Leadership Styles and Their Relationship with the Private University Employees' Job Satisfaction in United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

Rapid progression of United Arab Emirates' higher education sectors and the competition among private universities, increase the need to explore the influencing factors which leading to improve the organization performance. The purpose of the study current research was to examine the relationships between leadership styles and job satisfaction among the private university employees in the UAE. A random sampling technique was employed to collect data of 241 faculty members and staff from seven private universities in UAE. The method used to collect data was quantitative in nature and two different types of instruments were used: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). The result of the Pearson correlation analysis showed that there was positive and significant relationship between transformational style and employee Job Satisfaction. However, the relationship between transactional leadership style and job

satisfaction was observed to be negative and significant. This study provided validity evidence for the adapted instruments based on context of UAE universities, empirical evidence on the importance of leadership styles in enhancing job satisfaction among employees in higher education organizations. It is expected to be very helpful to faculty, academic leaders and supervisors as it might offer them new insights to facilitate better understanding and smooth functioning at the academic workplace.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, Job satisfaction.

1. Introduction

A successful university in this millennium requires a leader who supports traits such as innovation and creativity and be ready to draw out the maximum potential of their subordinates and keep them satisfied. It was argued that the organization success is usually depend on employees' loyalty and hard work as well as the dedicated managers (Bushra, Usman & Naveed, 2011). According to Yukl (1989), followers who perceive their leaders as effective are more confident in facing challenges, experience greater job satisfaction, demonstrate higher levels of commitment to the organization, and display healthier psychological well-being.. Thus at the individual level, leaders who are able to influence, motivate and direct employees will often be rewarded by loyalty and performance of their employees towards achieving organizational goals and objectives (Mosadegh & Yarmohammadian, 2006).

Academic institutions such as universities are socially complex organizations with cultures that are distinctive. Bass (1985) stressed that effective leadership is necessary to the success of the university in contexts of higher education institution and scientific research. Therefore, heads of higher education, such as academic leaders and deans, need to be aware of and understand the fact that leadership styles and job satisfaction are significant factors in their trials to achieve the organization goals. Academic heads such as Presidents and leaders often lead the transformation of their university. As well as administrative leaders of the university, deans and supervisors often need to sustain an academic environment and take up the responsibility of encouraging research. They are involved in program development and must maintain excellence in teaching while encouraging active collaboration throughout the university (Land, 2003).

2. Problem Statement

The government of the UAE supports all academic institutions from primary level to university (Saunders & Quirke, 2002). Moreover the government of UAE has provided education which has been a backbone while producing leaders who are skilled and capable of adopting new technologies. Therefore, it is commonly felt that the best way to improve productivity in society is to improve the skills of the work force and raise the educational achievements of its citizens (Sheikh Zayed, 2005). However studies conducted on Arabic countries revealed that there is an overwhelming lack of insight regarding leadership styles in the context of higher education. Bahgat (1999) stated positively that in the quest for

expansion of education that resulted in transformations, educational leadership has been overlooked in the UAE. Moreover, there is very little literature that studies the UAE leadership unique characteristics. As such, there is no previous research to observe the transformational and transactional leadership styles relation in Dubai as well as UAE (Metcalfe & Mimouni, 2011).

Global competition has resulted in leaders acting and behaving in a manner that is similar regardless of circumstances. Although there could be some truth in this claim, Budhwar and Mellahi (2007)found out that that Middle Eastern countries have a set of different management systems in comparison with developing countries which could be due to local culture as well as norms (values and attitudes as well as behaviour and expectations) . There could be problems in terms of participation along with restrictions while taking decisions that leads to work satisfaction issues. Therefore, Budhware and Mellahi (2007) stressed on the urgency and necessity of observing leaders in various parts of the world to examine how they can influence behaviors as well as attitudes of their employees or subordinates in cultural environments that are not similar compared to the western world.

