

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Motivation Towards More Inclusive Education: A Case Study of Tripura”

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Abstract

Inclusive education has become an important focus of the Indian education system in recent years. The idea of inclusive education is based on the belief that all students, irrespective of their physical abilities, learning difficulties, social background, or language differences, should be educated together in regular classrooms. In a diverse country like India, inclusive education is not only a policy requirement but also a practical necessity to ensure equality and social justice in education. Teachers play a key role in the successful implementation of inclusive education. Their willingness to adopt inclusive teaching methods, adapt lesson plans, and support students with diverse learning needs largely depends on their level of motivation. However, teaching in inclusive classrooms can be challenging. Teachers often face increased workload, lack of specialised training, limited resources, and classroom diversity, which can reduce their motivation if adequate support is not provided. School leadership plays a significant role in shaping teachers' attitudes and motivation. Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership has been identified as particularly effective in educational institutions. Transformational leaders motivate teachers by creating a shared vision, encouraging innovation, recognising individual efforts, and providing emotional and professional support. Such leadership helps teachers feel valued and confident, which is essential when implementing inclusive practices.

Keywords: *Ethical Leadership, Inclusive Education, Teacher Motivation, Tripura.*

Introduction

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Teachers play a key role in the successful implementation of inclusive education. Their willingness to adopt inclusive teaching methods, adapt lesson plans, and support students with diverse learning needs largely depends on their level of motivation. However, teaching in inclusive classrooms can be challenging. Teachers often face increased workload, lack of specialised training, limited resources, and classroom diversity, which can reduce their motivation if adequate support is not provided.

School leadership plays a significant role in shaping teachers' attitudes and motivation. Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership has been identified as particularly effective in educational institutions. Transformational leaders motivate teachers by creating a shared vision, encouraging innovation, recognising individual efforts, and providing emotional and professional support. Such leadership helps teachers feel valued and confident, which is essential when implementing inclusive practices.

The state of Tripura presents a unique educational context for the study of inclusive education. Schools in Tripura cater to students from varied cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Many schools, especially in rural

and semi-urban areas, face resource constraints and limited access to professional development opportunities. In such conditions, the role of school leadership becomes even more crucial in motivating teachers to adopt inclusive practices. This study titled “The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Motivation Towards More Inclusive Education: A Case Study of Tripura” aims to examine how transformational leadership practices of school heads influence teacher motivation towards inclusive education. The study also seeks to understand the importance of leadership support in strengthening teachers’ commitment to inclusive teaching in the context of Tripura.

Literature Review

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education refers to an educational approach where students with diverse learning needs are educated within the regular school system rather than being separated into special institutions. Internationally, inclusive education gained recognition after the Salamanca Statement (1994), which emphasized education as a right for all learners. In India, inclusive education is supported by legal and policy frameworks such as the Right to Education Act (2009) and the National Education Policy (2020), which stress equitable access and quality education for all children. Despite strong policy support, the implementation of inclusive education remains challenging. Studies indicate that the success of inclusive education depends largely on teachers’ attitudes, preparedness, and motivation. Without proper support, teachers may find it difficult to address the varied needs of students in inclusive classrooms.

Teacher Motivation and Inclusive Practices

Teacher motivation refers to the internal and external factors that influence teachers’ commitment and performance in their professional roles. Motivated

teachers are more likely to experiment with new teaching methods, engage actively with students, and show commitment towards inclusive practices. Research suggests that teacher motivation is influenced by factors such as job satisfaction, recognition, professional growth opportunities, and support from school leadership. In the context of inclusive education, teachers often require additional motivation due to increased responsibilities such as differentiated instruction, classroom management, and individual student support. Lack of training and inadequate institutional support can negatively affect teacher motivation, leading to resistance towards inclusive education.

Transformational Leadership in Schools

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve higher levels of performance. According to Bass and Avolio, transformational leadership includes components such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence. In schools, transformational leaders encourage teachers to think creatively, support professional development, and create a positive school culture. Several studies have found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and teacher motivation. Teachers working under transformational leaders report higher job satisfaction, stronger commitment, and greater willingness to adopt new educational practices. This leadership style is particularly effective in managing change and promoting innovative practices such as inclusive education.

