A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS DIRECTOR'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AT THE NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the teachers' perception of the director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education. This study had three objectives, which were: (1) to identify the teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style at the New Zealand College of Higher Education (2) to identify the teachers' perception towards knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education, and (3) to determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education. The study included 96 participants, and they were all teachers at the New Zealand College of Higher Education during the academic year of 2020. The researcher conducted a quantitative study to measure the research objectives and to test the research hypothesis. Then researcher used a statistical software program to analyze the collected data. Finally, this study found a significant relationship between the teachers' perception of the director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership Style; Knowledge Management

Introduction
It is well known that all industries require strong leadership (Masood, Burns & Backhouse, 2006), which is even more critical in the 21st century, particularly for New Zealand.

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For instance, New Zealand is currently experiencing the initial stages of a recession, which has led to financial cuts to the education budget proposed by the current government. While the budget is still large compared to some nations, it is considered to be less than previous budgets over the past decade. Coupled with the impending financial struggles that are likely to follow, educational institutes are required to improve their effectiveness at managing their operations as well as encourage greater efficiency when using their resources.

In order to achieve this, strong and effective leadership is necessary. Strong leadership enhances social and economic benefits, which are issues that all nations and people are widely interested in. For this purpose, school leadership strongly impacts these same social and economic constituents and may lead to economic efficiency for budget-minded educational institutes. In particular, to achieve the school development goals, there must be a proactive and intentional impact on all school organization members as a means to promote better academic achievement scores. For this reason, school leadership evaluation within the educational industry is becoming increasingly critical.

Since the beginning of the century, social development in New Zealand has been increasing. New Zealand is a country that is considered to be conservative and traditional, but globalism and immigration have forced further changes throughout New Zealand society. These changes have placed more stress on limited resources. As a result, educational leaders are forced to stretch their resources further. To achieve this, transformational leadership assists in the reflection of social values within a changing organizational atmosphere. In addition, if knowledge management is not critically applied right across the organization, then these efforts are likely to go unnoticed. For this reason, the role of leadership in knowledge management is a pivotal constituent to the educational organization.

The 21st century is also commonly known as the knowledge economy because of the immense amount of wealth and knowledge available, with employees becoming valuable assets to an organization. Schools are centers of knowledge, known as professional learning communities, where valuable talents and skills are encouraged for all stakeholders, including the principal. This perspective promotes the knowledge economy mindset and the *knowledge management factory*. Knowledge management could be considered a form of director professional development – a means to be more responsive to the local community.

It is critical to lead in areas of school knowledge and resource utilization.

Knowledge is recognized as a critical point of employee development, which business administrators might refer to as the value of human resources. It is also essential to realize that careful consideration should be undertaken to the cultivation of employee knowledge. Effective knowledge management is still a new concept that has been recently recognized as an important organizational trait across various industries. However, the practice of knowledge management within an educational setting is still a challenge for many.

The main problem is that employee development requires a high degree of knowledge management supported by transformational leadership for the digital age. To understand the relationship between these further, this study was undertaken. If this problem is not fully understood in the context of a changing society, the outcome of effective leadership may not meet the demands of a diverse community.

An urgent need is required to understand the knowledge management competency of schools is made in reference to school administrators but essentially requires the school leader to effectively lead her teachers through knowledge acquisition, the sharing of knowledge and its application, as well as the innovation of knowledge management tasks for the improvement of school adaptability and competitiveness. To this end, experts and researchers agree that competitive advantage is a key factor that supports both respective concepts. (Bryant, 2003). Furthermore, little research has been undertaken that determines leadership approaches for the promotion of knowledge management.

Research Objectives
The objectives of this study were as follows:
1. To identify the teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style at the New Zealand College of Higher Education.
2. To identify the teachers' perception towards knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education.
3. To determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education.