3. Leadership and Employee Job Satisfaction

Various empirical studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. Similarly leadership behavior is found as an important factor that influences employees` job satisfaction (Bass, 1998; Griffin& Bateman, 1986;Lian & Tui, 2012; Menon, 2014;Nguni et al., 2006).In the view of Howell and Dorfman (1986) leadership behaviors have a direct effect on employees' job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, work pressure, motivation, and team cohesion, all of which, in turn, affect job performance. Similarly, Lashbrook (1997) stated that leadership style plays a vital role in influencing employees' job satisfaction. In educational settings, The result of the studies about the relationship between leader's leadership style and faculty job satisfaction have supported the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction (Griffin, 2004;Heller, 1993; McKee, 1991; Timothy & Ronald, 2004; Silins & Mulford,2002;Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang, & Lawler, 2005).Thus, it is suggested that academic leaders influence the job satisfaction of employees to a large extent.

Mester et al. (2003) suggested that that transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles are related to job satisfaction. Furthermore, Berson and Linton (2005) indicated that extensive research has been done to investigate the positive relationship between transformational and transactional leadership as they relate to employee satisfaction. Bass (1990)argued that, follower job satisfaction is one of the most directly impacted and important outcomes of leadership. The following studies finding show the relationship between transformational and transactional styles and job satisfaction. Several studies have indicated that transformational leadership results had higher influence on followers` job satisfaction than transactional style.

Leary et al. (2004) conducted a study to find out the relationship between leadership styles and employees' job satisfaction in public higher educational institutions. The results revealed that there is a significant correlation between both of task-oriented and relationship-oriented

leadership styles and the overall employees' job satisfaction. The strongest relationship was seen between leadership and the extrinsic job satisfaction factors. On the other hand, the correlation between leadership styles and the intrinsic job satisfaction factors was statistically significant but not as strong as the correlation with the extrinsic ones.

In other related study Patricia (2002) examined the relationship between transactional and transformational leadership with job satisfaction at an aerospace company. This study used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Job Describe Index (JDI) to measure transactional and transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The study concluded that transactional leadership was not positively related to job satisfaction but that transformational leadership was. In another study, Abubakari and Mohammed (2014) in their study concluded that behavioral traits of transformational leadership styles promoted staff efficiency and productivity than transactional leadership styles. The study recommended that the Polytechnic authority should encourage the practice of transformational leadership characteristics among its staff to ensure efficient performance and productivity.

Jabnoun and Al Rasasi (2005) conducted a study to measure the effect of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employees' job satisfaction in UAE hospitals. Employees were selected randomly from six hospitals in UAE. The researchers adopted a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The researchers found that employees who rated their leaders in terms of the three dimensions of transformational leadership (i.e. charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and contingent reward of transactional leadership were satisfied with their job. Medley and Larochelle (1995) studied the relationship between nurses' leadership styles and the job satisfaction of the nursing staff. This study used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the Index of Work Satisfaction to measure transformational leadership and job satisfaction among staff nurses in community hospitals. The study revealed that staff nurses in hospitals do perceive transformational leadership styles. Staff nurses have greater job satisfaction if their leaders practice transformational leadership.

To sum up, from a theoretical perspective, it has confirmed the assertions of the transformational leadership theory which strengthens the belief that leadership styles influence job satisfaction. Findings from the literature review revealed that leadership styles have relationship with employee job satisfaction. Therefore this paper would provide some valuable insights about the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in higher educational environments.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative research method to collect data from the respondents using three instruments which comprises of four sections. The use of quantitative methodology in educational research can be very useful when trying to determine whether or not a claim is true or false. Often times quantitative research is specific, unbiased and objective as researchers are not closely attached to the study environment (Creswell, 2005; Gay &

Airasian). In addition, Gay and Airasian (2000) stated quantitative research involves (a) a statement of both the hypothesis studied and the research procedures that will be implemented prior to conducting the study; (b) maintenance of control over contextual factors that might interfere with the data collected; (c) the use of large enough samples of participants to provide statistically meaningful data; and (d) data analysis that rely on statistical procedures. Quantitative research data are usually collected through questionnaires. Questionnaires are considered the single most popular data collection tools in any research involving human subjects (Pickard, 2007). As a result, Questionnaires were used to collect data because this method was both time consuming and cost effective (Dillman, 1991).