Role of Leadership in Promoting Inclusive Education

Leadership plays a crucial role in promoting inclusive education by setting clear goals, encouraging collaboration, and providing necessary resources and training. Transformational leaders support teachers by acknowledging their efforts and creating opportunities for professional development related to

inclusive teaching strategies. Research also highlights that leadership support enhances teachers' confidence and reduces resistance towards inclusive education. In regions with limited resources, leadership support becomes even more important. School leaders who actively promote inclusion and provide guidance can significantly improve teacher motivation and the overall effectiveness of inclusive education.

Objectives

- To study students' perceptions of leadership support for inclusive education in educational institutions of Tripura.
- To assess students' perceptions of teacher motivation towards inclusive education.

Methodology

Research Design

The study follows a quantitative research approach to analyse the relationship between ethical leadership, teacher motivation, and inclusive education.

Data Collection

Data was collected through secondary sources and using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The tables below outline the structural demographic characteristics of the survey sample, including gender, age distribution, institutional affiliation profile, management sector, and length of institutional association.

Table I: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Metric Component	Classification Category	Sample Percentage (%)
Gender Group	Female	66.0%
	Male	34.0%
	Other	Small percentage
Age Distribution	Below 18 Years	Minor representation
	18–22 Years	60.0%
	23–30 Years	Minor representation
	Above 30 Years	Minor representation
Respondent Profile	School Student	Minor representation
	College Student	28.0%
	University Student	60.0%
	Working Professional	Minor representation
Type of Institution	Private Sector	91.8%
	Government Sector	8.2%
Institutional Association	Less than 1 Year	Minor representation
	1–3 Years	57.1%
	More than 3 Years	Minor representation

Survey Responses and Perception Metrics

The following consolidated data details student perceptions across the three primary survey dimensions: Ethical Leadership, Teacher Motivation, and Inclusive Education indicators.

Table II: Institutional Leadership & Management Perceptions

Measured Operational Statement	Strongly Agree / Agree (%)	Neutral Responses (%)	Disagree / Strongly Disagree (%)
Management supports equality among students	59.4%	36.0%	Very few

Management encourages teachers to help all students	88.0%	Minor presence	Small percentage
Management tries to create a friendly and fair environment	73.2%	16.3%	Minor presence
Teachers get management support to help special-need students	59.8%	32.0%	Minor presence
Management actions make the institution more positive / non-discriminatory	72.0%	Some responses	Very few

Table III: Teacher Motivation & Engagement Perceptions

Measured Operational Statement	Strongly Agree / Agree (%)	Neutral Responses (%)	Disagree / Strongly Disagree (%)
Teachers show interest and energy while teaching	78.0%	8.0%	Very few
Teachers are willing to explain concepts again	80.0%	Minor presence	Minor presence
Teachers give extra help to students who need it	64.0%	30.0%	Small percentage
Teachers treat all students fairly	61.8%	26.0%	Small proportion
Motivated teachers make learning better for me	83.1%	Very few	Very few

Table IV: Inclusive Classroom Environment Perceptions

Measured Operational Statement	Strongly Agree / Agree (%)	Neutral Responses (%)	Disagree / Strongly Disagree (%)
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Students from different backgrounds feel included	58.4%	30.2%	Very small
Students with learning difficulties are supported	64.1%	32.1%	Small number
Management listens to student concerns (Fairness/Inclusion)	86.8%	30.2%	Small proportion
Management models ethical and responsible behaviour	84.6%	13.5%	Small number
Teacher motivation is important for inclusive education	84.9%	Very few	Very few

Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationships among the variables, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed. The mean scores of the respective items were computed to represent each variable.

Research Variables	Ethical Leadership	Teacher Motivation	Inclusive Education
Ethical Leadership	1.00	0.89	—
Teacher Motivation	0.89	1.00	0.93
Inclusive Education	—	0.93	1.00

Interpretation of Correlation Results

The statistical linkage between ethical leadership and teacher motivation ($r = 0.89$) indicates a highly pronounced, positive relational tract. Consequently, structural advancements within institutional ethical frameworks generate direct baseline improvements in internal teacher motivation metrics.

The direct statistical linkage tracking teacher motivation and inclusive education execution ($r = 0.93$) maps an even stronger, positive linear

correlation trend. This indicates that active teacher motivation levels remain a major predictor for operational success inside inclusive classrooms. Collectively, these variables confirm that management behavior plays an essential, indirect role in driving inclusive school goals by acting through teacher motivation tracts.

