



Full Length Research

Impact of leadership approaches on employee motivation: An empirical investigation in Haramaya University

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Received April, 2015; Accepted July, 2015.

The study aims to explore leadership approach on employee motivation in Haramaya University. Primary and secondary data have been used for the study. Secondary data has been collected through published data in public domain. For primary data, using stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques, 230 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 210 were completed and used for analysis. Data was collected from these 210 respondents belonging to different age groups, educational background, occupational status, job tenure, gender. The instrument employs 29 questions on Leadership approach and 10 questions on Motivation, on a 5-point and 7-point scale respectively. The survey was administered between September, 2014 and January, 2015. The researcher found that the dominant leadership approaches were transformational and transactional and employees were moderately motivated. The results of survey shows that adequate incorporation of transformational elements, such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and other ingredients such as creativity, team orientation, appreciation of others, coaching and recognition, has strong impacts on employee motivation.

Key words: Leadership approach, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Laissez -Faire Leadership, Employee Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of the key factors which can drive a business to either success or failure. In fact, a leader is a person who 'influences' to direct and coordinate the activities of the members of an organized group towards the accomplishment of group objectives (Jagot, 1982). Without a clear vision and strategy, role modeling and suitable employee-employer relationships, employee motivation which has direct impact on corporate success is unreliable. Thus, in this paper the researcher argues why leadership is such an important driving factor for employee work motivation. Leadership in its different areas, such as types of leadership, personality of a leader, human relations, natures of business to be guided etc

have problems which may be encountered on the way. Effective leaders understand and play their roles and responsibilities to achieve organizational goals and objectives through employee motivation (Northouse, 2007).

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2007). Gibson et al (1994) describe leadership as, "an attempt to use non-coercive types of influence to motivate individuals to accomplish some goal". This tells us that leaders are individuals capable of motivating others into carrying out goal-related actions, in a variety of different environments. According to Jago (1982) leadership is viewed as a measurable and quantifiable property possessed in different amounts by different people. There are many common features of the

personality of the leader, such as confidence, charisma or determination. Confidence is the most important feature a leader should possess for employee motivation to enhance organizational success and also aid forward thinking, which in turn creates visions in the minds of employees so that they can be motivated. A determined leader is a successful leader.

Determination reflects what the leader wants to achieve and how he / she intend to get there (Northouse, 2009). It is indeed a vital factor to ensure employee motivation. If a leader is determined, he / she will have the ability to overcome obstacles on the way, such as competition, economical downturns (Dearlove, 2002).

In a business, a charismatic leader can influence his workers by motivating them in a psychological way. On top of the personality traits mentioned above, a successful leader should employ “abundance mentality” to his style of leadership. According to Covey, such mentality is “a bone deep belief that there are enough natural and human resource to realize my dream and that my success does not necessarily mean failure for others, just as their success does not preclude my own” (Covey, 1991). Such mentality allows a leader to learn to discipline him-self and believe that his mission is possible to accomplish. In addition, if workers of an organization see that their leader is positive about what he/she does, it is highly possible that they too be more motivated and thus more productive.

Haramaya University; has a large number of workforce tasked with dealing with students, academics and administrative staff and also handles the interactions in between. These employees of the university are the main interface of the organization that play crucial role to delight customers and serve as key source of competitive advantage, if they are really motivated. Effective leaders understand and play their roles in motivating the employees to achieve organizational goals.

If employees are not motivated and handled through effective leadership approach which suite the working environment, working culture and organizational structure, the result will be a negative impact on the image of the university and also lead to dissatisfaction and loss of valuable employees and customers in light of a competitive and dynamic world. Effective leadership approach is the main player to create the successful organization and project a positive image within the minds of workers through employee motivation. With this background; impacts of leadership approach on employee motivation are compelling the attention of researcher and finally providing findings for this research that help organizations to be more clear about leadership effects, as part of their ongoing initiatives and evaluations concerning continual improvement, corporate success and becoming the best in competitive market areas so as to take appropriate measures through the feedback of the findings.

