

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP STYLES AMONG ACADEMIC STAFFS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN ETHIOPIA

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Abstract: -The study discussed and compared leadership styles. Of 691 samples, only 596 usable questionnaires were collected from seven and four selected public and private universities respectively. Descriptive and independent t-test statistical technique were used for data analysis. The study found that there were significant differences in transformational leadership practices between public and private universities in Ethiopia. Thus, the study suggested that public and private universities of Ethiopia should enhance organizational leadership behavior that helps to get a competitive advantage through academic staffs.

Keywords: Leadership Styles; Academic Staffs, Public Universities, Private Universities

1. Introduction

Sampson Quain (2019) explained that leadership styles have a profound impact on the success or failure of any organization. Leadership is the decisions making process about the kind of organizational cultures in the organizations. It affects the organization by enhancing employee morale, productivity and decision-making. Successful leaders carefully analyze problems, assess the skill of subordinates, consider alternatives, and make appropriate choices that have an invaluable impact on organizational performance.

Due to an increasing number of public and private universities established in Ethiopia for the past few years, the competition is significantly increased. Academic employees are choosing to leave their universities when they are not satisfied with the leadership practices of their organization. Leaders can create a feeling of relationship and affection between the workforce and organizations. They link workforce and organizations around a common goal. In the context of Ethiopia higher education institutions few research studies have been conducted which address the effectiveness of leadership styles. Besides, little attention has given to the needs of organizational leadership behaviors

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in the public and private universities of Ethiopia. This study investigated the leadership styles of public and private universities in Ethiopia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Leadership Styles

Leadership styles create the climate within which employees work and influence the attitude and performance of his team. To be effective, leaders must learn to adapt their leadership style to the circumstances and respond to the employees they manage. Leaders determine values, culture, change tolerance and employee motivation (Northouse. P, (2007).

2.1.1. Transformational Leadership Style

According to Michael A.(2010), transformational leaders the most valuable form of leadership styles since followers are given the chance to change, transform and, in the process, develop themselves as contributors. Feleke Yeshitila (2019) described by transformational leadership style the leader has enthusiasm into his or her team and is very energetic in driving others forward. Bassam Al-Daibat (2017), explained that a transformational leadership style creates significant change in both followers and the organization. It inspires subordinates and motivates them to transcend their personal interests in favor of the organizations.

Transformational leaders provide their employees with a vision and motivate them in achieving particular goals (Armstrong. M., 2009). Transformational leadership has the ability to affect employee's perceptions through the returns that the organization gets in the form of human capital benefits. Njoroge.D (2015) explained that transformational leaders seek ways to get the best performance and potential out of each team member. It takes courage to challenge old ways of doing things in favor of better, more efficient, and more intuitive strategies. Mathern, A. (2016) discussed that transformational leadership condition was associated with enhanced task performance, higher social support perceptions, greater efficacy beliefs, lower negative affect, and lower threat appraisals compared to the transactional conditions. Transformational leadership is inspirational, challenging, charismatic, stimulating and always developing the capability of the employees (Ali Alghazo,2016). Based on the above information the following hypothesis was developed.

H1; there is a significant difference in transformational leadership practices between public and private universities in Ethiopia

2.1.2. Transactional Leadership Style

According to Njoroge.D (2015) transactional leadership succeeds best in a context of structure and rigid hierarchy. Transactional leadership style is formed by the concept of reward and punishment (Northouse, P, 2007). It focuses mainly on the physical and security needs of subordinates (Mgbeze Vincent, 2019). In transactional leadership, leader's prime responsibility is to focus on clarifying roles and tasks requirement (Zohra Kalsoom, 2018). It follows the concept of management by exception (active or passive) and contingent reward system (Uzma Rasool. et.al,2016). As a result the following hypothesis was developed.

H2; there is a significant difference in transactional leadership practices between public and private universities in Ethiopia

2.2.3. Laissez -Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire leadership style means the absence of effective leadership that avoids decision-making, ignores existing problems, refuses to intervene, and avoids initiative to interact with group members (Bassam Al-Daibat,2017). Laissez-faire leadership style defined as the situations where managers are not exerting sufficient control (Feleke Yeshitila, 2019). It does not openly manage workforce and does not provide regular feedback to subordinates. It is appropriate for an experienced and trained workforce that need low supervision (Njoroge, D, 2015).

