Impact of Leadership Styles on Job Performance in Healthcare Sector: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Literature claimed that leadership concept was one of the most researched topics in social sciences as well as organizational research. However, the organizational leadership research required more attention to the healthcare sector due to its vital importance and sensitivity. Hence, this paper shed light through literature review on the impact of two major leadership styles; transformational and transactional on job performance in the healthcare sector. The study used the qualitative research technique and relies on secondary data collection from empirical studies and literature reviews. The impact of both transformational and transactional leadership styles on job performance in the healthcare sector were found to be different. The transformational leadership style was found to be more effective in increasing both job and organizational performance in the healthcare sector. It further shown that adapting transformational leadership style in the healthcare sector increased the quality of healthcare services as well as patient safety and reduced healthcare staff turnover rates. The research findings served as a guide for practitioners and healthcare leaders in improving job performance. It added value and contributed to the leadership research in the healthcare sector.

Keywords

Leadership Styles, Job Performance, Healthcare Sector, Qualitative Research

Introduction

This research intends to determinethe difference between transactional and transformational leadership styles and its impact on job performance in the healthcare sector. It aims to highlight the challenges and obstacles of using both transformational and transactional leadership styles to reach the highest level of job performance. Trait theories, behavior theories, contingency theories and the neocharismatic theories are the foundation of the diverse leadership definitions as well as the most eminent styles of leadership (Fungwu et al., 2006; Warrick, 1981). This study pinpoints transactional and transformational leadership styles impact on job performance with emphasis on the medical industry. The study selected two leadership styles specifically as they are considered as a global leadership key concepts by researchers and business leaders (Gadot, 2007).According to Shalley et al. (2004) organizational success is usually driven by individuals' creativity unique ideas, policies and practices in developing services or products which cannot be achieved without the existence of leadership. Leadership literature is very rich with empirical studies on impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles on job performance in several industries. However, there are not many studies on the impact of the two leadership styles on job performance in the healthcare sector. This study aims to develop a conceptual framework to examine both leadership styles impact on employee performance in the healthcare sector. While there is no plenty of empirical studies in the researched sector, the study depends on finding links between the two styles and the industry best practices. The research shall use the qualitative approach through collecting and reviewing secondary data from empirical theoretical literature reviews in the subject field.

Literature Review

Leadership definition:

Leadership is one of the most important key determinants of organizational success or failure. Leadership in general is a harmonious blend of charisma, experience, and influence capabilities which can be used by leaders to motivate and direct a team or a group of people to outperform or achieve an organizational goal. Leadership is one of the hottest researches and business topics and has been defined from various perspectives. However, researchers and business leaders mostly

agreed on several personal and organizational outcomes in case different proper leadership styles are selected and implemented successfully. Kotter (1988) perspective tends to define leadership as influence of leaders on their followers. In the same context, Bass (1990) defined leadership as the ability to convince followers to achieve what leader wants to be achieved. However, Rost (1993) briefly defined leadership as relationship. It can be concluded that leadership is the most important skill for leaders and organizations to create a competitive gadget and increase performance (Kalsoom, Khan & Zubair, 2018). According to Othman, Robin & Abdullah (2014), leadership improves followers' knowledge and increases their retention and engagement.

Leadership theories overview

Great-Man Theory

Great-Man leadership theory is one of the most ancient theories of leadership. It symbolizes the leader as an eventful born hero who is able to lead and succeed (Dobbins & Platz, 1986). This early notion about leadership has its moral flaws as it didn't distinguish between different types of leaders and suggested that any event-making person is a successful leader regardless their traits. This leadership theory was the spark of the progress of leadership theories and the debate whether leadership is genetic or acquired and whether leaders are born heroes or not (MacGregor, 2003).

Trait theory

Trait theory has been developed as an opposition to the Great-Man theory to explode the notion of the born leader demonstrating that leadership is acquired not genetic. According to Ekvall & Arvonen (1991), the trait theory proposes two types of traits in a leader; emergent and effectiveness traits. The emergent refers to the inherited traits and the effectiveness refers to the learned traits. The inherited refers to the physical, charismatic, self-confidence traits while the learned refers to experience, competencies, education and skills. The traits theory of leadership tremendously focused on the power of charisma and its impact on followers (Burns,2003).

