Transformational Leadership in Hybrid and Remote Management: A Case Study in Higher Education After the COVID-19 Pandemic

BY

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Abstract

The consequences of the Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) negatively impacted many organizations. In the United States, the post-secondary education system was significantly impacted by the adverse effects of the post-COVID-19 pandemic, specifically in the management of remote and hybrid employees. Using transformational leadership theory, this study explored effective strategies needed in the higher education system to improve the remote and hybrid working management systems and increase employee job satisfaction in the education environment. Data from this study were collected using structured interview questions from nine supervisors with supervisory experience in a traditional university setting. The findings of this study revealed three major themes as strategies needed to improve the remote and hybrid working management systems: (a) transformational leadership method, (b) performance-based and task-oriented management, and (c) inspirational motivation. The findings also revealed that leading hybrid and remote teams in a post-COVID-19 environment requires efficient strategies for enhancing working conditions and job satisfaction and promoting positive social change in a higher education working environment.

Keywords: *Remote and hybrid management, Transformational leadership, Higher education, Effective strategies*

1. INTRODUCTION

The educational management system encompasses a tiered lineage of leaders, including supervisors or middle managers, all of which were highly affected by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic [1, 2]. During the pandemic, most supervisors and middle managers were forced to work in hybrid or fully remote settings with minimal guidance on the best approaches to leading their teams amidst the new work modalities [3]. Consequently, leading fully remote or hybrid staff teams was challenging, in large part due to the transition from in-person (pre-COVID) to fully remote (during COVID) to hybrid/remote (post-COVID). Thus, identifying effective strategies for supervisors or managers to lead virtual and hybrid teams impacted by the post-COVID-19 work shift is crucial to supporting supervisors in navigating unfamiliar working conditions.

2. BACKGROUND

During the COVID-19 pandemic, leading virtual teams became synonymous with 'going to work.' With the advance of technology, the internet became a conduit for feasibly managing, leading, and building solid relationships within hybrid and remote teams [6]. Birkinshaw et al. [1] discussed the role of supervisors in leading virtual teams in a post-COVID-19 era. They found that choosing an effective

managerial leadership strategy is paramount to reaching the planned goals. While the effects of the post-pandemic work schedule affected various organizations and industries, the higher education system was seriously impacted. Alward and Phelps [7] argued that academic leaders or managers should explore the benefits of using traditional or remote models by navigating their managerial roles to explore the appropriate techniques and facilitate the virtual higher education landscape. Dinh et al. [6] opined that leaders' perspectives of their teams are accepted once the shift to a virtual setting has occurred with employee engagement.

Education leaders, or managers, should improve employee engagement and job satisfaction to promote a positive higher education working environment.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Organizational managers require appropriate leadership to align followers with the organization's mission. Bass [8] introduced transformational leadership theory and many other leadership concepts, such as democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, etc., depending on managers' or leaders' managerial style and vision. To better understand the perspective of supervisors, specifically middle managers in a post-COVID-19 environment, organizational managers need an effective and appropriate leadership style to increase motivation and align employees in accepting remote or hybrid shifts. The general business problem was that some leaders in higher education encountered many challenges in balancing employees who worked in remote or hybrid modalities. The business problem was that some higher education managers lacked effective strategies to manage hybrid or fully remote shifts better and lead their teams efficiently with minimal guidance to increase job satisfaction.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main goal of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences supervisors of staff in higher education had after transitioning to either a hybrid or fully remote work model. Within this exploration was an evaluation of the supervisor as a leader, the resources they obtained from their organizations, how those resources assisted with mitigating the new work modality, and the impact the shift to hybrid or fully remote work models has had on their leadership style. The implications for positive social change will enable the potential for leaders in the higher education system to showcase the lived experiences of supervisors of hybrid and remote staff and how these experiences could be leveraged to create programs specifically for supervisors. Leaders may also leverage the findings in this study to conduct their focus groups and data retrieval.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1. Transformational Leadership Theory

