

LEADERSHIP STYLES AFFECTING THE INDIVIDUALS' COMMITMENT: A STUDY OF THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN NORTHERN STATE OF MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is referring to the process of interaction between the leader and follower in order to achieve the goal. The prime factor of an organization's success is the manager's leadership styles. The objectives of this study are to identify the relationship between types of leadership styles (task oriented and people oriented) that adopted by the leader that affecting the staffs' commitments among the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia. 300 respondents were randomly selected in this study through the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Statically Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Thus, frequency analysis, reliability analysis and descriptive analysis were applied to this study. The result indicated that the leadership styles adopted by the leaders among the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia are people oriented that strongly affecting their staffs' commitment.

Keywords: People oriented, task oriented, individual commitments

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is referring to the process of interaction between the leader and follower in order to achieve the goal (Stogdill, 1974; Jacques and Clement, 1994; Joseph and Richard, 2000; Northouse, 2010). Besides, according to McShane & Glinow (2006) defined leadership is about influencing, motivating and enabling others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members.

Human capital is one of those capital resources of an organization which not only increases the efficiency and the effectiveness of the organization, but it acts as a sheer source of competitive advantage which is inimitable (Ulrich, 2002). Considering this fact organization's success is based on employee's commitment and their focus towards achieving the organization's prime goals (Khan et al., 2012). Nyengane (2007) mentioned that no organization can perform at peak levels unless each employee is committed to the organization's objectives and works as an effective team member. While Mosadeghrad (2003) stated that another prime factor of an organization's success is the manager's leadership styles. It's the ability of the manager to influence his subordinates by making them more satisfied, committed and in return increases productivity. The lack of commitment among employees of an organization results in interruptions in normal operations, loss of efficiency and increase customer dissatisfaction while high levels of commitment to the

organization are likely to reduce staff absenteeism, staff and increase levels of job performance (Nyengane, 2007).

According to Swanepoel et al. (2000) emphasized that the ability of an organization, to successfully optimize human capital, largely depends on the leadership styles that encourage employee commitment. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between types of leadership styles (task oriented and people oriented) that adopted by a leader towards his/her staffs commitment among Public University in Northern State of Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Individuals' Commitment

Commitment is characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Connor, 2011). Meyer and Allen (1991) classify an organizational commitment into three types which are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment, according to Meyer and Allen (1991) refers to the employee's emotional attachment to identification with and involvement with the organization. Thus, continuance commitment is the second organizational commitment defined by Meyer and Allen (1991) based on H.S. Becker's (1960) site-be very. It is based on the idea that the investments make by an employee in an organization, such as time, effort, and the development of work, friendships, organization specific skills, and political deals, constitute sunk costs that diminish the attractiveness of external employment alternatives (Jaros et al., 1993). Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Randall and Driscoll (1997) defined normative commitment as an employee's moral commitment towards their organization when an organization provides them with moral and financial support besides the support for their career development.

Type of Leadership Styles

People oriented style

People-oriented style is opposite of task-oriented leadership because it focused more on organizing, supporting and developing the people in his team. This type of leader tends to lead to a better teamwork and creative approach in order to accomplish the task. It prioritizes the needs and welfare of the group member. This may include the offering of incentives like bonuses, providing medium to solve the conflicts, having more casual interaction with the employees, creating a good working environment and leading in a personable or encouraging manner (Manktelow and Carlson, 2012; Ebert and Griffin, 2010). The positive points for this type of leadership style are the employees are in the state where the leader cares about them. Leaders know the importance of positive environment can contribute to positive productivity among the employees. These types of leaders put people first to ensure that some issues that can lower the productivity like personal conflicts, job dissatisfaction, and employee commitment to stay at minimum level. Additionally, team members may be more willing to take risks because they know that the leader will provide the support if needed (Anzalone and Chris, 2012).

H¹: There is a positive relationship between people oriented style adopted by a leader towards commitments of his subordinates.

Task oriented style

Task-oriented leadership is focused on getting the important task or the series of task to

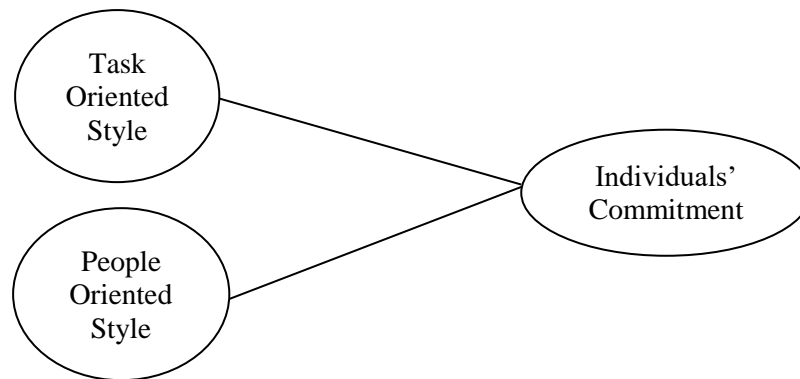
achieve the target. These leaders normally less concerned about the employees and more with the finding the solution to meet the specific targets. They will often actively define the work and the roles required, put structures in place and plan, organize and monitor the progress within the team (Manktelow and James, 2012). This style includes the aspects of task management and leadership. The management aspect includes coordinating work activities, paying attention to administrative task, monitoring product quality and preparing financial reports. In leadership aspects, the leader taking responsibilities for decision, setting short-term strategic goals and training their employees in order to perform their task efficiently and achieve the targeted goals.

