

The Effectiveness of Leadership Behavior Among Academician of Universiti Teknologi MARA Terengganu

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Abstract: People in organizations develop in their minds an implicit theory of leadership describing how an effective leader should act, and a leader prototype or mental image of what characteristics of effective leader should have. This paper aims to empirically determine the level of leadership effectiveness and leaders' behavior from subordinates' perception. This study is a cross-sectional research by distributing a set of questionnaire to academicians at local university, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Terengganu. A sample of 128 of academicians from seven faculties responded to a questionnaire which measured the leadership effectiveness and leaders' behavior. Decision making, leadership performance, personal characteristics and communication skill are identified as the most important areas for effective leaders' behavior. Leadership effectiveness model was adopted from Cumming. The findings show that the score for leadership effectiveness is the highest, followed by decision-making skill, leadership performance, communication skill and personal characteristic are significantly positive correlated to leadership effectiveness. Leadership effectiveness has been significantly explained by the four independent variables that are leadership performance, decision making skill, communication skill and personal characteristic.

Keywords: Leadership behavior; Effectiveness; Perception; Decision Making; Communication; Performance

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1. INTRODUCTION

People in organizations develop in their minds an implicit theory of leadership describing how an effective leader should act, and a leader prototype or mental image of what characteristics of effective leader should have. Organizational member were asked to select a person for a particular leadership position or asked to evaluate the performance of a leader in a given task situation can be expected to compare a leader or leader candidate to these mental images of leaders. This is an important process because often it is not actual leadership ability or effectiveness that the forms basis for the judgment, but the degree of match, or fit, with the image of what a leader looks like and what a leader does.

Decades ago, our country's emphasis on higher education, coupled with intense national pride and a strong desire to be first, delivered unprecedented economic growth and prosperity for our nation. At the same time the educational performance of our children simply does not measure up to countries around the world, and we are not producing enough educated, highly skilled workers to effectively compete in today's global, knowledge-based economy. A perception exists that higher education is experiencing a great leadership crisis. According to **President and Fellows of Harvard College (2008)**, a crisis situation is not routine and it is characterized by substantial degree of novelty – an unforeseen incident, an emergency of unusual scale, or a situation where the number of unanticipated incidents happen simultaneously. If universities and colleges are to raise standards, status, and improve the overall campus environment they must advance and improve their leadership practices for higher education, which are needed in the 21st century. The effectiveness and efficiency of the university and colleges campus is an emerging crisis – crisis directly related to failed practices in certain areas of leadership. The challenge for academy, more specifically leaders in academy, is to initiate and follow new leadership practices that directly confront unethical, failed and out-of-date methods of campus governance. Thus, the focus of the study is to determine the relationship between academic leaders' effectiveness and their behavior in areas such as leadership performance, decision making skills, communications skills and personal characteristic from the subordinates' perception.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Respondents and data collection

A questionnaire survey was conducted in November 2008. The population for the study comprised all the academic staff (lecturer, senior lecturer and associate professor) in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Terengganu excluding those who were on study leave and those who were working less than 6 months. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to all of the lecturers. A total of 128 usable questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of percent 64. All the data tested using SPSS software.

2.2 Framework

For the purpose of this study, Figure 1 illustrated the framework is developed to explain the association between independent variable (behavior areas; leadership performance, decision making skill, communication skill, and personal characteristics) and the dependent variable (leadership effectiveness).

This study is a cross-sectional research which uses survey method. In gathering the data, the questionnaire was based on the previous study by Brown (1964), Mirza (2003), Abdul Hadi (2004) and Cumming (1967).

2.3 Hypothesis development

Reliability test was done to test the consistency and reliability of items both independent and dependent variable. The Cronbach's Alpha of the reliability test was 0.72, so the scale is reliable.

There are five hypotheses being developed in conjunction with the objectives of the study namely:

H₀1 : There is no relationship between leadership performance, decision making skill, communication skill, personal characteristic and leadership effectiveness.

The analysis of Pearson Correlation Matrix indicates that, there is a significant correlation between leadership behavior and leadership effectiveness.

H₀2 : There is no difference between male and female lecturers perception on their leaders' leadership effectiveness. A t-test indicates that male and female lecturers have no different in perceiving their leaders' leadership effectiveness.

H₀3 : There is no significant difference in academican age group perception on their leaders' leadership effectiveness.

The result of ANOVA indicates that, there is no different among academican of different age group in perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness.

H₀4 : There is no difference in academican of different job seniority in perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness.