Objective of the study

Objective of this study is to explore the relationship between

leadership approach and employee motivation.

Specifically the objectives of this research can be expressed as follows:

1. To study the relationship between transformational leadership approach and employee motivation.
2. To study the relationship between transactional leadership approach and employee motivation
3. To study the relationship between Laissez-Faire leadership approach and employee motivation.

Research hypothesis

In the study, the hypotheses were developed to identify the impact of leadership approach on employee motivation.

H1: There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership approach and employee motivation

H2: There is a significant relationship between transactional leadership approach and employee motivation

H3: There is a significant relationship between laissez-faire leadership approach and employee motivation.

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational leadership

This type of leadership is concerned with developing a vision that informs and expresses the organization’s mission and lays the foundation for the organization’s strategies, policies and procedures. The transformation leader uses strategies and techniques to empower the followers, enhance their self-efficacy and change their values, norms, and attitudes, which are consistent with the leader’s vision. Transformational leaders are argued to be visionary and enthusiastic, with an inherent ability to motivate subordinates (Howell and Avolio, 1993).

Transformational leaders are proactive, raise follower awareness for transcendent collective interests, and help followers achieve extraordinary goals. Transformational leadership is theorized to comprise the following five first-order factors: (a) Idealized influence (attributed) refers to the socialized charisma of the leader, whether the leader is perceived as being confident and powerful, and whether the leader is viewed as focusing on higher-order ideals and ethics; (b) idealized influence (behavior) refers to charismatic actions of the leader that are centered on values, beliefs, and a sense of mission; (c) inspirational motivation refers to the ways leaders energize their followers by viewing the future with optimism, stressing ambitious goals, projecting an idealized vision and communicating to followers that the vision is achievable; (d) intellectual stimulation refers to leader actions that appeal to followers sense of logic and analysis by challenging followers to think creatively and find solutions to difficult problems; and (e) individualized consideration refers to leader behavior that

contributes to follower satisfaction by advising, supporting, and paying attention to the individual needs of followers and thus allowing them to develop and self-actualize (Tichy and Devanna 1996).

Transactional leadership

Here leaders communicate with their subordinates to explain how a task must be done and let them know that there will be rewards for a job done well (Avolio et al., 1991). Transactional leaders are said to be instrumental and frequently focus on exchange relationship with their subordinates (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Transactional leadership is an exchange process based on the fulfillment of contractual obligations and is typically represented as setting objectives and monitoring and controlling outcomes. Transactional leadership is theorized to comprise the following three first-order factors: (a) Contingent reward leadership (i.e., constructive transactions) refers to leader behaviors focused on clarifying role and task requirements and providing followers with material or psychological rewards contingent on the fulfillment of contractual obligations; (b) management-by-exception active (i.e., active corrective transactions) refers to the active vigilance of a leader whose goal is to ensure that standards are met; and (c) management-by-exception passive (i.e., passive corrective transactions) leaders only intervene after noncompliance has occurred or when mistakes have already happened (Antonakis et al., 2003).

Laissez-faire leadership

The avoidance of leadership, such as “is absent when needed”, and “takes no action even when problems become chronic” was strongly associated with subordinate dissatisfaction, conflict, and ineffectiveness. Laissez-faire leadership is a passive kind of leadership style, seen as not caring about others issues. There is no relationship exchange between the leader and the followers. It represents a non-transactional kind of leadership style in which necessary decisions are not made, actions are delayed, leadership responsibilities ignored, and authority unused (Bass, 1999). Laissez-faire leadership represents the absence of a transaction of sorts with respect to leadership in which the leader avoids making decisions, abdicates responsibility, and does not use their authority. It is considered active to the extent that the leader “chooses” to avoid taking action. This component is generally considered the most passive and ineffective form of leadership.

Leadership development model

The Full Range Leadership Development Model, developed by Bass and Avolio (1994), is a combination of both transactional and transformational leadership. It includes five transformational factors: Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation; Individualized consideration; Intellectual stimulation, and three transactional ones: Contingent reward;

Management by exception (active); Management by exception (passive).

