

IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT: STUDY AMONG THE STAFF OFFICERS OF PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS IN POLONNARUWA DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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Abstract

The organization success and failures depend on the employees and the leaders of that organization. With that point of view employee commitment and leadership styles are taken into the consideration by the researchers. In aligning with that, this study investigates the impact of leadership styles on employee commitment of public sector organizations in Polonnaruwa district. The research included staff officers from the public sector in Polonnaruwa district. For data collection, the researcher used standard questionnaire. In order to measure the leadership style and employee commitment 02 different standard questionnaire used by the researcher and they are namely, multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) and employee commitment questionnaire (ECQ). The findings of the study revealed that both transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style have significant positive relationship with employee commitment with $r = 0.712$ and $r = 0.670$, respectively. The result of multiple regression analysis revealed that the adjusted R square value for leadership style and employee commitment is 0.593. It means around 60% of the variance on employee commitment is explained by leadership styles. The implication of the study was that leadership styles are important in influencing employee commitment. Organizations should pay attention to these and incorporate proper leadership styles as one of the strategies to ensure the achievement of employee commitment.

Keywords: Employee Commitment; Leadership Styles; Transformational Leadership; Transactional Leadership; Public Sector Staff Officers.

Introduction

The main aim of any public sector organizations is to provide effective and valuable services for the society. No matter whether it is public or private, every organization tries to become more success by providing effective services and products. To achieve those objectives organizations, use many resources. Among them human resource is more valuable assets for every organization to become the success (Soelistya, Mashud, & Suryanto, 2016). Other resources can be used effective manner if they have qualified, competent and committed employees. Human resource is most valuable assets in every organization and high committed employees

can influence to the achievements of an organization directly (Stephen, 1992). Employee commitment can be defined as the loyalty, identification, and involvement with some appropriate object (Buchanan, 1974). Satisfaction and involvement of committed employees is very high, and they do not think to leave from the organization. Commitment can be defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with an organization and involvement in the organization. Organizational commitment refers to the acceptance of organizational values and willingness to stay in that organization (Meyer & Herscovich, 2001). Commitment to the organization is linked to key work-related factors such as employee absenteeism,

employee turnover, employee performance and employees' citizenship behavior (Alkahtani, 2016).

On the other hand, it is very difficult to get benefits from human assets without proper leadership. Effective leadership can be utilized and get benefits from human resources. Hersey and Blanchard (1984) claim that, organizations should be given the chance to improve the quality of leadership and achieving greater commitment of employees. After that organizations can be achieved their target as well as profitability (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Leadership is regarded as a key factor in the initiation of transformative change in organizations, with leaders having the capability to espouse and entrench behaviors and attitudes that result in a positive effect on individuals, teams, and organizations (Raja & Palanichamy, 2011). Some researchers also suggest that the continued interest is a result of the belief that if effectively managed the employee will show their commitment, on the other hand the employee commitment can be a result from effective leadership (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Leadership is a key factor in the management and control of employees and the organization; it can be viewed as a series of managerial attitudes, behaviors, characteristics, and skills, based on individual and organizational values, leadership interests and reliability of employees in different situations (Alkahtani, 2016). Leadership is an influence process in which can be gain commitment and trust of others. Leadership is a dynamic process whereby one man influences other to contribute voluntarily to the realization and attainment of the goals and objectives, aspiration of values of the group that is representing the essence of leadership is to help a group or an organization to attain sustainable development and growth (Cole, 2002). There are several leadership styles impact on employee commitment, but in this study the researcher chooses only two leadership styles, such as transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Several researchers found that transactional and transformational leadership styles are more crucial to increase employee commitment (Fasola, Adeyemi & Olowe, 2013). Transactional leadership occurs when managers take the initiative in offering some form of need satisfaction in return for

something valued by employees such as pay, promotion, improved job satisfaction or recognition. While transformational leadership is the process of engaging the commitment of employees in the context of shared values and a shared vision (Sadler, 2003). Finally, it can be viewed employee commitment is significant factor for any organization; therefore, the researchers attempt to investigate "to what extend the leadership styles followed by the managers affect their employee commitment".