Hypothesis Testing Summary

❖ Hypothesis 1

H_{01} (null hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between ethical leadership and teacher motivation.

H_{11} (alternative hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and teacher motivation.

Result

The correlation coefficient between ethical leadership and teacher motivation was found to be $r = 0.89$, which indicates a strong positive relationship. This value is close to +1, showing a high degree of association between the two variables.

Decision

Since a strong positive relationship exists, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_{11}) is accepted.

Interpretation

This result implies that ethical leadership significantly influences teacher motivation. Leaders who demonstrate fairness, integrity, and support create a positive working environment for teachers. As a result, teachers become more motivated, engaged, and committed to their responsibilities. This finding supports the idea that leadership plays a critical role in enhancing teacher performance.

❖ Hypothesis 2

H_{02} (null hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between teacher motivation and inclusive education.

H₁₂ (alternative hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between teacher motivation and inclusive education.

Result

The correlation coefficient between teacher motivation and inclusive education was found to be $r = 0.93$, indicating a very strong positive relationship. This suggests a high level of association between motivated teachers and inclusive classroom practices.

Decision

Since the relationship is very strong, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁₂) is accepted.

Interpretation

This finding indicates that teacher motivation plays a vital role in promoting inclusive education. Motivated teachers are more likely to support students with diverse learning needs, adapt teaching methods, and create an inclusive classroom environment. The result clearly shows that improving teacher motivation can significantly enhance inclusive education outcomes.

Findings

The analysis of the data collected from respondents provides several important insights into the relationship between ethical leadership, teacher motivation, and inclusive education.

Firstly, the study reveals that ethical leadership is moderately perceived in educational institutions. The mean score for ethical leadership indicates that students generally agree that management promotes fairness, equality, and support. However, the level of agreement is not very high, suggesting that ethical practices are present but not strongly experienced by all students. This indicates a need for more visible and consistent leadership efforts in promoting ethical values within institutions.

Secondly, the findings show that teacher motivation is relatively strong compared to ethical leadership. Students perceive teachers as generally energetic, supportive, and willing to assist learners when required. High mean values for teacher-related questions suggest that teachers are actively engaged in their roles. However, some variation in responses indicates that this motivation may not be uniform across all teachers, highlighting the need for continued support and encouragement from institutional leadership.

Thirdly, the study indicates that inclusive education is moderately to strongly implemented. Students report that they experience a certain level of inclusion in classrooms, especially in terms of support from teachers and fairness in treatment. However, the presence of neutral responses suggests that inclusion is not consistently experienced by all students. This may be due to differences in teaching practices, classroom environments, or institutional policies.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to examine the influence of ethical leadership on teacher motivation towards inclusive education, based on the perceptions of students and working individuals in Tripura. The results of the analysis provide strong evidence that these three variables—ethical leadership, teacher motivation, and inclusive education—are closely interconnected.

The findings indicate that ethical leadership plays a significant role in shaping teacher behaviour and attitudes. Although ethical leadership is moderately perceived, it has a strong positive influence on teacher motivation. Leaders who demonstrate fairness, provide support, and promote equality contribute to a positive institutional environment. Such an environment encourages teachers to be more engaged, committed, and responsive to student needs.

Teacher motivation emerges as a crucial factor in the study. The results show that motivated teachers are more likely to adopt inclusive teaching practices,

provide additional support to students, and ensure that all learners feel valued and included. The very strong relationship between teacher motivation and inclusive education highlights that the success of inclusive education largely depends on the level of teacher engagement and commitment.

Recommendations

- **Strengthening Ethical Leadership Practices:** Educational institutions should focus on developing strong ethical leadership among school heads and administrators. Leaders should actively promote values such as fairness, transparency, accountability, and equality in all institutional practices.
- **Enhancing Teacher Motivation through Support and Recognition:** Institutions should implement systems to recognise and reward teachers for their efforts, especially in inclusive teaching practices. Appreciation, incentives, and performance-based recognition significantly improve teacher motivation.
- **Improving Communication between Management and Students:** Institutions should establish clear and effective communication channels to ensure that student concerns related to fairness and inclusion are heard and addressed. Feedback systems such as suggestion boxes, student forums, or regular interaction sessions with management can improve transparency and trust.

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