Motivation and hygiene factors

Herzberg et al. (1959) developed two distinct lists of factors about attitudes of employees. One set of factors caused happy feelings or a good attitude within the worker and these factors, on the whole, were task-related. The other set was primarily present when feelings of unhappiness or bad attitude were evident and these factors, Herzberg claimed, were not directly related to the job itself, but to the conditions that surrounded doing that job.

Herzberg named the first group as motivators (job factors: Recognition, Achievement, Possibility of growth, Advancement, Responsibility, Work itself).

Herzberg named the second group as hygiene factors (extra-job factors: Salary, interpersonal relations-supervisor, interpersonal relations-subordinates, interpersonal relations-supervision-technical, company policy and administration, working conditions, factors in personal life, Status Job security).

Motivators refer to factors intrinsic within the work itself like the recognition of a task completed. Conversely, hygiene factors tend to include extrinsic entities such as relations with co-workers, which do not pertain to the worker’s actual job.

The role of leadership approach in motivation

Leadership approach is an important determinant of motivation. The reactions of employees to their leaders will usually depend on the characteristics of the employees as well as on the characteristics of the leaders (Wexley and Yukl 1984). There are different dynamics of task and relationship-oriented dimensions of management, which propagate high and low propensities of task and relationship-oriented managers when mixed with differing circumstances as well as diverse groups of employees. While motivating people to enhance job satisfaction, Herzberg’s concept of attitude is a force powerful in determining output. Aligned to this concept is Locke’s formulation of value and its importance to work goals and subsequently job satisfaction. Therefore, leaders should consider the significance of both attitudes and values in their leadership journey.

According to Gray and Starke (1997), motivation is actually focused on how much the person is persisting about getting their goals. It may be elaborated as factors that affect individuals internally and externally that create enthusiasm to do that specific acts for getting the desired task. It also specify the properties of motivation, that every person has unique qualities, this fact is intentionally not automatic, it means a person have the sense to do that task which he wants to do, it arises due to some reasons and motivation theories predict the behavior that lead to good performance and ultimately get incentives.

Robbins et al. (2010) define motivation as intensity of effort

of an individual to get the desired goals. Key components that elaborate the motivation are persistence, direction and intensity. It means the effort should be to a specific and production side that can produce positive and fruitful results; second one is the persistence, which means that the efforts should be consistent to achieve the required aim. Third one is intensity, this means how much the individual is keen to get the required goals for him as well as organization. Motivation can be positive, negative and neutral. Positive motivation will be in shape of salary, recognition and fringe benefits. But negative motivation can demote the job performance. Motivation actually drives the forces that exist in a person to act in the desired way.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

A cross sectional descriptive survey design was used to gather data pertaining to the impact of effective leadership and employee motivation for the purpose of meeting the research objective.

Sources of data

For the study, both primary and secondary data sources were used. As the study mainly focuses on human aspect, primary data were the main source of data. Primary data were collected from a sample of management and employees of the university through closed ended questionnaires.

The researcher also used observation method to observe the participants behavior during meetings and other social functions and which helps the researcher to observe aspects of interpersonal relation and behaviors with other members and to grasp the actual phenomena happening in the real environment. Secondary data was obtained from different documents of the organization and related literatures such as desktop researches, books, articles, journals and variety of websites as well as the other optional sources of the proposed study.

Data collection

Given the large number of population to be covered under study, the researcher used a self-administered questionnaire of close-ended forms to collect the relevant data. The closed ended questions were normally structured for respondents to select their choices of statement from a list of questions presented to them. Quantitative research generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey research (Dawson, 2002).

Two types of questionnaires (one for leaders and another for workers) were developed to collect the necessary data from the selected sample of leaders and workers.

The questionnaire for workers were designed to collect data supplementary to the data collected from leaders of the university from lower level to top level and data related to

leadership and employee motivation that might not be directly answered by them.

Sampling and sampling techniques

Cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques will be used to consider the sample from the population. In this regard the whole population first will be clustered into management and workers.

