

The Association of Leadership Styles and Administrators' Performance

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Abstract

This study proposes to examine the effect of leadership styles on job performance. Several determinant factors influence the performance of academic administrators and their effective style of leadership. Still, the selection of inappropriate leadership styles results in lower functioning. This study was carried out in 3 selected universities in Malaysia which include 196 academic administrators as respondents. The result of the correlation analysis between two styles of leadership and job performance showed a positive and significant correlation score value. The results of this study contribute to academic administrators to enhance the efficiency of higher learning establishments. Therefore, they are thought to take the leadership style that raises the capabilities of academic administrators to reach the optimal execution. The implication of this finding will be discussed.

Keywords: Job Performance, Transformational Leadership Style, Academic Administrators, Transactional Leadership Style

Introduction

In the past few decades, academic administrators around the world have encountered serious problems in terms of leadership styles, which are a potential way to resolve some challenges at higher learning institutions. An efficient academic administrator can significantly influence their followers by achieving target goals. Organizational performance is affected by various styles of leadership (Tosuntaş & Danişman, 2015). Academic administrator or leader is recognized as a fundamental decision-maker who determines the achievement of the university, and consequently, the performance of the employees directly influence the reputation of the university. Therefore, academic administrators have made an effort to develop their communities, students, and faculty members, and maintain the effectiveness of his department. To substantiate the fact that the performance of the academic administrators leads to the achievement and success of higher learning institutions, the researcher investigated the effective variables on academic administrators' job performance. Hence, this paper aims to investigate the influential variables that contribute academic administrators to enhance his/her job performance. Therefore, this study makes a major contribution to research on human resource development by demonstrating how these two styles of leadership affect academic administrators' job performance.

Transformational style of leadership is realized as a motivating method to encourage and enable academic administrators to think creatively (FIRMIN et al., 2015). Inspirational motivation and idealized influence are recognized as essential components of transformational leadership since these two components operate as an appealing pattern and represent the common image of the future. According to individual consideration, academic administrators take into account individual differences. Transactional leadership style is different from transformational leadership since collaboration is attained by exchanging of rewards in transactional leadership style. Followers are encouraged by transactional administrators to function as expected (Taly Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). The most fundamental concept in transactional leadership is offering contingent reward by academic administrators; it is subjected to employees' performance and their active management.

From a review of related literature, some researchers argued that the choice of leadership styles enhances performance whereas some scholars oppose this view because they have used various concepts of leadership in their studies, it makes impossible to compare those concepts. Therefore, this gap still exists and many questions remain unanswered. The present study aimed at re-examining the relationship between the style of leadership and job performance to contribute to the area of human resource development.

Consequently, comprehensive research on academic administrators' transactional and transformational leadership styles is required to improve and enhance the understanding of ways academic administrators achieve ideal outcomes. The concept of leadership positively influenced organizational results, namely, the performance and outcomes of human resource (Luthans & Peterson, 2003). Furthermore, styles of leadership are the essential predictors of job performance in human resource concept.

Literature review*Job performance*

To assess the desired goals of educational institutions, the optimum performance of academic administrators is required (Wall et al., 2004). Even though not only job performance is commonly measured by financial statistics, but also it is evaluated by a combination of task-related features and contextual behavior (Motowidlo, 2003). In fact, job performance is a

value and relative judgment that reflects comprehensive organizational outcomes (Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa, & Nwankwere, 2011). In higher educations, various factors potentially are evaluated comprising; educational programs, institutional efficiency, and the staffs' performance such as research, faculty service, teaching and student learning. Particularly, the criteria of assessment of academic administrators might include attitudes, performance, or decision-making, behavior, and effectiveness (Peterson, Walumbwa, Avolio, & Hannah, 2012).