Literature Review

Leadership

Establishing a definition of the term "leadership" has shown to be a challenging attempt for scholars and practitioners alike. More than a century has passed meanwhile leadership evolved into a subject of scholarly thought and different definitions have developed continuously during that period. These definitions have been determined by many factors, from world affairs, politics and to the aspects of the discipline in which the subject is being studied. There is an extensive range of definitions in the subject of leadership. Effective leadership can influence employees to work to achieve organizational goal (Datuk & Xavier, 2012). There are many characteristics and views of leadership which helps to distinguished leaders from non-leaders. There are many different views of leadership due to the characteristic that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Today leadership theories have shifted from traditional trait or personality-based theories to situational theory (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Leadership is an influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through change. They continue to define influence, as the process of a leader communicating ideas, gaining acceptance of them, and motivating followers to support and implement the ideas through change (Achua & Lussier, 2013). Leadership is defined as the ability of an individual to influence and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members (Cojocar, 2009).

The Leadership Style

A leadership style refers to leaders' characteristics and behaviors when directing,

motivating, guiding, and managing people. Effective leaders can identify political movements and social change. They can also motivate others to perform, create, and invent something (Cherry, 2012). Some leaders possess one style or many styles that helps them to direct and guide their followers in effective manner. Some leaders are not always being a well-liked person. They are treating for their employees very roughly. Some leaders are stay with their followers friendly. Like that effective employee change their styles situations to situations. However effective leaders provide positive directions through different leadership styles. Ineffective leaders do not change their styles according to the situation and do not correlate with their organization and individuals who are attempting to lead (Lazzari, 2018). In 1936, a group of researchers led by psychologist Kurt Lewin set out to identify different styles of leadership. While further research has identified more distinct types of leadership, this early study was very influential and established three major leadership styles that have provided a springboard for more defined leadership theories (Cherry, 2019).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership can be defined as the most effective leadership style. This style was first described during the late 1970s and later expanded upon by researcher Bass (1990). Abilities to motivate, inspire followers and to direct positive changes in group are some characteristics of those leaders. Transformational leaders tend to be emotionally intelligent, energetic, and passionate. A transformational leader helps their employees in the organization to fulfill their targets while helping the organization to achieve its future goals (Cherry, 2019). Transformational leaders function as role models and display a charismatic personality that influences others to want to become more like the leader. Idealized influence can be most expressed through a transformational leader's willingness to take risks and follow a core set of values convictions and ethical principles in the actions he takes. It is through this concept of idealized influence that the leader builds trust with his followers and the followers in turn develop confidence in their leader (Shieltz, 2019).

Transactional Leadership

The transactional leadership style views the leader-follower relationship as a transaction. By accepting a position as a member of the group, the individual has agreed to obey the leader. In most situations, this involves the employer-employee relationship, and the transaction focuses on the follower completing required tasks in exchange for monetary compensation. One of the main advantages of this leadership style is that it creates clearly defined roles. People know what they are required to do and what they will be receiving in exchange for completing these tasks. It also allows leaders to offer a great deal of supervision and direction if it is needed. Group members may also be motivated to perform well to receive rewards. One of the biggest downsides is that the transactional style tends to stifle creativity and out-of-the-box thinking (Cherry, 2019).

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire leadership also known as delegate leadership may be the best or the worst of leadership styles. If the leader follows the normally understood definition and standard practice of non-interference and hands-off when leading his or her followers, the worst form of leadership is formed. However, laissez-faire leadership emerges as the ultimate form of leading during the twenty-first century. The laissez-faire style of leadership encompasses non-interference policy, allows complete autonomy to all workers, and has no way of attaining goals (Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh, Hashmi, & Shaikh, 2012). Also, it is the inability or a mark of general failure to take responsibility for managing and coordinating activities thereby showing leaders who avoid making decisions, hesitate in acting, and are absent when needed in critical situations (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003).