H₀5: There is no difference in academican different level of education group perception on their leaders' leadership effectiveness. The result of ANOVA indicates that, the perceived leadership effectiveness has no difference among academican of different level of education group.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of Pearson Correlation Matrix is shown in Table 1.

The result shows that, leadership performance, decision making skill, communication skill, personal skill, personal characteristic is positive and correlated to leadership effectiveness. Therefore, hypothesis H₀1 is substantiated. This result explains that, there is correlation between leadership behavior and leadership effectiveness. This finding is similar to the previous study by Yousef (1998), Fleenor and Bryant (2002), Humphreys (2002), Peterson et. al. (2003), Gregory (1996), Bennis (1984), Rodsutti and Swierczek (2002), Hartog et. al (1999), Hart and Quinn (1993), Block (2003) and also Mc Given and Tvorik (1997).

The analysis of t-test is shown in Table 2.

As can be seen, the difference in the means of perceiving leaders leadership effectiveness for the male and female lecturer is 3.24 and 3.17 with standard deviation of 0.35 and 0.45 is not significant ($t = 1.06$, $p > 0.05$). Thus the H₀2 is not substantiated. This result explains that male and female lecturers want a similar quality regarding perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness. This result supports the previous researchers, Hudson and Rea (1998), Pounder and Coleman (2002) and Oyinlade (2003) but it is different from So and Smith (2003) and Oshagbemi and Gill (2003).

The analysis of ANOVA is shown in Table 3.

In this study, $F = .430$, $p > 0.05$. Thus the H 3 is not substantiated. This result explains that there is no difference in perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness among academican of different age group. This result is different from the finding by Kakabadse et. al. (1998), Mitchell (2000) and Oshagbemi

(2001).

The analysis of ANOVA is shown in Table 4.

In this study, $F = 2.440$, $p > 0.05$. Thus the H_{o4} is not substantiated. This result explains that, there is no difference in perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness for academicians of different job seniority group. This result is different from the finding by Oshagbemi (2001).

The analysis of ANOVA is shown in Table 5.

In this study, $F = 3.202$, $p > 0.05$. Thus the H_{o5} is not substantiated. This result explains that, there is no difference in perceiving their leaders leadership effectiveness for all academician group regarding to level of education. This result is different from the finding by Mitchell. (2000)

4. CONCLUSION

This study tested a model that links between leadership behaviors and its effectiveness from the subordinate perception. Gender does not make any difference in perceiving the leaders' behaviors. It shows that male and female perceive the same thing to be effective leaders.

For further study, there is a need to study on academic leaders' behavior related to members' behavior as a model reflection. Further research should also examine the supporting staffs' perception on academic leadership effectiveness.

Additionally, this study could be regarded as the beginning of a line of investigations examining the relationship between academic leader and the university supporting staff. For example, to explore and try to determine the factors that contribute to good working relationships among academic leader and their supporting staff would be a highly relevant future extension of this research, both for practitioners and scholars.

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TABLES

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**Table 1: The correlation between leadership performance and leadership effectiveness
Correlations**

		Leadership performance	Decision Making Skill	Communicatio n Skill	Personal Characteristic	LEF
Leadership performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.346(**)	.242(**)	.173	.157
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.006	.051	.077
	N	128	128	128	128	128
Decision Making Skill	Pearson Correlation	.346(**)	1	.580(**)	.436(**)	.306(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	128	128	128	128	128
Communicati on Skill	Pearson Correlation	.242(**)	.580(**)	1	.582(**)	.481(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	128	128	128	128	128
Personal Characteristic	Pearson Correlation	.173	.436(**)	.582(**)	1	.579(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	128	128	128	128	128
LEF	Pearson Correlation	.157	.306(**)	.481(**)	.579(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.077	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	128	128	128	128	128

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: T-test for the differences between male and female

Leadership Effectiveness	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
	Male	63	3.24	.3578	1.060	.560
	Female	65	3.17	.45545	1.064	

Table 3: ANOVA for the difference in academician age group perception

Leadership effectiveness		Sum squares	of df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Between groups	.142	2	.071	.430	.652
	Within groups	20.622	125	.165		
	Total	20.764	127			

Table 4: ANOVA for the difference in academicians job seniority group

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Leadership effectiveness	Between groups	.780	2	.390	2.440	.091
	Within groups	19.984	125	.160		
	Total	20.764	127			

Table 5: ANOVA for difference level of education group

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Leadership effectiveness	Between groups	.515	1	.515	3.202	.076
	Within groups	20.249	126	.161		
	Total	20.764	127			