All the population in the two categories was given equal chance of selection using simple random sampling method. According to Williams (1997) it is necessary to select a subsection of the elements from the population under consideration to make the research more manageable. If this subsection is chosen following the correct principals it should be possible to draw inferences about the characteristics of the population on the basis of the statistics derived from the sample (Brannick, 1997). According to Yamene (1967) the appropriate sample size can be determined if the population along with the required level of precision is known. The formula is presented hereunder using 95% confidence level. From 86 management bodies (4 Vice-presidents, 16 directors and associate directors, 10 deans, 56 lower level managers (heads of department, team leaders and supervisors) and workers/employees collected. Where:

$$\text{Where: } n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

n is the sample size, N is the population size (110 managers from top to lower level and 225 worker/employees), and e is the level of precision or significance level. In the case of the current study the researcher decided to take samples from each college and administrative office, which is 230 in sample size.

Research instrument

The present study is descriptive in its nature based upon a personally administered questionnaire. In the light of various studies conducted on this topic, the MLQ was selected to conduct this study. Before conducting the study, a pilot test was conducted to make the instruments more effective. The standardized (MLQ) questionnaires were modified to make it more responsive. Population includes all major demographic variables. Sample of 86 management members are taken for analysis and 144 employees working in the Haramaya University was gathered. The response rate was approximately above 91.3% and 10 questionnaires rejected as they were incomplete. Finally 210 questionnaires were selected for analysis purpose.

Data analysis

Data analysis was done using SPSS (statistical package for

Table 1. Reliability statistics for work motivation scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items	No. of Items
0.894	0.894	10

Table 2. Reliability statistics for leadership approach

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
0.891	0.897	29

Table 3. Correlations (Pearson's R).

Parameter		Employee Commitment	Work Motivation	Transformational	Transactional	Laissez Faire
Work motivation	Pearson correlation	0.277	1	0.612**	0.449*	-0.585**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.051	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.000
	N	210	210	210	210	210
Transformational leadership	Pearson correlation	0.475**	0.612**	1	0.855**	-0.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	0.000
	N	210	210	210	210	210
Transactional Leadership	Pearson correlation	0.385**	0.449*	0.855**	1	-0.496**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.020	0.000	-	0.000
	N	210	210	210	210	210
Laissez- Faire leadership	Pearson correlation	-0.398**	-0.585**	-0.733**	-0.496**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000	-
	N	210	210	210	210	210

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

social sciences) and the Validity was established through suitable statistical means.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A majority of the respondents (90%) are male and the rest were female workers. About 64% are master degree holders, 32% have a first degree and the rest are PhD holders.

As table 3 indicates, correlation between employee commitment and employee work motivation is positive and the score is 0.277. This implies that there is direct relationship of employee commitment and employee work motivation. The correlation between transformational leadership and employee motivation is positive and the score is 0.612. The result implies that transformational leadership is the important leadership approach to motivate employees at the workplace. Correlation between transactional leadership and motivation is also positive and the score is 0.449. Even though transactional leadership approach correlation with employee work motivation is

positive, it is less important in employee work motivation. Correlation between Laissez-faire approach and work motivation is -0.585, which has a negative correlation with motivation. This means that employees at Haramaya University are not motivated under laissez-faire leadership approach. From the analysis, transformational leadership approach motivates employee more than transactional leadership approach and employees are negatively influenced/motivated by Laissez-faire approach (see Tables 1 to 3).

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study emphasizes the importance of relationships between leadership approach/supervisor and employees and the way the organization communicates; a finding supported by similar studies which have shown supervision and communication to be important factors in terms of employee motivation.

The results under study are consistent with previous studies showing the significant positive influence of transformational

leadership approach on motivation and the significant negative influence of laissez-faire leadership on subordinate's/employee motivation (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Loke, 2001; Bass, 1998; Avolio, 1999; Shim et al., 2002; Waldman et al., 2001; Lok and Crawford, 1999; Howell and Avolio, 1993).

The finding is also consistent with some previous studies which found that delivering on the promise of a contingent reward has a significant influence on employee motivation. Rewarding and encouraging are consistently considered by commentators to be one of the important motivators (Snape, 1996; Erkutlu, 2008).