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment has been defined as the strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Three distinct components are described by some authors, first strong belief of employees and accept every organizational goal, second Strong desire to maintain membership to the

organization and third willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization they work for (Mowday et al., 1979).

Usually, the employees who have high commitment are loyal and mostly they think about the future of the organization. Committed employees always make extra effort to achieve organizational objectives as well as they concern about growth and success of their organization (Mowday, et al., 1979). More committed employees do not think to leave from the organization, and they try to attend regularly. Having committed workforce is one of the main reimbursements for any organization (John & Maltin, 2010).

Dimensions of Employee Commitment

The most basic theory of employee commitment is Allen and Meyer's conceptualization. This theory differs from others in the nature of the psychological state being described. They identified three dimensions of employee commitment; affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Normative commitment is a relatively new aspect of organizational commitment having been defined after the former ones (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment defined as positive feelings of identification with attachment and involvement in the work organization. Affective commitment is also attitudinal based and in this situation the employee perceives him/herself as a part of the organization. Individuals with prominent levels of affective commitment continue employment because they want to (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment means extent to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving. Continuance commitment is a commitment situation originating from the needs of employees to stay in the organization considering the costs of leaving (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment means as employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organization. Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Those with high levels of normative commitment stay with an organization because they feel they ought to remain (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Leadership Styles and Employees' Commitment

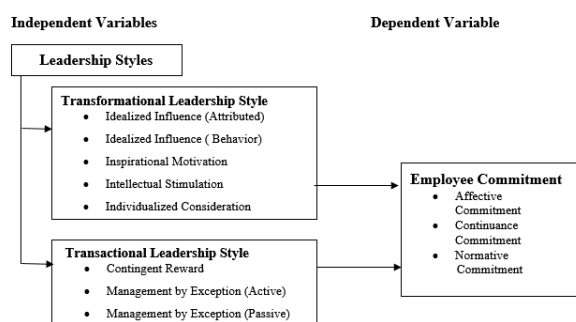
An exploration of organizational commitment' its influence on organization efficiency and actions leaders can take to build highly committed personnel (Allen & Meyer, 1990). A relationship between commitment and leadership style has been reported in the organizational and management literatures. Several studies found a positive relationship between these two variables. For instance, studies concluded that the leadership styles of supervisors are important dimensions of the social context because they shape subordinates' organizational commitment in various important ways. Likewise, Ponnu (2009) indicate that ethical leadership behavior has a positive impact on employee commitment and employee trust in leaders.

Avolio (2004) found a positive association between transformational leadership and employee commitment. Contrary to the previous research, they found that transformational leadership at the indirect senior level had a more positive relationship with employees' level of organizational commitment as compared to the relationship between commitment and ratings of transformational leadership of the followers' immediate supervisor. According to the study of Avolio (1993) claimed that organizations have a kind of culture, which is represented by the leaders who use transactional or transformational leadership styles. According to their findings, transactional culture creates only short-term commitment, whereas transformational culture creates long-term commitment (Avolio, 1993). According to the Lo, Ramayah, and MIn, (2009) examined leadership styles and employees' organizational commitment in Malaysia manufacturing industry, to ensure the successful management of employees and to improve productivity and achievements of an

organization. They discovered that several dimensions of transactional and transformational leadership have positive relationship with organizational commitment, but the impacts are higher for transactional leadership style (Lo et al., 2009).

Mulugeta and Hailemariam (2018) revealed that the leadership style applied in their organization inclined to transformational leadership style, followed by transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles as adjudged by the employees. The study also concluded that there are certain factors that also affect the employees' commitment in the organization, part from leadership styles (Mulugeta & Hailemariam, 2018). As like another finding of Gcaza, Garande, and Echezona (2018) assessed the effect of leadership style and organizational culture on employees' commitment. Their study found that there are significant positive effects of leadership styles and organizational culture on employees' commitment. The study also revealed that employees' commitment was influenced the most by transformational leadership style when compared with transactional leadership style (Gcaza et al., 2018). The findings of Wiza and Hlanganipai (2014) showed that leadership styles are drivers of employees' commitment and noting this by the leaders of the organization will ensure desired outcomes. The study noted that employees' perception of the leadership style to be good would help them identify with the organization. Their study also revealed that transformational leadership style had a significant positive relationship with affective and continuance employee commitment, whereas transactional leadership style had a significant positive relationship with only normative commitment (Wiza & Hlanganipai, 2014).