Contingency/ situational Theory

Contingency or situational theory states that there is no definite or best leadership style fits all settings. According to Greenleaf (1977), contingency theory is a behavioral based leadership theory which opposes the notion that there is a best way of leadership. Namely, what may be considered as operationally effective in some setting may not fit in other settings. Therefore, the theory suggests that leaders should adapt to the requirements and not to stick to a specific type of leadership all the time. Hence, they should consider the characteristics of the internal and external factors and adapt to them to achieve the best possible outcomes. According to this theory, the leaders' and followers' relationship is the center of focus and that followers play an effective role in the definition of the leadership style (Khan et al., 2016). In the same context, Bass & Avolio (1997) asserts that the maturity of the followers is the major definers of the leadership style.

Style and behavior theory

The style and behavior theory assume that the leaders should be equipped with different traits and skills to fit different types of settings and followers. According to Yukl (2001), there are three different leadership styles; democratic, autocratic and laissez faire. He assumes that democratic leadership aims to motivate, engage and respect the followers and maintain excellent connection with them. The autocratic leadership aims to create followers who abide to rules, follow instructions and implement the vision of the leadership regardless their own views. Autocratic leaders pursue discipline and big outputs. The third style, laissez faire fits the talented followers who are able to take decisions and complete their tasks independently.

Transactional theory

According to House & Shamir (1993), transactional leadership is based on the level of

agreement between the leaders and followers. Many scholars argued that transactional leadership is a free leadership style. Namely, no one manages anyone but authorizing everyone to bring value instead, through brining new ideas and achieving targets and objectives (Wen et al., 2019).

Transformational theory

It has been alleged that transformational leadership is one of the most effective theories as it is based on the greater involvement of followers through developing their skills and increasing their morale to be able to confront work challenges (Khan et al., 2016). According to House & Shamir (1993), transformational leaders are focusing on increasing the morale, motivation and engagement of their followers based on common values, believes and goals. One of the transformational leader's missions is to prepare their followers for leadership through empowerment and delegation (House & Aditya, 1997).

Leadership and Job performance:

Job performance is the predicted outcome of individuals which brings value to organizations over a certain period of time (Motowidlo & Kell, 2012). It has also been defined as the efficient accomplishment of employees' job duties and responsibilities (Torlak & Kuzek, 2015). According to Erkutlu, (2008) employee and organizational performance are the result of effective leadership and is measured through revenues, return on investment, market shares, production increase, cost decrease etc. The literature review is evidencing that leadership styles can be sensitive to types industries and characteristics of followers. Namely, not every leadership style can be used without understanding the consequences of the implementation as well as the pros and cons. It is hence very advisable to study the impact of different leadership styles on job performance from specific industry perspectives so as to reach the aspired organizational effectiveness and job performance.

Leadership styles overview:

Fiedler (1967) in his contingency leadership model proposed that leaders should select and adopt their leadership styles based on the followers' characteristics; their readiness, the telling, the selling and the participating approaches. On the other hand, neocharismatic leadership theory is mainly used by transformational and transactional leaders as it depends on transforming followers through charismatic and visionary aspects of the leader (Fungwu et al., 2006). Transactional leadership is a reward-based approach which relies on rewarding the high performers and punishing the low performers (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018). It has its pros and cons in terms of organizational gains as it urges employees to learn more and develop their skills to avoid mistakes but may scare them to work on their best to avoid mistakes.

On the contrary, Molero et al., (2007), stated that transformational leadership is one of the most organizational followed leadership styles during the past two decades. Transformational leaders are charismatic, inspirational, visionary, confident and able influence people to follow them and achieve their mission (Egri & Herman 2000). Through the emphasis on making clear vision and mission and the concentration on skills, competencies, job descriptions and policies, they are able to motivate followers and encourage them to achieve the organizational objectives (Bass, 1990).

According to Bass (1985), transformational leadership stands on four corners: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, charisma or idealized influence, and inspirational motivation. The intellectual stimulation aims to prepare follower for the change through focusing on increasing their problem-solving skills, work competencies, creativity and capabilities.Through individualized consideration the leader gives direct attention to followers and acts as a mentor to them by being sympathetic, supportive and also by giving advices, feedbacks and counseling (Memon, 2014). Charisma, can be considered as the cornerstone of transformational leadership as by which the leader will be able to influence the followers and create trust and respect between each other (Shin & Zhou 2003). Inspirational motivation is the art of inspiring confidence and setting the goals through creating a sense of purpose and articulating clear vision between followers (Eeden et al., 2008).

Transformational leadership:

Hypothesis 1. There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance in healthcare.