Literature Review
Leadership Style
Leadership style refers to the habitual preference of different leaders in different environments, which does not involve what they do and what they want to do. Considering the leadership style, it is critical to discuss the relationship between concepts of style and behavior regarding a leader. The

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nature of leadership and what good leadership is being discussed and defined in many literatures. So it is necessary to define leadership before studying leadership style in the literature.

Transformational Leadership
Transformational leadership identifies the role of needed change, produces a vision of change by using inspiration, and incorporates a team of loyal individuals dedicated to implementing change throughout the organization. While the main idea of transformational leadership refers directly to the idea of the change process within the school, the original expression came from Burns (1978).

Bass (1985) noted that transformational leaders have a better relationship with their staff and can contribute to the organization because leaders' have a greater understanding of employee interest and team awareness. Transformational leaders have been described as having high demands of supporters who believe that they can achieve an optimum state of employment. The most important characteristics of motivation are that it is considered a personal factor (Bass & Avolio, 1990). On the other hand, intellectual motivation encourages employees to contest conventional systems, ideals, principles, and ongoing originality and discoveries (Bass, 1985).

Transactional Leadership
Transactional leadership is a form of leadership that promotes follower compliance through rewards and punishments. Through reward and punishment systems, transactional leaders can incorporate short-term inspirations for their followers. Transactional leadership refers to leaders who constantly understand and meet the needs of students by defining the work responsibilities and roles of teachers, and accomplish the organizational tasks through this type of transaction-based entirely on personal interests, and finally form a school organizational culture that follows the rules and does not need innovation but is very stable.

Transactional leaders pay more attention to results, in line with the prevailing constitution of the organization, and assess success according to a standard of rewards and punishment. While these leaders also have authority over the organization and its member, she is also responsible for team performance management. The strategic leader sets a standard for their employees primarily based on formerly defined agreements.

Unique Attributes of Transformational Leadership
Several attributes characterize transformational leadership as a suitable

leadership strategy for theorizing how to change and lead employees. Studies by Rast (2018) show that transformational leadership is critical to organizations because, as noted by Muralidharan (2018), it reflects changing contextual issues in politics, economics, the law, technology, and the environment.

A characteristic of transformational leadership is that it encourages individuals to contribute to their team's work duties more than usual (Lynch, 2016). This commitment to work duties entices employees to feel more self-efficacy towards their responsibilities and ethics, which has increased determination and resilience to fulfill performance outcomes (Lynch, 2016). This researcher has concluded that the respective characteristics require further discussion and research. These form the basis of why this study has chosen to use transformational leadership as the underpinning theory for this research.

Concept and Definition of Knowledge
Knowledge has not clearly been defined, but it has been described as the course of civilization culminating in human exploration, both in the material and spiritual world. This culmination has been to the benefit of human beings since it has led to the creation of new materials as a means to develop greater strength for prosperity (Kantner, 1999).

The concept of knowledge and how it can be defined, knowing what epistemology is, has been the cause of many philosophers' confusion over the centuries. Other research has defined the term differently; for instance, knowledge has been accepted as the understanding of a subject for it to be used in specific and intentional circumstances. Although it naturally requires some familiarity, it is combined with experience to sufficiently grasp a subject's knowledge.

Explicit, Implicit, and Tacit Knowledge
Davenport and Prusak (1998) distinguished data, information, and knowledge in terms of working knowledge. While data and information are frequently considered to belong to a third category, as mentioned above, the concept of knowledge body exists outside human beings; their view of knowledge is broader, deeper, and richer than data or information. It seems to be possible to conclude that there are two basics of knowledge: (1) knowledge reflected in the internal state of a person, and knowledge reflected in the ability of the same person to act, and (2) knowledge that is clarified and regularly recorded. This leads to the concepts of explicit, implicit, and tacit knowledge.

Explicit Knowledge refers to knowledge as expressed in a simple manner,

either through written communication or by shared transmission. Implicit Knowledge refers to the application of explicit knowledge. The ability to move from one job to another is an example of tacit knowledge. Tacit Knowledge refers to inexpressible knowledge that is more difficult to express from personal experience. As Polanyi (1966), the chemist who became a philosopher of the word for invention, we know more than we can tell; it's also tacit knowledge.