Conceptual Framework



Source: Develop for this study

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are developed to test the relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment.

- H1:** There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and employee commitment.
- H2:** There is a significant relationship between transactional leadership style and employee commitment.
- H3:** There is a significant impact of leadership styles on employee commitment.

Research Methodology

Data Collection Method

This study focused on primary data which is collected via standard questionnaire from the staff officers who are working public sector organization in Polonnaruwa district by a survey method. Simple random sampling used to collect the data from the respondents. The data collection instrument for the study had been developed based on literature from scholars about leadership styles and employee commitment and used the quantitative method with literature support.

Population and Sample of the Research

The target groups of the present research were secondary level and primary level employees from district secretary office and other three divisional secretary offices, Such as development coordinators, development officers, public management assistants, draftsman, technical officers, technical assistants, information technology assistant, drivers and office assistants. Total population consist of 755 employees. To get the sample size, researcher gets the population to an approximate value, it is 800. The sample size calculated with the 95% confidence level and $\pm 7\%$ precision level by using published table of Israel (1992); this means that if a 95% confidence level is selected, 95 out of 100 samples will have the true population value within the range of $\pm 7\%$ precision level that specified earlier. According to the published table of Israel, 163 of responses selected as the sample for this research.

Method of Data Analysis

Collected data analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22. Researchers used some statistical tools for analyze the data, based on that, frequency tables used to summarize the respondents' profile in the form of frequency and percentages whereas the descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations of employees' answers to leadership styles and employee commitment scales were calculated to determine employees' perceptions of leadership styles and employees' commitment. Subsequently, the researcher employed two-tailed Pearson correlation analysis to investigate the relationship between leadership

styles and employee commitment. The correlation analysis supported in determining both the form and degree of the relationship between the leadership styles and employee's commitment. Cronbach's alpha used to calculate reliability of each questionnaire.

Measurement of Variables

The study used two standard instruments one is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), used to determine relevant leadership styles which formulated by Bass and Avolio (1997) and the Organizational Commitment measured by using the measurement and antecedents of (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Operationalization

Table 1: Operationalization of the research

Concept	Variables	Dimensions	Questions to measure
Independent Variable (Part B)	Transformational Leadership style	Idealized Influence (Attributed)	Q1 – Q2
		Idealized Influence (Behavior)	Q3 – Q4
		Inspirational Motivation	Q5 – Q6
		Intellectual Stimulation	Q7 – Q8
		Individualized Consideration	Q9 – Q10
	Transactional leadership styles	Contingent Reward	Q11 – Q12
		Management by Exception (Active)	Q13 – Q14
		Management by Exception (Passive)	Q15 – Q16
Dependent Variable (Part C)	Employee Commitment	Affective Commitment	Q1 – Q4
		Continuance Commitment	Q5 – Q8
		Normative Commitment	Q9 – Q12

Source: Develop for this study

Results and Discussion

Response Rate

The researcher distributed 163 questionnaires to the respondent who are working in the district and divisional secretariat office in Polonnaruwa district. Due to unclear answers (more than one answer) and uncompleted questionnaires, the researcher can be able to receive only 151 responses from the targeted

sample. These results gave the study a response rate of 92.6% which was above the required threshold as indicated by Cooper and Schindler (2011) and stated that a resulting studies rate of 60% sufficient to render a study successful.