The conceptual framework for this study was the transformational leadership theory established by Bass in 1985. Bass [8] was the first to introduce transformational leadership among other leadership theories, such as democratic, transactional, and autocratic. Per Bass [8],

transformational leadership elevates followers' quality and performance because transformational leaders can motivate other members of the organization to build trust, reduce turnover, and enhance professional development for followers [9]. Bass [9] argued that the role of leaders is to lead followers and align them with the missions and visions of the organization. Bass [8] added that the transactional leadership theory focuses on a task-oriented approach, while other theories often intersect at the crossroads of employee outcomes. A focus on employees as human capital is one of many considerations that a leader uses to motivate employees and increase job satisfaction.

According to Bass [8], transformational leadership is always popular and constantly strives to do what is suitable for people in the organization. Bass [8] focuses on the required goals and how the goals can influence an employee to achieve them. Bass [9] also described the characteristic of transformational leadership as the one that has charisma, inspiration, and stimulation to provide individual consideration.

Transformational leadership focuses more on organizational leaders' ability to stimulate their employees' or followers' intellect by showing them how problems should be resolved efficiently and objectively [9]. This means that transformational leaders use a solutions-based approach to motivate employees to align with the organizational goals. Specifically, transformational leaders inspire motivation to accomplish organizational missions [8]. Transformational leaders are also committed to efficiency and should be able to listen more than using bossing attitudes [8, 9].

In addition to the transformational leaders' attributes explained above, real leaders should also focus on the leader/employee relationship to illustrate the ethical and moral qualities of both employees and leaders [9]. Grah et al. [10] examined employees' mindsets and proactive personalities toward work engagement and suggested that transformational leadership may or may not be suitable to promote employee engagement or workforce productivity. Jaman et al. [11] opined that engagement is neither directly nor indirectly related to transformational leadership. As shown above, not everyone believes in the tenets of transformational leadership. However, their beliefs have not stopped the advancement of this theory.

This study is significant in analyzing how supervisors are impacted while leading hybrid and fully remote teams and how their leadership impacts employee motivations to accept this change; transformational leadership appears to be the best approach to leading employees in higher education. Additionally, transformational leadership will contribute to enhancing organizational culture and performance.

5.2. Organization and Structure

The organization and structure of the higher education system, particularly within higher education systems such as universities, are intricately designed to fulfill the institution's overarching mission of academic excellence, research advancement, and student development. Faculty positions form the cornerstone of this structure, serving as the

intellectual backbone responsible for teaching, research, and scholarly contributions. Professors, lecturers, and researchers play pivotal roles in delivering curriculum, mentoring students, and producing groundbreaking research to advance knowledge in their respective fields [12]. During hardship situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty members have exhibited remarkable adaptability, transitioning to remote teaching modalities while delivering high-quality education and maintaining academic rigor.

Complementing the faculty, university staff members form a diverse workforce that supports various administrative, operational, and student-facing functions crucial to the institution's functioning. From admissions and enrollment management to facilities maintenance and student services, staff members play essential roles in ensuring the seamless operation of the university ecosystem. In times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, staff members have demonstrated resilience and resourcefulness, implementing contingency plans, providing essential support services, and adapting administrative processes to meet the evolving needs of everyone [13]. Moreover, the physical and digital environment of the university, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and online learning platforms, serves as the backdrop for teaching, learning, and research activities. During unattended situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, universities have leveraged technology and infrastructure to facilitate remote collaboration, maintain continuity in academic operations, and ensure the safety and well-being of their educational community.