Furthermore, the concept of "performance" consists of two fundamental components: efficiency that associates input with outcomes and effectiveness that relates goals with predicted outcomes. The notion of performance introduces the perceptions of "the execution of a task", attainment", and "accomplishment,". In this point of view, the responsibility of academic administrators is to assess, reward, hire, and to make the most important decisions in terms of funding, personnel, budgeting, tenure, and to comprehend the consequence of their decisions on the total structure of the higher education institutes (Walumbwa, Wang, Lawler, & Shi, 2004). Thus, the assessment of academic administrators involves investigating how they are performing their functions and to what extent they conduct effectively to achieve its goals and how to employ the resources proficiently and practically. The assessment of academic administrators includes to what extent academic administrators ensure mutual understanding and integrity. To what extent inconsistency or contradictions occur among academic administrators to achieve common goals and resolutions. Whether academic administrators hold discussion session in the process of making determinant decision; how academic administrators manage to communicate with faculty members; and finally to what extent faculty members develop intimate relationship with academic administrators (Seldin, Miller, & Seldin, 2010)

Leadership styles

Style of leadership is defined as a constant pattern of behavior that distinguishes leaders (DuBrin, 2001). As (Burns, 1987) conceptualized two styles of leadership to distinguish "ordinary" from "extraordinary" leadership: transactional and transformational leadership. Transformational and transactional leadership is different in the method of inspiring followers. Transformational administrators give importance to the personal values and beliefs and encourage followers to perform beyond the expectation. Burns, (1987), recognized that transformational leadership is such a process in which "as followers and leaders work collectively to raise each other's awareness to achieve a higher level of motivation and morality". In other words, in transactional leadership subordinates' fulfillment (loyalty, effort, and productivity) is replaced with anticipated rewards. Conversely, transformational leaders enhance the level of subordinates' awareness in terms of the significance and value of specified outcomes and methods to attain these outcomes. They encourage followers to go beyond their current self-interest for mission and vision of the organization.

Consequently, transformational leadership style engages and encourages subordinates emotionally, intellectually and morally to have great performance beyond expectations (Bernard M Bass, 2003). As Burns (1987) stated, transformational leadership contains the process of making major modifications in organizational attitudes to meet the goals and strategies of the organization. Furthermore, the distinction between transformational leadership and transactional leadership is related to the function of the administrator. The emphasis of both styles of leadership is on the subordinates, for instance, transactional administrators offer feedback regarding the performance, whereas transformational leaders

engage followers to achieve their optimum goal (Ali, Jan, & Tariq, 2014). Therefore, the majority of transactional leaders give feedback in terms of performance, additionally; effective administrators integrate with transformational leadership behavior. Consequently, academic administrators can enhance the effectiveness of their job by applying both types of leadership styles at the same time. Mostly, academic behaviors and inconsistencies in performance and other standard parameters are not taken into account in transactional leadership. Moreover, transformational leadership highly influences the overall thinking and behavior of leaders, since it leads to establishing a unified understanding toward success. (Glynn & Raffaelli, 2010). Transformational leadership catches the attention of intellectual to resolve forthcoming problems. Transformational leadership fosters novelty and learning to enhance the general performance (Taly Dvir et al., 2002). However, penalty or punishment and contingent reward as a source of effective management are associated with transactional leadership. Transformational leadership is considered to develop an appropriate foundation for effective leadership.

Transformational Leadership Style: The theories of leadership emphasizes the role of prominent administrators on their organizations (Bennis, Spreitzer, & Cummings, 2001); (Beyer & Trice, 1984). As Shamir, House, & Arthur, (1993) stated that these types of academic leaders named as "charismatic leaders"; however, Burns (1987) give preference to name them as "transformational leaders." The essential components of transformational leadership include the identification of goals, the statement of objectives, considering individualized support and, developing behaviors consistent with their objectives, developing intellectual inspiration, and establishing a high level of performance (Vermeeren, Kuipers, & Steijn, 2014). Obiwuru et al., (2011) maintained that in transformational leadership, administrators give preference to internal standards and values adopted by subordinates, in order to make changes in subordinator's attitudes and goals "(p. 653). Therefore, transformational leadership mainly made some modifications in objectives, beliefs, and aspirations of subordinates to accelerate their performance that is consistent with assigned values, as opposed to transactional leadership that they hope to receive a reward in return. These academic administrators attempt to change subordinates' perception toward their behaviors (Piccolo & Colquit, 2006). As Bryman, (2004) stated that both leaders and subordinates in transformational management are required to raise each other's awareness in terms of goals, objectives and enthusiasm.

