices in light of the significance of leadership in the policy process.

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