5.3. Leadership and Management

Leadership and management methods are crucial in any organization that needs to meet its missions or goals. By experiencing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, leadership and management in the higher education sector have undergone significant adaptations to effectively oversee hybrid or remote work arrangements. Embracing a proactive approach, leaders in higher education have fostered a culture of flexibility and innovation, recognizing the importance of maintaining productivity and morale amidst unprecedented circumstances. Mozammel & Haan [14] used surveys to conduct a quantitative study of 64 employees of the banking industry in Bangladesh. The authors concluded that the transformational leadership style was not always a sound management tool for engaging employees in the workforce. Due to the poor management system in Bangladesh, the transformational leadership theory was ineffective in promoting employee satisfaction. Clear communication channels have been paramount, with managers employing various digital platforms to ensure that staff remain informed, connected, and supported regardless of location. By leveraging technology and cultivating an environment of trust, leaders have empowered employees to adapt to new work modalities while prioritizing their well-being.

Moreover, effective leadership and management education during the pandemic has emphasized maintaining academic standards and student engagement. Managers have collaborated closely with faculty to develop robust online learning frameworks that uphold educational integrity and student outcomes. Chagadama et al. [15] argued that leaders have equipped staff with the necessary tools and skills to deliver high-quality instruction in virtual environments through ongoing training and professional development initiatives. Simultaneously, management strategies have focused on promoting a sense of community and belonging among students, leveraging digital platforms for interactive discussions, virtual events, and peer-to-peer support networks. By fostering resilience and adaptability within their teams, leaders in higher education have navigated the complexities of remote work while upholding institutional excellence and student success. Regarding students' success, managers should consider how the pandemic would affect in-person learning, recruitment, sports, budgets, tuition, teaching, and the future of learning in the new context of the pandemic [16]. Essentially, COVID-19 perpetuated paradigm shifts for those institutions that were not entirely on board with distance education learning and created a pathway for distance education to become a method of instruction [13].

5.4. Innovation and Technology

The success of leading or managing people remotely or in a hybrid environment depends on the efficiency of innovation and technology. In the post-COVID era, innovation and technology have become indispensable tools for managing staff and supervisors operating in hybrid or remote environments in higher education. Institutions increasingly embrace cutting-edge solutions to streamline administrative processes, enhance communication channels, and foster collaboration among dispersed teams. Technology is revolutionizing how supervisors oversee staff, from cloud-based project management platforms to virtual meeting software, enabling seamless coordination, supervision, and performance evaluation regardless of physical location. Moreover, innovative digital tools facilitate professional development opportunities for staff, offering online training modules, webinars, and virtual workshops to enhance their skills and adaptability in a rapidly evolving landscape [17].

Luamba et al. [17] argued that technology is pivotal in optimizing management practices, empowering leaders to make data-driven decisions, and monitoring performance metrics effectively. Digital dashboards and analytics tools provide real-time insights into key performance indicators, enabling supervisors to identify trends, anticipate challenges, and implement targeted interventions to support staff and enhance productivity. Additionally, virtual collaboration platforms facilitate cross-departmental communication and strategic planning, enabling supervisors to align institutional objectives with departmental goals and foster a culture of innovation and excellence. By harnessing the power of innovation and technology, higher education institutions are poised to navigate the complexities of the post-COVID landscape while advancing their mission of academic excellence and student success [13].

5.5. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is essential for motivating employees and reducing turnover in the workplace. Grah et al. [10] argued

that job satisfaction is fulfilling a rewarding performance that provides security to those engaged in the workplace [10, 15]. The impact of job satisfaction on higher education management, particularly among supervisors and staff working in hybrid or remote settings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, cannot be overstated [13]. Jaman et al. [10] argued that job satisfaction is crucial in employee morale, productivity, and retention within the university environment. Supervisors who prioritize the well-being and satisfaction of their staff are more likely to cultivate a positive work culture, foster strong team cohesion, and promote a sense of belonging among employees. In remote work arrangements, job satisfaction becomes even more critical as it directly influences the engagement, motivation, and commitment of staff members who may feel isolated or disconnected from the traditional campus setting. Supervisors must implement strategies to enhance job satisfaction, such as regular check-ins, recognition of achievements, and professional growth and development opportunities, to ensure their teams' continued success and resilience.