Reliability Statistic of Leadership Style and Employee Commitment

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of scale items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Transactional leadership	10	0.762
Transformational leadership	06	0.845
Employee Commitment	12	0.857

Source: Survey data

According to the table 2, if the alpha value between 0.60 -0.70 is respectable and between 0.70-0.80 is very good. Therefore, the above table 2 shows good and acceptable reliability for all instruments.

Validity of the Scale

Table 3: Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test and Bartlett's Test

Variables	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
		Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
LSs and OC	0.763	0.840	300	0.000

Source: Survey data

According to the above table, KMO value is 0.763 which considered good result as it exceeds the 0.5. Bartlett's test shows the significant value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 that means the factors that form the variable is satisfactory.

Correlations Analysis

Table 4: Correlation between Leadership Styles and Employee Commitment

Variables	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
Transformational Leadership Style and Employee Commitment	0.712**
Transactional leadership Style and Employee Commitment	0.670 **
Sig. Level (2-tailed)	0.000

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

Source: Survey data

Correlation analysis used to quantify the strength of association between the variables. According to the above table, the significant value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between the transformational leadership style and employee commitment with $r = 0.712$ and there is a significant positive relationship between the transactional leadership style and employee commitment with $r = 0.670$, based on this the alternative hypotheses were supported, and null hypotheses were not supported.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 5: Model summary of multiple linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.690 ^a	.638	.593	.473

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transactional leadership style, Transformational leadership Style

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

Source: Survey data

Table 5, represent the model summary of leadership style (transformational and transactional) and employee commitment. R square value is 0.638 and the adjusted R square value is 0.593. It means 60% of the variance in employee commitment can be explained by both transformational and transactional leadership styles jointly.

Table 6: ANOVA of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.267	2	.174	53.208	.000b
Residual	33.210	148	.225		
Total	33.477	150			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

Source: Survey data

Findings

The main objective of this research is to identify the impact of leadership styles on employee commitment. According to the analysis, the results of the study showed that around 60% of the variance in employee commitment can be explained by both transformational and transactional leadership style.

There were three hypotheses formulated for this study such as there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and employee commitment, there is a significant relationship between transactional leadership and employee commitment and there is a significant impact of leadership styles on employee commitment. According to the correlation analysis, there is a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership style and employee commitment with $r = 0.712$, there is a strong positive correlation between transactional leadership style and employee commitment with $r = 0.670$ which are significant at 0.000 levels and multiple regression analysis show that one-unit rise in leadership styles will increase the employee commitment by 0.593 units at 0.000 significant levels. Hence there is a significant impact of leadership styles on employee commitment. Therefore, alternative hypotheses supported whereas null hypotheses not supported with rational through the data that were collected and analyzed. Therefore, there is statistical indication to assertion that there is a significant link between leadership styles and employee commitment.

The results of the research supported the hypotheses and led to their acceptance. A significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment found. Further, a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and employee commitment found. And finally, leadership styles significantly impact on employee commitment also found.

Implication and Conclusion

In this present study researchers tried to find out that there is any relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment, for this the researcher chooses public sector organizations in Polonnaruwa district. According to the result there is a significant positive impact between leadership styles and employee commitment. Findings of this study also in line with some of the earlier researchers; Suranga Silva and Mendis (2017) identified the relationship between transformational, transaction and laissez-faire leadership styles and employee commitment in the insurance sector of Sri Lanka. The results of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship with leadership styles and employee commitment. Another regression result of the study indicated that there is statistically significant effect for leadership styles on organizational commitment at Jordanian banks (Al-Daibat, 2017). Lo et al. (2009) found that leadership styles have positive relationship with organizational commitment in Malaysia manufacturing industry.

Further the finding also concludes that transformational leadership is a better predictor of employee commitment in the public sector organization, another important finding was that there is a positive and significant relationship between transactional leadership styles employee commitment. This concluded that employees' feeling of having to stay in the organization increases when transactional leadership behaviors increase. Finally, the present study was able to conclude that transformational leadership and transactional leadership style significant association with employee commitment in public sector organization. Overall, the researchers found that leadership style is significantly impact on employee commitment in public sector organization in Polonnaruwa district.

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