This study was cross-sectional as opposed to being longitudinal in which data was collected more than once throughout the study period (Sekaran, 2003). Because the present study intended to get a cross-sectional description of the issues at hand and was not concerned with changes that took place across time and place, data was collected once during the whole period of the research work. The data was collected once the final questionnaires were available after taking into account the modifications that had to be incorporated for the final study.

The employee's` rating of their leaders` leadership styles and communication competence would be more valid than the leaders` self rating. This claim was supported by many studies (Kelley et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2007). Thus, this study involved only faculty and other staff from various colleges particularly concentrating on a random set of private universities of the United Arab Emirates. The analysis of responses to the questionnaires formulated the reported conclusions.

4.2 Instrument

4.2.1 Leadership Styles

The instrument used to measure leadership styles was Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) or commonly known as MLQ 5X. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) to measure transformational and transactional leadership characteristics following a six-factor model of leadership earlier proposed by Bass (Avolio et al.,1999). The MLQ is one of the most widely utilized instruments used to measure transformational and transactional leadership and it has been indicated that this instrument has been used by numerous empirical investigations throughout the US and other continents as well as it belongs to the model of transformational and transactional theory(Tejeda, Scandura, & Pillai, 2001; Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ was used to measure the factors that distinguish transactional and transformational leadership. The MLQ places each item on a 5-point Likert type scale. The scale is utilized as: 0) Not at all; 1) once in a while; 2) sometimes; 3) fairly often; 4) frequently, if not always. The latest version of the MLQ has been used in many research programs, doctoral dissertations and Master's theses around the world.

In this study, transformational leadership was measured using 20 items from Avolio and Bass' (2004) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ— Form 5X). Every item rates how

normally specific behaviors are demonstrated by leaders and supervisors in the organization. The items measuring five scales were identified as characteristic of transformational leadership (Idealized influence attributed and behaviour, Inspirational motivation, Individual consideration, and Intellectual stimulation). Transactional leadership was measured using 12 items from Avolio and Bass' (2004) MLQ—Form 5X. Every item rates how normally specific behaviors are demonstrated by leaders and supervisors in the organization. The items measuring the three scales were defined as characteristic of transactional leadership (Contingent reward, Management-by exception-active, and Management-by-exception-passive).

4.2.2 Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Job satisfaction independent variable was measured using the short version of The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by (Weiss et al., 1967). This scale has been widely used in the literature being a well-known and stable over the time instrument with previous researches yielding excellent coefficient alpha. Spector (1997) identified the 20-item short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967) as a popular measure that is frequently used in job satisfaction. The short-form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al. 1967) consists of 20 items. MSQ are developed to measure job satisfaction by requiting respondents to rate degree of job satisfaction with various components of their job based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied to 5 being very satisfied. The response format for both the short-form and the long-form MSQ are the same.

The MSQ has been designed to measure two job satisfaction factors intrinsic and extrinsic (Weisse et al., 1967). This makes it an appropriate fit for this study. The intrinsic scale is composed of twelve items and is characterized by abilities related to on the job achievement opportunities, recognition, advancement, and opportunities to do things for others and measure feelings about the nature of the job tasks. The extrinsic subscale is composed of six items and is designed to measure company polices, compensation, co-workers and the quality of working conditions (Spector, 1997). A general satisfaction is composed of 20 items; two of the general satisfaction items are unrelated to intrinsic or extrinsic satisfaction.