Moreover, job satisfaction among staff in higher education significantly impacts the overall quality of teaching, research, and administrative support services provided to faculty and students, as well as by the institution [6, 15]. Satisfied staff members are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of job performance, creativity, and innovation, leading to improved outcomes for students and stakeholders. In hybrid or remote work environments, where communication and collaboration may be more challenging, maintaining high levels of job satisfaction becomes paramount to mitigate potential disruptions and ensure the continuity of academic operations. Supervisors must prioritize their staff's well-being and job satisfaction through effective leadership, transparent communication, and proactive support initiatives to navigate the unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and foster a resilient and cohesive workforce within the higher education system.

6. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study used the transformational leadership theory and the phenomenological approach to examine the experiences of supervisors who have either hybrid, remote, or both staff and how they lead staff in these different work environments. A qualitative research method was appropriate for this study because it aimed to explore the impacts of supervising staff that worked in a hybrid or remote setting and how supervisor staff leadership style impacted other staff job satisfaction. Luamba et al. [18] argued that in the qualitative research method, researchers analyze the participants' experiences in detail by collecting data from individuals who experienced the phenomenon.

However, other methods, like quantitative and mixed-method, were not appropriate because the quantitative method focuses on using numeric data to test hypotheses, and mixed-method combines qualitative and quantitative methods.

7. METHOD

7.1. Population and Sampling

The participant pool for this study consisted of nine supervisors who oversee staff employees within institutions of higher education in the United States, which aligns with the standard sample size in phenomenological studies. Participants agreed to participate voluntarily and had supervisory experience and roles since 2019 from public and private institutions.

As researchers, our primary goal was to ensure the sample size was large enough to manage and aggregate valuable data for the research study. We also ensured the sample size was large enough to obtain data saturation to enhance the reliability of the study. Luamba et al. [18] described that researchers achieved data saturation when no new information emerged. We reached data saturation after interviewing the nine participants.

Luamba et al. [18] opined that more than five participants in a qualitative analysis is acceptable to provide enough information. The number of participants was limited to nine to ensure that each participant's experience was given enough credit and time to respond to the interview questions. Participants also met the eligibility criteria, which were (a) being currently supervising two or more staff employees working remotely or hybrid, (b) being a supervisor or middle manager, and (c) having been in a supervisory position since 2019.

7.2. Procedures

The research question for this qualitative study was: What strategies have supervisors used when leading employees in either hybrid or fully remote settings? The six interview questions were: (a) What was your experience with leading hybrid and remote teams before and after the COVID-19 pandemic? (b) Describe the structure of your department and how it functioned before COVID-19. (c) How did the structure and functions of your department work during and after COVID-19? (d) What were some of the supervising challenges you encountered during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic? (e) What leadership skills did you use to motivate employees who worked remotely or in a hybrid environment? (f) What other information would you like to add or share regarding your strategies to increase employee engagement?

For data collection, we conducted one-on-one interviews with each participant within 45 minutes. All interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom and recorded. After the interviews, data was transcribed and coded to ensure participants' confidentiality and privacy. The participants were coded as P1, P2, P3…etc.

8. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis for this study was completed using ATLAS.ti software. ATLAS.ti assists researchers in translating their data into various analytical subsets. It can be used when dissecting quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods data. The software allows users to upload their data

and assess trends and patterns. Moreover, ATLAS.ti offers many other tools to maintain and oversee emerging themes and patterns.

For our data analysis, we transcribed all audio-recorded interviews into text, reviewed their contents for clarity or discrepancies, and ensured transcript accuracy. After that, we uploaded all transcripts and other documentation into ATLAS.ti. ATLAS.ti provided tracks and patterns that helped determine the thematic outcomes for consolidation. Once all documentation was consolidated and upon the completion of the coding review, the information was exported into an Excel spreadsheet to determine the relationship between the research questions and the information obtained from the interviews.