Definition of Knowledge Management
Drucker (1999) believes: "the most valuable assets of organizations in the 21st century are the knowledge workers within the organization and their productivity." In the current era of a knowledge economy, no matter which industry, knowledge management has become more and more important and has become a key competitive advantage.

For management, knowledge management has been an intellectual practice for various reasons. Knowledge management theory integrates a series of theories in the existing research field into a field with a unique direction and innovation concept. In the digital age, gathering more knowledge has become an important part of any economy. In contrast, workers have been understood to be the most important assets, while the most critical components of an organization require individuals to manage their knowledge. In this way, greater competitiveness is likely to occur so that more effective decision-making might occur, which means that it could be perceived as an opportunity for the organization or a burden to overcome.

Related Studies on Transformational Leadership Style and Knowledge Management
Baines (1997) suggested that organizational leaders are first responsible for learning, whether personal or organizational learning. Leadership plays an important role in establishing and sustaining the organizational learning culture. Beckman (1999) defines that the organization's highest responsibility for the process of knowledge management is to encourage all organizational employees and give them sufficient – but equal - opportunities and development channels for their professional development. Therefore, knowledge-management researchers note that management thinkers should provide important knowledge management processes and practices to leaders, particularly their leadership styles, to develop knowledge management processes and practices successfully.

Koch and others also defined that this kind of leader can support creating a culture that motivates knowledge sharing and knowledge creation. They

support learning, encourage open communication, and tolerate failure (Koch et al., 2002). In order to impart a knowledge sharing and management organization, all organizational leaders must be conscientious and sensible in choosing the type of leadership style they wish to apply in order to lead the organization effectively towards its shared vision (Viitala, 2004)

Background of the New Zealand College of Higher Education
The New Zealand College of Higher Education is a reputable institution of English language learning. The main focus of the institution has been to provide English language courses to students who wish to become English teachers. While its main focus has been in this respective area, it also provides instruction in communication, philosophy, religious courses, business, and management, as well as in education, organization and development, and psychology.

The school has a strong online presence, where it focuses most of its core instructional programs through e-learning. While many programmers include an online learning component, many students blend their courses with some on-campus courses. While the institution is private, over the years, the school's administration had informed this researcher that there had been various issues that have caused the New Zealand College of Higher Education to re-think its short-term and long-term plans. As a result, the New Zealand College of Higher Education was concerned that this reform would be unfairly competitive since other institutions would have a larger pool of resources, more access to government funds, and greater opportunities to reduce their operating costs (NZCHE, 2020).

Summary of the Literature Review
According to the previous literature description and related research, leadership is an important part of the school, and people increasingly recognize the importance of effective leadership. For decades, educational research has shown that school director is central to school improvement.

Transformational leadership requires that leaders need to be able to adapt to the changes within society and that autonomy is an important trait. For significant change within the organization, empowerment is an important tool for leaders to be more stimulated and engaged in their work duties. Therefore, it is necessary for the study of the relationship between school leadership style and knowledge management. The research on the knowledge management ability of school director can deepen the director's understanding of school knowledge management, strengthen their learning, promote the improvement of director's knowledge management ability literacy, and provide a rule-based

basis for carrying out effective director's knowledge management training.

Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management at the New Zealand College of Higher Education. The researcher's intention was to identify whether there was a relationship between these two variables.

Figure 1. *The Conceptual Framework Utilized in this Study.*

Research Questionnaire

Participants

The entire teaching staff was used. Thus the population selected for this research is 96 teachers at the New Zealand College of Higher Education (NZCHE, 2020).

Instrumentation

This study utilized two questionnaires in order to measure the research objectives. The entire questionnaire was divided into three main parts; these were as follows:

(1) Demographic information
(2) Multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ)
(3) The Knowledge Management Assessment Tool (KMAT).