Moreover, Ali et al., (2014) asserted that leaders enhance subordinates' intrinsic motivation and confidence for leading to higher levels of motivation. However, transactional administrators potentially integrate aspiration towards common goals and performance beyond expectations. Both subordinates and academic leaders are different in terms of goals and aspirations. Hence, according to existing literature transformational leadership has the potential to predict subordinator's performance, job attitudes and behaviors.

Transactional Leadership Style: There is an exchange between subordinates and administrators in transactional leadership; leader provides rewards for subordinates' effort in return. As Bass, (2000) stated there are two types of transactional leadership behaviors. The first type is called contingent reward behavior, which is associated with positive feedback from supervisor. The second category of transactional leadership named as "management by exception" and conditional reward is provided by leader. If subordinates have poor

performance, leaders manage to present different kinds of negative feedback behavior such as correction, criticism, and other types of punishment.

Since, transactional academic administrators deal with the stable environment, which is less competitive. However, this competitive working environment requires a new leadership style such as transformational leadership to ensure high performance and survival of the organization. Comparably, as Bolden, (2004) argued that transactional leaders set goals and allocate task, and manage subordinators by penalizing low operators and rewarding high operators. Transactional leaders satisfy their subordinators by identifying their aspirations and goals.

Leadership styles and job performance

Many researchers considered leadership as significant driving forces to promote job performance and comprehending the influences of leadership on performance plays a key role in higher educational settings. (Lado, Boyd, & Wright, 1992). Efficient leadership is viewed as a potential source of managing and developing a competitive advantage for improving job performance (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). Transactional leadership contributes to the achievement of aims more effectively by relating job performance to valued rewards and making sure that subordinators apply the required sufficient resources to perform the job (Umer Paracha, Qamar, Mirza, & Waqas, 2012).

Mehra, et al., (2006) claimed that when some educational setting inquires about effective methods to empower them to do better than others, an established approach is to emphasize on the influences of leadership. Academic administrators play a major role to shape collective norms, to assist cope with their environment, and coordinate group action. This viewpoint of leader-centeredness has supplied constructive insights to relate job performance with leadership (Shafie, Baghersalimi, & Barghi, 2013). Previous studies have attempted to clarify the leadership role by examining how to apply leadership models and utilize the styles leadership to promote job performance (McGrath & MacMillan, 2000; Gardner, et al., 2010; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Scholars and researchers consider that leadership is associated with performance, however, the conceptual and scientific basis of leadership style is disseminated. In recent times, many researchers have examined the most noticeable area of transactional and transformational leadership (Arzi & Farahbod, 2014; Ehrhart, 2004; Nasrah, 2012; Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). These two transactional and transformational styles of leadership are not taken into account as contrasting leadership. Academic administrators might own two styles of transactional and transformational simultaneously, compared to transformational leadership, transactional leadership is less efficient (Tosuntaş & Danişman, 2015). Some evidence supports this assumption that transformational leadership is superior to transactional leadership. Moreover, transformational leadership is highly correlated with job performance, but there was a weak correlation between transactional leadership and high performance. (Bass, 2003; T Dvir et al., 2002).

When academic administrators encounter with new challenges, appropriate styles of leadership result in high level of performance (Glynn & Raffaelli, 2010). Furthermore, it is essential to recognize the influence of leadership on performance as a leading factor to motivate subordinators to promote job performance. Therefore, the empirical evidence revealed that there is a positive association between the transformational leadership of academic leaders' views, attitude, and their job performance (Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005). Transformational academic administrators have created the well-defined and transparent

prospect of the plan and encourage others to apply and to share this prospect regardless of challenging and restrictive conditions. As Bass (1987), stated there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance since it has an effect on outcomes of the organization. The leaders must act in a way to convey ethics, principles, and values, and considered as a model in an organization. Consequently, transformational leadership positively related to academic administrators' performance.