9. FINDINGS

Using a thematic analysis, three major themes and six sub-themes emerged from ATLAS.ti. The three major themes were (a) transformational leadership method, (b) performance-based and task-oriented, and (c) inspirational motivation. The sub-themes were: (a) focus on employees, (c) performance-based, (d) task-oriented, and (e) mitigating stress.

Theme 1: Transformational Leadership Method. Professional leadership and management are not new to organizations. However, facilitating employees' adherence to the organization's missions and visions depends on the ability to lead people efficiently. According to Bass [9], transformational leaders should demonstrate a commitment to goal achievement by staying calm and managing people's pressure during challenging situations. This aligns with the transformational leadership style, which essentially focuses on motivating and stimulating people in the organization to be involved in meeting the shared goal of the organization. Jaman et al. [10] added that an effective leader should be a trainer who master's all incoming and outgoing situations. Jaman et al.'s [10] statement aligns with transformational leaders' characteristics that influential leaders need, especially when dealing with a challenging situation like post-COVID-19. Luamba et al. [18] opined that effective managers should have transformational leadership skills to help followers identify their strengths, weaknesses, and interests in what they are doing. All nine participants viewed their transformational leadership method as an effective strategy that helped followers increase their capabilities to support stress and improve their productivity while working remotely or in a hybrid environment during the post-COVID-19 period. Participants further stressed the importance of prioritizing an employee as a primary factor of job improvement.

Focusing on employees. When leaders act with humanity, they can elevate employees' competency levels. Aside from the personal and professional cultural shifts noted, participants also described many ways in which they aspired to put employees first, which was the first relevant theme. One consideration that was made by many of the participants was the care and consideration of their employees during the risks and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic season. For instance, P8 stated, "I was concerned about employee social life during the COVID pandemic because some were not married and living alone. P3 also noted, "My leadership skills helped me outline the notion of employee first because I was concerned about all employees' living conditions in the hybrid and remote work environment before making any decisions." Seven of nine participants agreed that understanding the role and importance of employees in higher education helped them make sound decisions with the management of their staff.

Seven participants also agreed that it was clear that being more flexible with employees' requests for personal accommodation at the height of the pandemic was paramount for making effective management decisions. All participants also concluded that combining transformational leadership skills and focusing on putting employees first in any circumstance during the pre- or post-COVID-19 pandemic seasons was crucial for improving the hybrid and remote employee management system.

Because supervisors had greater responsibilities to motivate their employees to accept and act responsibly during the COVID-19 pandemic, all employees accepted without pressure to adhere to the organization's commitment with pleasure. Participants strongly believed that focusing on employees first helped employees perform their tasks better. Through employee role consideration, supervisors aided employees in reflecting on their performance and increasing their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Table 1
Transformational Leadership

Actions	Number of Participant Agreement	Percentage of Participant Agreements
Focus on Employee	8	89%
Total Participants	9	

Theme 2: Performance-Based and Task-Oriented Management. The COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges in the educational system, which required managers to use performance-based and task-oriented approaches to survive. With traditional modes of instruction disrupted, educators and administrators have had to adapt to remote and hybrid learning environments swiftly. Supervisors are tasked with assessing teaching outcomes and the effectiveness of technological tools and pedagogical strategies in these unconventional settings. Leadership in education during these times demands a keen focus on setting clear objectives, providing adequate support and resources for educators and students, and continuously evaluating and adjusting strategies to ensure optimal learning outcomes [13]. Chagadama et al. [15] stated that by prioritizing performance metrics and task-oriented approaches, leaders could navigate complex situations while maintaining the quality and integrity of the workplace.