Part One of the questionnaires – the demographic information – requested data about the teachers' demographic profile, and it consists of four questions, which were as follows: (1) Gender, (2) Age, (3) Education level, and (4) Work experience.

Part Two of the questionnaire contains 19 questions. – The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – was adopted from Avolio and Bass (1999). This

questionnaire was initially designed to determine the director's leadership style as transformational or transactional. The wording had been changed slightly for this study, including items that only cover transformational leadership style. To interpret the responses for leadership style, this research utilized a 5-point Likert Scale that had a range.

Part Three of the questionnaire asked 20 questions sourced from the Knowledge Management Assessment Tool (KMAT), developed by the American Productivity and Quality Center and Andersen (1995), to assist organizations in evaluating their strengths and opportunities when it came to knowledge management. For this purpose, the questionnaire had already been assessed for its reliability and validity measurements. Although the original instrument had five consecutive segments, the KM process; Leadership; Culture; Technology and Measurement; this researcher opted to remove measurement from the study as it was not a related topic. In order to interpret the responses for leadership style, this research utilized a 5-point Likert Scale that had a range.

Using a statistical software package, the researcher tested the reliability of transformational leadership styles and knowledge management subscales. As shown in the table below, the reliability of the multifactor leadership questionnaire was respectively .87, and the knowledge management questionnaire was .885. This questionnaire was regarded as reliable.

Table 1. *Cronbach's Alpha Values of the Instrument*

		Alpha
Part 2	Transformational Leadership Style Questionnaire	.87
Part 3	Knowledge Management Questionnaire	.885

Findings
Teacher's Demographic Factors
A total of 96 questionnaires were distributed, and all 96 were also returned. Thus, the response rate was 100%. There are four factors of respondents' demographics which include gender, age, educational level, and years of teaching experience.

In this research, the total number of participants numbered 96, including 49 females and 47 males. The study grouped participants according to their age, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and those over 60 years; each group numbered 23, 33, 27, 13, and 0, respectively. Forty-seven participants had a bachelor's degree, while 26 had a master's degree. Doctoral degree holders numbered

only 24. There were four categories in this demographic: 5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and 16 years or more of teaching experience. These numbered 39, 31, 12, and 14, respectively.

Research Objective One
Table 2. *Mean for Teachers' Perceptions Towards Director's Transformational Leadership Style*

Leadership style	N	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Inspirational Motivation	96	3.90	.76	High
Intellectual Stimulation	96	3.67	.74	High
Idealized Influence	96	3.42	.67	Moderate
Individual Consideration	96	3.42	.78	Moderate
Total	96	3.60	.70	High

Table 2 shows the overall mean scores of teachers' perceptions towards director's transformational leadership style among all 96 participants at New Zealand College of Higher Education. It illustrates that the total mean score of teachers' perceptions towards director's transformational leadership style was high.

Research Objective Two
Table 3. *Mean for Teachers' Perceptions Towards Knowledge Management*

Knowledge Management	N	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Knowledge Management Technology	96	4.15	.68	High
Leadership in Knowledge Management	96	4.14	.58	High
The Knowledge Management Process	96	4.12	.64	High
Knowledge Management Culture	96	4.00	.65	High
Total	96	4.10	.61	High

Table 3 illustrates the overall mean scores of teachers' perceptions towards knowledge management among all 96 participants at New Zealand College of Higher Education. It illustrates that the total mean score of teachers' perceptions towards knowledge management style was high.

Research Objective Three
Table 4: *Result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation*

		Knowledge Management	Conclusion
Teachers' perceptions towards leadership style of school leaders at the New Zealand College of Higher Education	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.533**	There is a significant relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 illustrates the relationship between teachers' perceptions of director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management. The Pearson correlation results indicated a significant moderately positive relationship between transformational leadership and knowledge management, r(.533) = .001, p < 0.05. Thus, the researcher can hypothesize that the relationship between teachers' perceptions of director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management is moderately positive at the New Zealand College of Higher Education during the academic year of 2019-2020.