4.3 Data Collection

Data collection for the actual study was carried out in 2014 involving 241 employees from seven private universities in United Arab Emirates. The researcher visited Vice Presidents of some universities and deans of colleges and sent emails to the ones who could not be met. The Vice Presidents or the deans of the selected universities were approached for approval. Some of the universities declined participation. The reasons for the refusal was because of topic sensitivity or because they were not interested. In addition, some of these universities might worry it would have an effect on the reputation of the University. The deans or heads who declined participation were sent an email thanking them for their time and replies. Considering the large number of population that was targeted and the sensitivity of survey questions the researcher had to keep the survey anonymous to a large extent. The employees assessed and evaluated their leaders based on their interaction patterns with the respective

leaders and their identity had to be protected. Hence, it was decided that online data collections would be the most efficient means to collect the necessary information in an accurate and timely manner. The use of an Internet-based survey was convenient, cost-effective, and easily analyzed (Creswell, 2003).Additionally, web surveys allow data to be collected and downloaded into statistical software without additional data entry (Witt, 1998). Data were analyzed using the (SPSS) Statistical Package for the Social Sciences computer program.

5. Result and Discussion

Data analysis started with the inspection of the data to screen the suitability for analysis. Then, Descriptive statistics were generated to review data and to show profile of respondents in terms of age, gender, length of experience and education level so that a review and general assessment of the data could be made. After that, a reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was employed to examine whether the variables in each component had internal consistency. As it was mentioned, a threshold of .70 was sought to indicate an acceptable level of reliability.

In order to test the hypotheses of the study, firstly, correlation analyses were employed. Pearson correlation was used to test the relationship between the variables in the study. The researcher inter correlated the main variables and produced an inter correlation matrix. The researchers in correlational research designs investigate the findings through the use of correlation statistical testing to help describe and measure the degree of association or relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2005). The principal aim of the study was to investigate relationships between leadership styles and employee job satisfaction and measure the degree of the relationship. Correlational studies are used to test whether or not relationships existed between given variables, as well as to test the extent of these measures (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Therefore, a correlational analysis was the prominent measure used in the study.

Correlation analysis is run to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables (Sekaran, 2003). The direction of the relationship can either be positive or negative. A positive correlation shows that as one variable increases so does the other. While a negative one shows that as one variable increases, the other decreases (Pallant, 2007). Pearson correlation coefficient. r, symbolizes the estimated strength of a linear the prefix (+, -) indicates the direction of the relationship (positive or negative), while the number represents the strength of the relationship. In theory, the higher the value of the correlation between two variables, the more related they are to each other. The closer to 1, the stronger the relationship: 0 = no relationship (Cooper & Schindler. 2008).

In interpreting the strength of the relationship based on the r coefficient Dunn's (2001) recommendation was used. According to Dunn (2001) a correlation coefficient (r) between 0.00 and 0.19 is very weak. If the correlation coefficient ranges from .20 to .39 it is weak. A correlation coefficient between .40 and .59 shows moderate relationship. If correlation coefficient is .60 to .79 it is strong. Very strong is a correlation coefficient between .80 and 1.00. Correlations were computed between the main variables in the studyis shared in the

Table 1: Correlation between Job Satisfaction, Transactional and Transformational Leadership Style

Variable	1	2	3
Job Satisfaction(1)	1		
Transactional Leadership (2)	-.43**	1	
Transformational Leadership (3)	.60**	-.33**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the correlation analysis presented in Table 1, all main variables of the study correlated significantly. The results found that the correlation between transactional leadership and job satisfaction was negative, moderate and significant, (r = -.43, p<0.01). In sum, there was a significant relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction.

The findings of the current study have revealed the information mentioned below. The following hypotheses were proposed in this study.