The performance-based and task-oriented management approaches were strategic for supervisors to ensure that the employees were effectively managed in and outside the office. The transformational leadership style, however, navigated how all participants approached their roles and work. According to Bass [8], a transformative leader should have a keen awareness of self and constantly strive to do what is right for the group and the organization, not what is always popular. Based on the data collected, it was evident that participants exhibited some of the characteristics of ideal leaders or managers.

All participants emphasized the need to maintain a functioning team and department while still considering the 'employee first' and 'mental health' components that existed when supervising hybrid and remote employees. Participants mentioned being conscious of the personal circumstances of each employee (e.g., employees who lived alone versus those who lived with families, as well as individual health) and the compassion required to maintain that cognition. This behavior coincided with the individualized consideration characteristic, which denotes a leader's active role in ensuring that each employee is considered a sole entity. All participants remarked that they had a heightened sensitivity to their employees' circumstances, especially at the height of the pandemic, and were more thoughtful about such individualization now.

Performance-Based. Participants noted that performance-based in the higher education system was crucial, primarily when employees work in remote or hybrid environments. According to Raba and Ngamal [19], performance-based work enhances knowledge and improves productivity. For instance, eight participants attested that their leadership styles based on performance were strategic to meet employees' satisfaction at work. P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, and P7 described their supervising experience with hybrid and remote teams as requiring greater flexibility and prompting more frequent check-ins. The participants characterized these types of attributes as innate, which, to some degree, coincides with the transformational leadership approach. The other three participants, who are more hands-off, suggested using leadership based on both performance-based and task management for better surveillance or control.

Despite the performance-based approach, seven participants recommended that leading hybrid and remote employees should be well-defined and oriented to meet better the organization's respective missions and how they wanted to contribute to the outcomes of their department and, in turn, the organization. Jaman et al. [10] suggested that organization leaders should assist employees in understanding the scope of decision-making and its implications, especially when dealing with a difficult situation.

Task-Oriented. Task-oriented practice in the workplace is essential for the organization's sustainability. In higher education, top managers play a crucial role in navigating the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in motivating employees to adapt to remote and hybrid work environments [13]. Ahmad et al. [20] argued that employing a task-oriented method becomes paramount during such hardships. Supervisors can effectively guide their teams through these unprecedented times by clearly defining tasks, setting achievable goals, and providing necessary resources. Through task-oriented leadership, managers can break down larger objectives into manageable tasks, ensuring that employees clearly understand their responsibilities and how they contribute to the organization's overall mission.

Moreover, in the educational sector, where the shift to remote and hybrid learning has been substantial, motivating employees to embrace new technologies and teaching methodologies is vital. Supervisors utilizing task-oriented methods can offer structured support, training opportunities, and recognition for achievements, fostering a sense of purpose and accomplishment among employees. This approach ensures productivity and engagement and cultivates a resilient and adaptive workforce capable of navigating future challenges.

Despite the approach used in leading hybrid and remote employees, six participants explained their respective missions and how they achieved them using a task-oriented strategy. P4 stated, "Using a task-oriented approach while leading employees remotely or hybrid was paramount to better understanding employee schedule and role flexibility." P7 and P8 also argued that the task-oriented method contributed to better describing the elements of the transformational leadership style in its entire context because it helped to know each employee's performance better. Other participants argued that they ensured that task-oriented employees understand the organization's goal when working in a team context, which helps them carry out their job responsibilities with dedication. Jaman et al. [10] expressed the importance of employees working in a team context to achieve the common organizational goal.