Discussion
As a result of the findings from this research, the total means score for the teacher's perception towards director's transformational leadership style was 3.60, which was interpreted as high. This dimension measured various areas of leadership styles. Their means were interpreted from moderate to high; for instance, Inspirational Motivation (3.90) was interpreted as high, Intellectual Stimulation (3.67) was interpreted as high, Idealized Influence (3.42) was interpreted as moderate, and Individual Consideration (3.42) was also interpreted as moderate. Accordingly, the total means (3.60) was interpreted as high as a result.

The total means for the teachers' perception towards knowledge management, on the other hand, was 4.10, which was interpreted as high. This part of the research measured various segments of school knowledge management, particularly Knowledge Management (4.15) which was interpreted as high, Technology Leadership in Knowledge Management (4.14) which was interpreted as high, The Knowledge Management Process (4.12), which was interpreted as high, and Knowledge Management Culture (4.00), which was also interpreted as high. The overall interpretation for the total means of this part (4.10) was interpreted as high accordingly. While the overall interpretation is considered high, knowledge management culture was the lowest. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); this might be explained by a low degree of knowledge creation compared to other segments.
The research concluded that the teachers' perception towards director's transformational leadership style at the New Zealand College of Higher Education during the academic year of 2019-2020 was .001, which is less than .05 significance level; thus, the research hypothesis was accepted, while the r-value was .533 and this is explained as having a correlation between director's transformational leadership style and knowledge management as moderately positive.

Related studies in this literature review found that having knowledgeable managers in education assisted in the development of group members as a

means to motivate them (Viitala, 2004). Singh (2008) noted that faculty members are more than likely to actively share their knowledge and potential strategies when strong educational leaders lead a well-developed organization. Research by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) came to the same conclusion.

Furthermore, it was also stated that it was important to think as clearly as possible because poor, muddy thinking is not good for members, whether in knowledge management or any other area of effort. For this purpose, knowledge management is a key area that conveys meaning, which should be clear and understandable.

Overall, Todd (1999) noted that when these respective strengths come together, they enable greater commitment that flows from the employee towards the organization's goals overall. This is likely to have positive influences on the competitiveness of the organization and its strength to overcome burdens or challenges.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has referred back to the significance of the study in order to provide suitable and appropriate suggestions that may be pertinent to each stakeholder. The recommendations are as follows:

Educational Leaders
It is recommended that the educational leaders at the New Zealand College of Higher Education are encouraged to improve the areas of Idealized Influence and Individual Consideration to improve credibility and their sense of care for others within the institution. In order to improve credibility and to resolve the issue which was found in the findings of treating employees as individuals as opposed to a single group (which was moderate), it may be necessary to develop a framework of collaboration and interaction or engagement with employees to build their self-esteem and sense of confidence with educational leaders. Through their difficulties and challenges, a sense of care could be developed by ensuring that faculty members engage in open communication that instills a sense of credibility.

Educational leaders are also recommended to improve their image of confidence and influence; this could be done by providing instruction on various school-related issues, identifying innovative ways of completing projects and improving communication and tacit knowledge. Further recommendations include finding alternative ways of compensating those who contribute to organizational knowledge; this could be through praise and

awards. Offering staff greater responsibility is also recommended, including providing technology or software that encourages better work results.

Teachers and Other Instructors

Teachers are encouraged to build their sense of confidence towards their educational leaders and ensure that their shortfalls could be improved by requesting educational leaders' support and assistance and forming their own team members who hold leadership positions. In doing so, it might be positive to improve their influence and confidence within their departments.

Students

Learners are likely to identify with the indirect impact on their studies as a result of this research by receiving higher performance excellence from their teachers, such as more engaged teachers. For instance, leaders are suggested to be more open-minded and be more willing to engage with their teachers and their educational leaders to improve the institute's overall culture.

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