Whereas, transactional leadership realizes specific academic administrators' expectations and suggest rewards in response to the satisfied performance. Ultimately, contingent reward behavior will enhance subordinators' job performance. An academic administrators' performance is established on assessing academic administrators' behavior and play a major role in addressing the achievement of organizational goals and appropriateness of the subordinators' interpersonal behaviors is associated with the norm of the organization.

A primary principle of "full range" as a model of leadership demonstrated that these two styles of leadership transformational and transactional are not considered as the ranges of two opposite end (Bruce J. Avolio & Bass, 1995.) The similar academic administrator is capable of manifesting attributes of both styles of leadership. According to transformational leadership, subordinators are persuaded to make extra effort to achieve the target goal of job performance. Bacha, (2014) found that performance outcome associated positively with the transformational leadership style. Furthermore, it is suggested that organizations are required to provide training programs for developing leadership skills and enhancing the outcome of the organization and job performance.

Research Methodology

This present research, a sampling of the population was conducted through simple random sampling from several sampling available methods among three selected universities in Malaysia. This study employed self-report questionnaire to collect data among 196 respondents which consists of two parts; Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x), the adapted job performance measurement. In the present study, each item assessed two styles of leadership and job performance through a five-point scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x): Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x) has been widely employed to evaluate leadership efficiency and also assess transformational and transactional leadership in public and private educational sector (Avolio & Bass, 2004). It consists of 45 items which applied five points Likert scale to assess administrator' style of leadership and the way of their behavior. Since this study excluded outcome behavior, the questionnaire consists of 32 items.

Job Performance: Job performance as an independent variable is evaluated through two subscales of the task and contextual performance. Task performance consists of four components (coordination, making a decision, motivation, and planning) and contextual performance composed of 8 components; attention and manpower, relation and flexibility, innovation and creativity. In contextual performance, academic administrators attempt to expand their knowledge and job proficiency, standard ethical behavioral and to develop an appropriate relationship with faculty members. The questionnaire consists of 22 items which applied five points Likert scale to assess administrator' performance.

Statistical Analysis

This study employed correlation analysis or Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) to reveal a linear relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and job performance. Further, as Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, (2012) explained that multiple regression is used in this research as a statistical method to determine the relationship between one dependent variable and several predictor variables. The aim of multiple regression analysis is to anticipate the variations of one dependent variable in reaction to variation in predictor variable.

Results and Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine whether transformational leadership style is related to job performance. Regarding this objective, the following research question was formulated:

Is there any relationship between transformational leadership style of academic administrators and their job performance at selected Malaysian universities?

The following Table illustrated the relationship between transformational leadership style and job performance by employing Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were conducted to reveal that data were normally distributed and data met the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The transformational leadership style of academic administrators was positively and significantly correlated to their job performance ($r = .64, n = 196, p < .0005$), and high levels of transformational leadership style related to high level of job performance.

This study found that academic administrators who have the transformational style of leadership reflect superior job performance. The results obtained from this study are in line with (Shafie et al., 2013) who argued that individuals who apply transformational leadership style reveal a higher level of performance. Since development-oriented leaders play a major role to make changes and motivate subordinates by applying motivational procedures to guide their staff. This kind of academic administrators identifies and recognize the plan of future organization, to lead to higher and optimum performance.

The result of this study is consistent with the finding of other researchers regarding the relationship between transformational leadership style and job performance. The results also in agreement with Avolio's et al., (1999) findings that performance is related to high level of transformational leadership style. As (Nasrah, 2012) found the positive relationship between transformation leadership and job performance.

Regarding the second part of the aforementioned research question, this study aims to determine the association between transactional leadership style and job performance. The following research question was formulated to investigate the relationship between transactional leadership style and job performance.

