

Leadership on Technical and Vocational Education in Community College

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Abstract

This study aims to examine types of management leadership used by the Head of Department and job satisfaction among lecturers in community colleges. A total of lecturers were randomly selected from three community colleges in Malaysia. Quantitative survey is used with questionnaires as an instrument. SPSS software is used to analyze the data and shown in the form of percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and Pearson correlation. Less emphasis on these features can affect the job satisfaction of the subordinates. The Head of the Department at the community colleges practice the four characteristics of transformational leadership influence, individual consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation in managing the department at the community colleges. Lecturer job satisfaction under the leadership of the Head of Department as a whole is at a high level. In conclusion, the Head of Department community colleges transformational leadership qualities in managing the department and this is shown by the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers.

Keywords: leadership; effective leadership; leadership transformation; technical and vocational education.

1.0 Introduction

In the face of globalization, many organizations had been pushed to have a leader and led by a leader with extraordinary leadership qualities. An irregular organization insisted that led by leaders with leadership qualities outside normally. The organization must show a leader that able to address the changes and the effects of the environment, the culture and expectations of staff. Abd.Aziz (2000) stated that leaders who make a difference will be faced with many challenges exposed to competition and conflicts and create discomfort. Therefore, in making a change, the leaders must have an intellectual strength and sharpness of the analysis to develop a vision and is able to outline the goals and vision clearly. Leaders see leadership as a privilege that entitles it to be at a high position in the organizational hierarchy. Leaders need to have a superior goal, know the functions of leadership and not be afraid or jealous of the staff's strength.

1.1 Leadership Styles

Burns in 1978, introduced the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership was considered to be more complex than transactional leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Burns, 1978). Bass and Avolio (1994) viewed transformational leadership as a process that changed the organization by transforming followers to leaders and leaders to agents of change. This leader had an inspiring vision of how the organization should look like (Bass, 1985; Leithwood, 1994). Kouzes and Posner (1989) conducted a study to identify how leaders get extraordinary things done. They identified five exemplary leadership practices: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modelling the way and encouraging the heart that leaders utilized during times of best performance.

Bass (1985) proposed that transformational leadership was characterized by four factors. These factors included; charisma that involved the followers respect and trust for the visionary leader; inspirational motivation which involved using symbols or emotional appeals to gain support for the vision; intellectual stimulation which dealt with encouraging followers to think about old problems in new ways; and individual consideration which reflected the personal concern expressed by the leader for the follower.

1.2 Vocational Technical Education in Malaysia

Vocational technical education had been emphasised in Malaysia education system since before the independence era. It is organised at all the three levels of education in the country: Basic or primary level, secondary level, and tertiary level. At the basic school level the focus is on exposing pupils to a range of practical activities in the vocational field in order to make them familiar with, and stimulate their interest in vocational subjects as well as provide equal opportunity for pupils to choose their future careers in either the vocational technical or general field. At the secondary level, training is vocational in nature and aims at equipping young men and women with relevant productive skills training that will enable them fulfil the country's manpower needs in the field of technology, industry, commerce, agriculture, and business. Vocational technical education at the tertiary level is technical in nature and focuses on providing personnel with the technical knowledge and vocational skills to match the demand of skilled labour necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, scientific, technological, and economic development; while at the same time, paying attention to environmental issues. It occurs in the Universities, Polytechnics, community colleges and other post-

secondary pre-service training institutions in the country.

2.0 Methodology

The population for the study consisted of all administrative and academic staff from all the three community college, which is vocational technical institutions, in Malaysia. A total of 356 individuals were sampled using the stratified sampling procedure from a population of 712 to allow the two major domains of staff – academic and administrative staff- to be appropriately represented in the sample.

3.0 Result and Discussion

Application features intellectual stimulation by the head of department at the community college is one of the factors that make the head of the department have a place among the staff. In order to adopt this feature, head encourages the staff creativity and encourages the staff to think more futuristic in resolving any problems. Bass (1968) considers that openness manner shown by the leader because the staff did not hesitate to express opinion because they think that there is mutual trust between each other. In addition, the openness shown by the department head makes the staff more open to accept any criticism or opinion as an effort to enhance their job skills. The openness manner shown by the department heads also helped a lot in determine the success of a change because of the willingness to share information with staff.

Characteristic that increases the influence of which one head of department encourage their staff to see them as a worthy leader modelled (role models) in the pursuit of glory. In case the head of department want the staff to work hard, they must demonstrate that free first, they also must worked hard in order to achieve goals. Head of departments also need to make an effort to instil confidence, respect and trust in the staff. The reverence shown by the head of department with the staff would improve the confidence level of the staff to the head office and at the same time the head office can increase his influence. Greenberg and Baron (1997) argue that free in order to establish trust among experts collection, one chairman should encourage interaction among each other.

Consideration of individual characteristics is the head of the department responsibility to become the advisor for the staff in its planning and decision making. As an advisor, the head of department must be friendly and approachable to discuss things and take account of staff affairs. In addition, the head of department also is important in giving positive and negative feedback. This response is the path toward continual improvement. Head of department give more emphasis in guiding the staff to ensure they have the knowledge and resources sufficient to achieve all the goals that have been established. Resources to be provided are in terms of financial assistance, the staff or the time necessary to complete its work (Jeanenne, 1995). Head of the department should not give instructions without guiding their staff.

The fourth feature is inspirational feature motivation. Motivation is needed for creating awareness among the staff about the strengths and weaknesses of themselves and the means to maintain or exceed next to correct the deficiencies. Although this feature is not practiced by the head of department, the respondents agreed that the head of department are the best. Amongst shows examples of the best examples are the ethic of hard work, attitude of openness (optimistic) in the face of the crisis, the willingness to take responsibility in the event of an error and do not provide stress and strain on the trivial of their staff. Weaknesses shown by staff prove weakness personally. However one of head department head that has the gift of inspiration motivational characteristics willing to accept responsibility for the deficiencies shown by the staff themselves. Bass (1990) consider that good leadership occurs when the leader can run one or a combination of these four characteristics of transformational leadership.

4.0 Conclusion

Thus, these four characteristics of transformational leadership influence, individual consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation are suitable to be practiced by heads of department in the administration of a department or job satisfaction organization. Satisfaction works among the lecturers under the leadership of the head of the department indicated that it was at high level. Amongst factors that can lead to job satisfaction of the lecturers are justice in compensation, the support given to the head of department, a good working environment and others. Head of department should be concerned about matters that could give rise to happy and satisfied with the leadership of the department head personally. Work satisfaction will not achieve high level if the head of department is selfish, like criticizing his staff, decided to accept the views independently without staff or simply act as observers.

This is consistent with Bass and Avolio (1990); Bass and Sleidlmeier (1998) who found in their studies that it is possible for a person to exhibit characteristics that include both transformational and transactional leadership styles. This is very significant in view of the present challenges facing vocational technical education in Malaysia. This is because of the argument by Waldman, Bass, and Yammarino (1990) that both transformational and transactional leadership behaviour are needed to accomplish the broad task of leadership in an organization

such as the school, since both leadership styles augment each other.

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