H^2 : *There is a positive relationship between task oriented styles adopted by a leader towards commitments of his subordinates.*

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A total of 300 questionnaires have been distributed to the staffs of the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia by using simple random sampling method. Data were obtained using a structured questionnaire through a survey. There are three parts of the questionnaire; (1) demographic background, (2) task oriented style and people oriented style (Sergiovanni, 1969) which encompassed 35 items was used, (3) individuals' commitment and was explored through an organizational culture questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Meyer and Allen's (1997) as represented in Figure 1. Likert scale was used, having five scale options according to the description of T-P questionnaire; (1) Always, (2) Frequently, (3) Occasionally, (4) Seldom and (5) Never. Staffs of the related department were asked to rate the leadership style items as their degree of agreement. Each respondent was reviewed to allocate the scores of 'Task Oriented' (autocratic) and 'People Oriented' (laissez-faire) style. Furthermore, the data analysis method consists of reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework



ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize quantitative data, enabling patterns and relationships to be discerned which are not apparent in the raw data (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). The common purpose of these techniques is to summarize both variability (that is the spread of the numbers) and the center of the data. Sekaran (2000) describes the mean of a sample as a measure of central tendency that offers a general picture of the data without unnecessarily inundating one with each of the observations in a data set or sample. This

analysis was conducted to test whether task oriented style or people oriented style adopted by a leader among the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
<i>Individuals' commitment</i>	3.7167	0.63600
<i>People oriented style</i>	2.4000	0.67466
<i>Task oriented style</i>	1.7000	0.59596

Table 1 above showed that the mean for all variables which ranged between 1.7000 and 3.7167. Mean for individual commitment is 3.7167, people oriented style is 2.4000 and task oriented style is 1.7000, indicates the respondents' average agreed with the questions in general terms of individual commitment, people oriented style and task oriented style.

Correlation analysis

The correlation analyses of the studied variables are concerned with establishing a relationship between leadership style and individuals' commitment. The relationship between leadership style and individuals' commitment was investigated using two-tailed Pearson analysis. This provided correlation coefficients which indicated the strength and direction of a linear relationship. The p-value indicated the probability of this relationship's significance. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation analysis

<i>Correlations are significant at p < 0.01 N = 300</i>		
<i>Variables</i>	<i>People oriented style</i>	<i>Task oriented style</i>
<i>Individual commitment</i>	0.782	0.674

Table 2 showed the result of correlation analysis which is the relationship of people oriented style and task oriented style is significant with individual at $p < 0.01$. Mean that people oriented style is $r = 0.782$ and task oriented style is $r = 0.647$. This finding support by Buèiuniene and Škudiene (2008) and Nyengane (2007).

Regression analysis

The p-value is compared with the alpha value (normally 0.05) and if small, it can be presumed that the independent variable constantly expect the dependent variable. The result of regression analysis in Table 3 showed that the people oriented style adopted by a leader which $p = 0.001$ shows a statically significant relationship with the individual commitment while task oriented style $p = 0.385$ is not significant and cannot be used to predict leadership style by a leader towards individual commitment. This findings is consistent with Brown and Dodd (1999) which had investigated employees in US municipalities. Furthermore, the values of R Square for leadership styles are higher than 0.5 which means the leadership adopted by the leader among the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia is strongly

affecting his staffs' commitment level.

Table 3. Regression analysis

<i>Serial</i>	<i>Independent values</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	People oriented style	0.668	0.001
2	Task oriented style	0.155	0.385
$R^2 = 0.623$		} Model Summary	}
Sig. = 0.000b			

Table 4. Summary of the hypotheses testing results from multiple regression analysis

Hypotheses	Remarks
There is positive relationship between people oriented style adopted by a leader towards commitment of his subordinates.	Supported
There is positive relationship between task oriented style adopted by a leader towards commitment of his subordinates.	Not supported

Table 4 presents summary of the hypothesis testing results from Multiple Regression Analysis. The first hypothesis which is ‘There is a positive relationship between people oriented style adopted by a leader towards commitments of his subordinates’ is supported. Nevertheless, the second hypothesis which is ‘There is a positive relationship between task oriented styles adopted by a leader towards commitments of his subordinates’ is not supported as the p-value is high which illustrates that the relationship between task oriented style and the dependent variable is less significant compared to people oriented style.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to examine the relationship between types of leadership styles (task oriented and people oriented) that adopted by a leader that affecting his/her staffs' commitment among the Public University in Northern State of Malaysia. Based on finding (see table 4) obtain through conducting analyses, leadership style adopted by the leader that affecting his/her staffs' commitment among the Public University of Northern State in Malaysia is people oriented style. The current study has a number of limitations that should be taken into account in the future researches in this area. Firstly, the sample size used in this study is limited, hence the findings of the current study cannot be generalised to the whole staff of the Public University. Secondly, the variables used in the current study are not exhaustive, thus future studies need to extend these findings to other contexts and preferably using other models as well.

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