The instruments used to determine the impact and the findings obtained, clearly indicates that by providing adequate coaching, mentoring, encouragement, supportive work environment, sense of respect and confidence in employee's ability, the leaders can increase employee motivation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study tries to analyze the relationship between transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire leadership approach on the motivation of Haramaya University employees in Ethiopia. The results of the study show that there is positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership with employee motivation. Therefore, employees are motivated with this leadership approach.

Therefore, the results of the study show that the impact of transformational leadership approach on the motivation of Haramaya University employees in Ethiopia is more effective than the transactional leadership and Laissez-faire approach. The study concludes that there should be transformational leadership in dealing with the employees of higher institutions. When the employees will be more motivated they will work hard and then organizational productivity will increase. "It is exceedingly important for a leader of any organization to communicate his or her vision constantly to ensure that there is no doubt about the direction a team is heading," says Ken Blanchard, world-renowned management coach.

Hence some of the well-known employment brands known for their leadership values focus on employee engagement through commitment and discretionary effort and on employee enablement, with optimized roles and a supportive environment, leading to financial success, customer satisfaction and employee performance to drive organizational success.

Leaders should especially focus on motivators such as dimensions of discretion (freedom to choose, what, when and how activities are carried out), job demands, as well as apt use of skills and competencies. As the study indicates, for leaders to succeed in today's fast changing and dynamic business environment, it is recommended to adopt a transformational leadership approach rather than transactional or laissez-faire styles to enhance employee's motivation consistently and efficiently; which will in turn generate higher quality performance on the employee's part and boost business performance for the organizational success. The leaders should

avoid any laissez-faire behavior and spend time instead coaching, paying attention to employee's abilities and needs, help them develop their talent, and provide performance standard within the organization. They should also enhance their knowledge about how their leading style influences their employees. To ensure higher employee performance, they should act as ethical role models and be accepted as such.

Another issue raised by the survey was that the leaders should encourage employees to push the challenges themselves with roles which utilize their full potentials, talents and creativity. This would align employees to the organizational vision and make them more confident and eager to perform the allocated tasks.

The managerial skills that the leaders should continue to develop are creativity, team orientation, respect, listening skills, aligning to shared objectives, coaching and employee recognition. The leaders should ensure that the reward and recognition system is reliable, trusted and time-tested and highlights important and meaningful employee performance.

In conclusion, as this survey shows, the ideal leadership approach should be an integration of transactional leadership abilities, with adequate incorporation of transformational elements, such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and other ingredients such as creativity, team orientation, appreciation of others, coaching and recognition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge Haramaya University, College of Business and Economics for their financial and other material support. Furthermore I would like to thank the management and employees of Haramaya University for giving me their time for questionnaire filling. Finally, I am deeply indebted to my wife Alemtsehay Niguse and my son Nahom Admkew for their endless love, support and encouragement.

Conflict of Interest

Author has none to declare.

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LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent:

I am undertaking research project sponsored by Haramaya University titled **Impact of Leadership approach on employee motivation: an empirical investigation in Haramaya University**.

I enclose here with a short questionnaire. I kindly request you to go through and fill it. It will take only a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and we will collect it after **7** days from you.

You are valuable employees of the Haramaya University and for this reason; I need to know how you feel about your **leading approach /behavior**. The aim of this project is to see the **Impact of Leadership approach on employee motivation: An Empirical investigation in Haramaya University** and how this approach can be developed to improve employee motivation.

The information you provide will be used for academic purposes only. I assure you that all your individual answers will be held in strict confidence. I report only totals with no personal identification.

Your frank and genuine views and valuable comments are of great importance to the research. Again may I ask you to take a few minutes and complete the questionnaire?

Since the sample size of this survey is relatively small your response is extremely important.

Thank you for your assistance in providing this valuable information.

Sincerely,
Researcher
(Admkew Haile)

Telephone: Work: +251 255530058 Private: +251 921674931

QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO EMPLOYEES

Dear Respondent:

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