5.1. Hypothesis 1

It is evident that there is a relationships between transformational leadership style and employee job satisfaction. The results of Pearson correlations is found to be statistically significant, strong and positive relationships between between Transformational and job satisfaction (r = . 60, p<0.01).Such findings are consistent with previous studies (Aydin et al., 2013; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Griffith, 2004; Hukpati 2009; Weasmer &Woods,2002). A significant and negative correlation was identified between transactional leadership and job satisfaction. These findings supported previous research findings (Awamleh et al., 2005; Saleem, 2015; Voon et al., 2011).Furthermore, researchers (Bass, 1999a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Dumdum et al., 2002; Lowe et al., 1996) indicated that transformational leadership was generally more strongly related with job satisfaction than transactional leadership. Bass (1990) stated that transformational leadership is the prototype of leadership that people have in mind when they describe their ideal leader. Bass (1990) also added transformational leaders are more effective and successful. If private universities` leaders are practicing transformational leadership more often than transactional, the employee's satisfaction will be higher and the chances for success and the continued viability is promising. The findings were also in line with theory of transformational leadership style which highlighted transformational style as being related to job satisfaction (Bass,1985). This meant that frequent use of transformational leadership style leads to higher job satisfaction.

5.2. Hypothesis 2

Correlations analysis was applied to test the significance relationship between transactional

leadership styles factors and employees` Job satisfaction. As per the analysis in Table 1 the relationship between transactional leadership and job satisfaction was negative moderate but significant(r = -.43, p<0.01). Through this, it can be concluded that frequent use of transactional leadership style leads to lower levels of satisfaction with relevance to both factors of job satisfaction. The plausible explanation for this result is that employees such as university faculty members with a high level of education dislike the leaders` focus on reward and in some cases punishments. Also, those with higher levels of education may have higher levels of reward expectation from employment positions. The employees were not satisfied with the academic leader and supervisor who took actions only if problems occurred or the situation became serious; someone who may use punishment to correct the situation. Possible explanations could be due to pressures placed upon employees by this behavior. Faculty members cannot be responsible for everything in the university whether important or not as they have a lot of other teaching responsibilities and need time for their research activities. Also the academic staff in an environment like a university may not accept the punishment method to correct the mistake. As it was shown in a number of literary works that transactional leadership is often viewed in a negative light in educational settings which supported the findings of this study.

The study found that faculty and staff members had negative and lower level of satisfaction with the transactional behaviours .They were not motivated and satisfied by reward and punishment system, monitored and controlled to get the work done through them and it traced their faults. These behaviour patterns cause lower job satisfaction in turn to reduce the performance of employees in universities environment. Hence, based on the findings of the study, transactional leadership showed negative relationship in connection with job satisfaction. Such findings were consistent with previous studies which also reported negative and weak correlation between the variables. Saleem (2015) examined the relationship between transactional leadership styles and teachers job satisfaction of 217 teachers from universities in Pakistan. The result found that weak negative relationship between transactional leadership and job

satisfaction. In another related study Voon et al. (2011) explained that one purpose of their study was to determine the aspects of transactional leadership that affect employee's job satisfaction in the public sector in Malaysia. The results showed that transactional leadership style has a negative relationship with job satisfaction in government organization. Awamleh et al. (2005) examined transactional leadership among banking managers in the UAE. They studied the effects of transactional leadership styles of banks manager on employees' self-perceived performance and job satisfaction. One finding of this study depicted that there was negative relation between transactional leadership styles and employees' job satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

The primary goal of every organization should be to improve its effectiveness. Two approaches to improving the overall effectiveness of an organization is to increase the effectiveness of the leader and to enhance job satisfaction levels of employees. Since leadership styles and communication competence are conceived as the essence of organizational behavior, it has been suggested that one of the best ways to improve

organizational effectiveness is to improve a leader's leadership styles and communication competence. Employees are one of the most important assets for an organization. Their role is vital to the organization's success. In higher educational context for example, a faculty member plays an important role in providing quality teaching to the students, enhancing their skills and doing research. Thus, it is important for the organization to ensure that they have high job satisfaction. Also other staff should have high job satisfaction while they provide services and complete their job tasks.

In conclusion, this study was successful in making a significant contribution to the existing literature by further exploring the impact of leadership styles and communication competence on job satisfaction through an empirical analysis. It is to be noted that using the transformational style of leadership style and appropriate and effective communication competence should lead to increased job satisfaction among employees. This in turn could result in enhanced performance among employees, commitment, productivity, working climate and encourage employees to stay in the university and contribute to greater organizational effectiveness.

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