Unlike transactional leadership, transformational focuses on creating value to both followers and organizations through crating a sense of ownership and motivating followers to select the organizational goals on the top of their personal interest (Bass, 1985). Cummings et al., (2010), observed that transformational leaders focus on quality outcome unlike most of the other leadership styles. They added that, the leadership style requires a proper and inline organizational culture to increase the patient morality and engagement.

Idealized influence

It is linked to the charisma of the leaders and the level of inspiration and influence as a role model they have on their followers (Yukl, 2001; Shamir et al., 1993). They are capable to create a self-sacrifice attitude in their followers through creating a strong constructive relationship based on trust, confidence and respect with them (House & Shamir, 1993).

Inspirational Motivation

According to Bass and Avolio (2004), transformational leaders are keen to inspire and motivate their followers to understand and work for the sake of achieving the organizational mission and vision. They as well encourage them to take decisions to perform beyond expectations and increase the organizational outcome. After all, if the followers fail, they replace them and create new opportunities for both individuals and organizations.

Intellectual simulation

Transformational leaders stimulate the followers' knowledge to increase their creativity and problem-solving skills and make them able to face challenges and solve them. They focus on both the organizational and personal skills to encourage

their followers to work proactively (House & Shamir, 1993).

Individualized consideration

This considers the individuals as the core asset of organizations and the main pillars to its sustainable success. Based on this, transformational leaders focus on training, counselling, coaching and caring for their followers needs to encourage them to be outstanding performers.

Transactional Leadership:

Hypothesis 2. There is a positive relationship between transactional leadership and job performance in healthcare.

Bass (1985), proposed that transactional leadership style involves three major components; contingent reward, management by exception (active style) and management by exception (passive style). According to Bass (1985), the transactional leaders use the reward and punishment style as the major motivator for good performance. It has been claimed in literature that this style limits the innovation and creativity and decreases the job satisfaction (Khan et al., 2016). In addition, MacGregor (2003), claimed that tis leadership style fits the production industries which relies deeply on machineries more than humans and cannot fit the industries which depend on human thinking and contribution.

Transactional leadership aims to achieve results through material rewards as the major motivator unlike transformational leadership which relies more on value based motivational structure (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Furthermore, transactional leaders who follow the active management by exception aim not to go beyond the agreed-on targets but to only achieve them while those who rely on passive management by exception neglect to set any agreement and interfere only if a problem occurs (Bass & Avolio, 2004). That's why, it has been claimed that it doesn't motivate employees' to over achieve or outperform but to only achieve the agreed-on targets. It has been found that transactional leadership motivates employees' and increases their job performance.

Comparison between transformational and transactional leadership impact on job performance

In general, literature defines the transactional leadership as reward-based approach while the transformational as motivational approach (Keegan et al., 2004; Bass and Avolio J., 1990; Pearce, 1981). They do believe that the motivation of transactional leadership doesn't last for long as it is based on reward and punishment while transformational leadership fosters the engagement of followers and make them feel ownership and lasts for long. In addition, transformational leadership is concentrating on the role of higher leadership which is missed in the transactional leadership (Memon, 2014).Transformational leaders follow balanced approach through focusing on helping their followers to learn how to face challenges and solve problems (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018). Through following the balanced approach, they are able to motivate their subordinates to reach the self-actualization level (Chen et al. 2005). In addition, this style of leadership unlike other types of leadership styles, promotes the value of communication and encourages all team members and leaders to continuously communicate so as to achieve the organizational objectives and foster engagement and productivity (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

According to Barrow (1977), transformational leader spends time to coach and train their followers which reduces the role ambiguity and increases the job performance and productivity. However, transactional leader focuses on the execution of tasks and applying rewards and punishments accordingly. Bass (1985), concluded that transformational leadership is more motivational and leads to better job performance and employee satisfaction more than the transactional leadership.

High employees' turnover rates, low levels of engagement and loyalty are all big challenges facing many organizations and impacting its productivity (Asrar-ul-haq & Kuchinke, 2016). Managers who follow a proper leadership style are not only able to increase employees' and

organizations' performance but make them outperform (Nawoselng' ollan & Roussel, 2017). Therefore, it is crucially important for leaders to understand the different types of leadership and adapt them to the best fit to their employees' and organizational requirements. It is never easy job to fit the leadership style to the best interest of different industries due to their different characteristics. Bass & Avolio (1994), abbreviated the most effective and most used leadership styles as transformational and transactional leadership. In the same context, Kirkman et al., (2009), confirmed that transactional and transformational leadership styles have great impact on job performance.