H3: there is a significant difference of laissez-faire leadership practices between public and private universities in Ethiopia

3. Material and Method

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design to compare leadership styles of public and private universities in Ethiopia.

3.2. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The total permanent academic staffs of sampled public and universities of Ethiopia are taken as the target population. Currently, there are 7032 and 1337 lecturers that are a permanent employee of the selected public and universities respectively. By using the random sampling technique a total of 596 samples were selected as sample size by using Morgan Stanley (1970) formula presented here below

$$n = \frac{X^2 * N * P * (1-P)}{(ME^2 * (N-1)) + (X^2 * P * (1-P))}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

X^2 = Chi-Square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom

N = Population Size

P = population proportion (.50 in this table)

ME = desired Margin of Error (expressed as a proportion)

3.3. Source of data and research instruments

The research study primarily used structured multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) to seek responses from respondents. A closed-ended self-administered questionnaire was administered to permanent academic employees of both public and universities in Ethiopia.

3.4. Data analysis techniques

The latest version of SPSS was used to undertake comparative analysis and the findings are presented below here.

3.5. Reliability Testing

The following table presents the computed values of internal reliability testing for each of the variables used in this study. It shows that the variables build used in this study were internally consistent.

Table 1 Reliability of Measurements

No	Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Transformational leadership	22	. 97.9
2	Transactional leadership	10	94.7
3	Laissez faire Leadership	4	. 83.2

Sources: Own survey 2018

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1. Descriptive statistics findings of the study variables

Descriptive statistics were presented in the following table. It shows the mean variation on transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles of public and private universities in Ethiopia.

4.2. Comparative Statistics Results for Respondents' Organizational Commitment and its Dimensions

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare and determine whether there are any significant differences in mean scores among academic staffs on leadership styles practices of public and private universities in Ethiopia.

Table 2. Comparative Statistics of Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership Styles of Public and Private Universities in Ethiopia

Variables	Types of Universities				T- value	Sig.	Hypothesis Decisions
	Mean		Standard Deviation				
	Public	Private	Public	Private			
Transformational Leadership	3.2476	2.3903	.74679	57743	15.403	.000	Accepted
Transactional Leadership	3.4466	3.6648	.90045	.99833	2.802	.005	Rejected
Laissez faire Leadership	3.0091	2.8563	1.13816	.62701	2.076	.005	Rejected

Sources: own survey 2018

As shown in table 2 above, the overall result of the independent t-test indicated that there is a significant difference in the scores of transformational leadership style between the public universities ($M=3.2476$, $SD=0.74679$) and private universities ($M= 2.3903$; $SD=0.57743$). The computed t value was at 15.403 and was significant at the 0.001 level. The study also shows that private universities leaders have moderate transactional leadership behavior than public universities counterpart. Besides, comparative data on public and private universities provided clearly shows that transactional and laissez faire leadership styles could not show a significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the academic staff's of public and private universities in Ethiopia since p-value is $>.001$ (See table 2).

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The result of the independent t-test found that there was a significant difference in the score of transformational leadership style between the public and private universities. The findings also revealed that the academic staffs of private universities have a moderate level of transactional leadership behavior. The comparative data on the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles of the public and private universities academic staff were not significantly different.

There are a number of possible justifications for the similarity and differences of leadership styles between public and private universities. First, public universities in Ethiopia are inherently more structured than private universities. It needs a strong transformational leader. It leads weak leaders as having little discretion of their own. In transactional leadership, the subordinates have responded to their leaders. Public universities leaders tried to offers ideas about new and different ways of doing things; pushes for growth; initiates new projects; with new ways of doing things. Public university leaders seem to value work environments that encourage high personal autonomy and participation in decision-making. It is argued that job autonomy is positively related to more participative leadership behaviors and lower levels of job autonomy to more directive leadership behaviors. Based on this the following recommendations were provided:

- Both public and private universities should enhance transformational leadership style training for department heads and academic deans.
- Both public and private universities should work on demand and problems of their academic staffs and enhance conducive teaching-learning working environment.
- Universities in Ethiopia should focus on the development of leadership behaviors that match and goes with today's environmental challenges and conditions.

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