Is there any relationship between transactional leadership style of academic administrators and their job performance at selected Malaysian universities?

The following Table illustrates the relationship between transactional leadership style and job performance by employing Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Transactional

leadership style was significantly correlated to job performance ($r = .63$, $n = 196$, $p < .005$). the association between leadership style and performance is hypothesized by some authors as, Jing and Avery (2008), found that there was association between leadership styles and job performance.

Table1:

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Between independent and dependent variables

Variables	1	2	3
(1) Job performance	1		
(2) Transformational leadership	.639**	1	
(3) Transactional leadership	.636**	.715**	1

** $P < .01$

The other objective of this study was to determine to what extent variance of academic administrators' job performance is explained by transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style at selected universities in Malaysia. Following research question was formulated for the predictor variables.

To what extent variance of academic administrators' job performance is explained by transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles?

Two predictors of job performance in multiple linear regression are proposed for this study. Transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style were determined as predictor variables.

To answer this hypothesis, the researcher employed multiple regression analysis. To determine to what extent the variance of job performance among academic administrators is explained by predictor variables; transformational and transactional leadership style. Moreover, the partial regression coefficient and Standardized regression coefficients were employed to investigate the linear relationship between variables. The findings obtained from analysis revealed that transformational leadership style is significant to explain the variance in job performance. ($t = 5.56$, $p = .000$). Additionally, transactional leadership with $t = 4.910$, $p = .000$ was also significant and it could explain significantly the variance in job performance. As shown in the following Table, the value $R^2 = 0.475$ revealed that 47.5% of the variance in the job performance is explained by predictors variable.

According to the following table, Table the estimated model coefficients for (B): b_0 is 2.330, b_1 is .301, and b_2 is .308. Consequently, the estimated model is formulated in in the Equation model:

$$Y (\text{job performance}) = 2.330 + .301X_1 + .308X_2 + e.$$

According to the following table, f-statistic (87.161) was relatively large, and the p-value was highly significant (.000). As this model illustrated the slope of the estimated linear regression model line was not equivalent to zero and revealed a linear relationship between job performance and two styles of leadership. The following table reports the result of multiple regression.

Table:

Multiple Regressions between leadership styles and job performance

Variable	R	R ²	ΔR ²	df	ΔF	B	SEB	β	t
	.689	.475	.469	2	33.716				
constant						2.330	165		14.100
TRF						.301	.060	.377	5.056**
TRS						.308	.063	.367	4.910**

*** $P < .001$, ** $P < .01$. Dependent variable: job performance, TRF= transformational leadership, TRS = transactional leadership

The values in the table show that transformational leadership has the highest beta coefficient (beta= .377). Therefore, transformational leadership has the highest effect compare to another predictor, transactional leadership with (beta=.367). As a final point, the standard score in the multiple regression models for job performance as follows:

$$\hat{Y} (\text{Job performance}) = .38(\text{Transformational leadership}) + .37 (\text{transactional leadership style})$$

It is implied that administrators could significantly improve their job performance by enhancing their leadership styles techniques at universities.

Conclusion and Research Implications

This study aimed at investigating the relationship between job performance and styles of the leadership of academic administrators in Malaysian higher education context. Based on the obtained results, leadership styles contributed to developing leadership ability of both styles of academic administrators and improves their performance. In addition, previous studies have emphasized on a partial relationship between transformational and transactional styles of the leadership (Tosuntaş & Danişman, 2015). However, Bass, (1990) claimed that transformational leadership is almost more efficient than transactional leadership constantly; other researchers argued that neither of the styles of leadership could be recognized as the most effective style (Lim, B., & Ployhart, 2004). Alternatively, academic administrators must choose the leadership style that corresponds to the context in which the subordinators and leaders communicate. However, the mainstream of past research regarding the influence of leadership style on job performance reported the positive association between job performance and styles of the leadership. A further study is required to be conducted to clarify why and how the nature of this relationship between leadership styles and job performance.

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