Theoretical framework
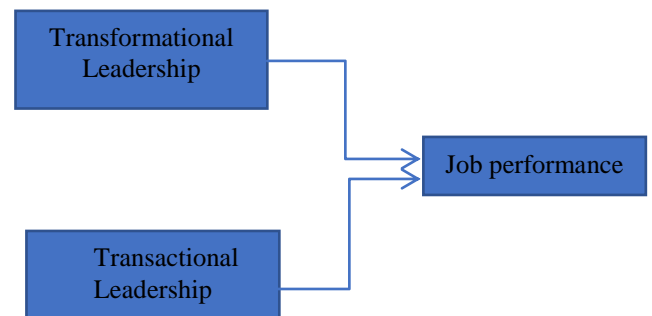
**This model shows the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on job performance

Discussion

It is a known fact in business management that some employees would react to punishment by destructing the workplace instead of accepting the punishment and correcting their mistakes. This if happens in healthcare would imply disastrous results which may directly threaten the health and safety of patients and employees at a time. Hence, this research suggests that the implementation of transactional leadership is not recommendable in the healthcare industry specifically and other sensitive industries in general. Staff may accept punishment and live with it in many occasions when they don't have alternatives which is not the case in the healthcare industry. Healthcare professionals are scarce in terms of numbers in most of the world countries and the demand on their services is one of the highest. Following the

punishment and reward would indeed increase turnover rates in the healthcare organizations which will definitely result in lack of talents and decrees in the provided healthcare quality as well as the organizational outcome.Doctors are having pride in their profession more than most other professions may be due to the fact that they are handling the most precious thing for any human being. This fact confirms that this category won't be able to deal with a leader who will follow punishment as it will make them feel downgraded and leave the organization or drop in terms of performance.

In general terms, this study finds that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are positively impacting employees' job performance. However, both styles have different characteristics which fit different styles of business and different types of employees. Transactional leadership is a reward and punishment driven leadership style that can fit the production industries. It doesn't focus much on the behavioral factor of employee performance but achieving the targets instead. It doesn't require employees to outperform but to achieve targets. In addition, transactional leadership doesn't focus on the engagement or loyalty factors of employment. Based on the aforementioned, it has been suggested that the traits and characteristics of both transactional leaders and transactional leadership style itself doesn't fit the healthcare industry or its workers as it is a very sensitive industry with sensitive requirements.

On the other hand, transformational leadership is more focused on the motivational and behavioral aspects of followers. It further improves their level of engagement and loyalty till they reach the level of self-denial and focus on the organizational benefits as their first priority. This is in the interest of quality healthcare delivery and patient safety. Furthermore, it increases employees' job performance which result in better outcomes for both employees and organizations. Many researchers assert that transformational leadership is an ideal fit for business and organizational success as it is based on sustainable factors which create positive behavior in employees and in turn their performance and creativity (Eeden, 2008).

While they believe that organizational success is based on commitment of employees, the transformational leaders focus not only on achieving the organizational objectives but on the sustainability of the mental health of their followers as well (Memon, 2014; Bass, 1990). Charisma is considered as the most important factor in transformational leadership (Banerji & Krishnan 2000)). It is widely used by politicians, religious figure and public figures to create loyalty to their causes, ideas or themselves through (Memon, 2014). In conclusion, scholars claimed that transformational leadership is linked to both higher levels of job performance in addition to quality patient safety (Boamah et al., 2018). Boamah (2018), added that transformational leadership increases nurses' retention.

Recommendations, Managerial Implications and Limitations

The findings of this research suggest that transformational leadership has better impact on job performance of healthcare workers due to its special traits which fits the sensitive requirements of the healthcare industry and the patients' health safety. This can be considered as a very useful gadget for a competitive advantage to be used by business leaders to increase the effectiveness of their own roles, employees' job performance as well as the entire organizational performance. The leader role in the success of followers is as ancient as earth and its importance is pivotal for all fields without exception i.e., teaching, business, management, politics, religion etc. It is crystal clear that followers' attitude is linked to the way they perceive their leaders and the level they are influenced by them. Hence, the quality of leaders' traits, approaches, styles, influence and charisma is essential to the success of their followers.

In the business context however, leaders should adapt their skills, approach and styles to fit the different requirements of their subordinates to ensure the achievement of the organizational objectives. Furthermore, leaders should be capable to motivate and engage their followers to face any challenge and in-turn increase the organizational performance. The study is focused on the most relevant literature and finds that transformational leadership can best fit the healthcare industry and

it can dramatically increase both healthcare workers and organizational performance. However, this research has to be empirically experimented quantitatively through collecting data from healthcare organizations.

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