Table 2
Performance-Based and Task-Oriented Management

Actions	Number of Participant Agreement	Percentage of Participant Agreements
Performance-Based	8	89%
Task-Oriented	6	67%
Total Participants	9	

Theme 3: Inspirational Motivation. The establishment of inspirational motivation contributes to promoting work-life balance in the workplace. Bass [8] states that organizational managers should promote intellectual stimulation and give individual consideration. As with individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation also focuses on the employee experience, with one caveat being that this characteristic emphasizes shifting an employee's mindset for the team's greater good. Transformational leaders tap into their ability to stimulate their employee's intellect by

broadening and reframing how problems are viewed, approached, and tackled. Bass [9] added that intellectual stimulation can lead to inspirational motivation when coupled with individualized consideration. All participants agreed that a thorough understanding of factors affecting work-life balance and inspirational motivation fosters employee engagement in high productivity remotely or hybrid. Jaman et al. [10] argued that leaders should promote an efficient work environment onsite or at home for employees by providing appropriate workshops and encouraging positive habits such as exercise, nutrition, music listening, relaxation, and meditation. The sub-theme under inspirational motivation is mitigating stress.

Mitigating Stress. Organizational leaders or managers should ensure employees are not stressed at work. Jaman et al. [11] stated that when employees feel stressed in the workplace, they are more likely to experience burnout. All participants agreed it was hard to disentangle the fear and stress of being thrust into a working remotely situation during a pandemic such as COVID-19.

While some participants reflected on the emotional effects of the pandemic, others pointed out how they were forced to alter their leadership styles. For example, P1 stated, "I had to be very mindful about folks feeling engaged." Participant P3 added that fear and stress arose because so many managers were only used to managing in-person programs.

Moreover, participants' internal documents revealed that a healthy work-life balance is taken seriously to mitigate stress and improve productivity. For example, a review of the organization's records indicated that employees can take annual sick leave and compensatory time work. The finding aligns with Jaman et al. [10] 's conclusion that organizations need resources to motivate employees to remain energetic while performing their tasks.

Table 3
Inspirational Motivation

Actions	Number of Participant Agreement	Percentage of Participant Agreements
Mitigating Stress	7	78%
Total Participants	9	

10. IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all industries, including the higher education system. Top educational managers were also negatively impacted, specifically, supervisors who are critical in leading employees to meet the organization's vision. This study highlighted the emerging themes from leading hybrid and remote teams during the post-COVID-19 environment.

The authors also analyzed the lived work experiences of top supervisors in their current supervisory positions while dealing with others who worked remotely or in a hybrid capacity. By focusing on the lived experiences of supervisors or top managers of staff, this study explored how supervisors view leading hybrid and remote teams and their approaches to some of the most common concerns.

By applying the findings of this research, leaders in higher education may be able to showcase the lived experiences of supervisors of hybrid and remote staff in higher education and how these experiences could be leveraged to create programs specifically for improving supervisor management practices. Leaders may also leverage the findings in this study to conduct their focus groups and data retrieval. While some themes were blatant in this study, the discovery process to uncover the evolving needs of supervisors must continue.

The impacts of positive social change of this study on the local community include the potential of leaders in the higher education system to effectively lead remote or hybrid staff to improve job and employee satisfaction. As Chadadama et al. [15] stated, business practices that enhance employee engagement and workforce productivity contribute to success. Higher education supervisors as business leaders need to understand the business practices that influence workforce productivity and affect the local community and the country's educational system.

11. CONCLUSION

Using a transformational leadership theory lens, this study analyzed the impact of leading hybrid and remote team staff in the higher education system. It also explored the outcomes of such supervisor experience within higher education and its implications for job satisfaction.

The results showcased the factors that impact supervisors as they lead hybrid or fully remote teams and underscored the need for future research in this area. The primary themes of this study's results included the major leadership strategy, performance-based and task-oriented, and inspirational motivation. These culture shifts also created a series of 'new normal(s)' that supervisors contend with (and compete with) to this day. As such, the necessity to investigate this topic further seems more pressing now than ever.

By conducting this study, supervisors (and senior leadership) may also be prompted to engage in further discourse on supervisors who have been impacted in their leadership roles in higher education. Advocating for further research and continued conversation on this topic seems almost intuitive and extremely important to the progression of leadership. As we continue to develop a nuanced approach to leadership in a hybrid and remote world, we must keep the conversation going and center the supervisor's experience.

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