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The Relationship between Spiritual and Transformational Leadership toward Intention to Stay: A Study in a Political Environment

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ZULKELFI AINI*

ABSTRACT

One of the attributes to a leader’s profile that often get the attention of researchers is the leadership styles. The ability to influence is the essence of leadership, and a very powerful leader has high impact on the lives of his followers and the future of the organization. This study aims to look into the relationship between spiritual and transformational leadership styles toward follower’s intention to stay. Samples were taken from the political officers that were appointed in a democratic selection process by the party members. 357 questionnaires were analyzed and though both styles are having significant relationship, it is found that spiritual leadership has greater influence toward follower’s intention to stay compared to transformational leadership style.
Leaders play an important role in establishing and maintaining the organization's culture. Leaders also are source of beliefs and values of the organization that required by followers to deal with problems related to external adaptation and internal integration (Fry and Cohen 2009). Character of a leader is a significant factor in determining the success or failure of an organization (Lok and Crawford 2004). Howard (2005) describes, effective leader must be able to navigate their follower, instilling the belief in them, take a risk and give hope to his followers.

One of the attributes to leaders profile often get the attention of researchers is the leadership styles. In most organizations, the bad overall performance of the system is often not due to poor administration but rather to shortcomings in organizational leadership (Sheh 2002). Yulk (2006) states that the ability to influence is the essence of leadership, and a very powerful leader have high impact on the lives of his followers and the future of the organization. This opinion was supported by Allio (2009) which states that leaders and followers is one part of the system and their symbiotic linked to each other that have the ability to support or enhance the performance between the two.

**INTRODUCTION**

In organizational management, the spiritual aspect has long been neglected in the leadership dimensions as how psychological contract was protected in the working environment of an organization (Kakabadse et.al. 2002). Furthermore, as the pressure in the community increased, the development of information technology, globalization, including increased population pressure, the environment and the demand for food has increased the researcher interest in spirituality (Kakabadse et al 2002). This assertion is supported by Quatro, Waldman and Galvin (2007) to the state of contemporary corporate scandals, loss of public confidence as well as increasing demand for workers' needs and expectations have increased the need for a holistic approach to leadership. Therefore, leaders have an important role in ensuring that the spiritual needs of employees are met to ensure quality and productivity.

Fry (2003) define spiritual leadership as the values, attitudes and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate followers to help in their spiritual survival through calling and membership. Spiritual leadership approach emphasizes on fundamental questions on what it means to be human, what it means to development and the value and power of what is needed to develop the
organization and the community in general (Burke 2006). Quatro, Waldman and Galvin (2007) emphasized that the spiritual goals are relevant to leadership competence in the work environment. Spiritual leadership explaining the follower’s moral identity and strengthen and deepen their commitment level (Fairholm 1996). To meet these needs, spiritual leadership approach was introduced over 20 years ago (Fernando et al 2009). Spiritual leadership was developed to create a vision and strategic value in line with the authorized group as well as at the individual level and thus increase the level of organizational commitment and productivity (Fry 2003; Fry, Vitucci and Cedillo 2005).

The main goal of the spiritual leadership is to find resources to meet their dreams; find the wisdom and power to serve others (Howard 2002). Delbecq (2003) has recorded the statement of executive level leaders stating that the spiritual element is important as a protection against many obstacles and challenges in leadership. They added that the spiritual aspect is the factor that drives them to involve in leadership as a form of humanitarian assistance. Therefore, the spiritual leadership should be based on the feelings and higher spiritual practices (Fernando et al 2009).

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leadership style is developed based on transactional leadership style that emphasizes the transaction or exchange that occurs between leaders, colleagues and followers (Bass and Avolio 1994). A Transformational leader increase employee motivation beyond the extrinsic exchange and leads to high performance and high employee satisfaction (Burn 1978). Transformational leadership style is a new style of leadership that must be followed by a good management tool, but it goes beyond what is important to a leader in ensuring an assignment being executed by employees while maintaining a good quality of relationship between them (Bass and Avolio 1994). Yammarino (1994) added that transformational leaders develop followers to a level where followers will be able to take over the leadership role and act beyond the prescribed standards or goals.

Based on transformational leadership practices, the means used to influence followers is to create a work that gives meaning to them (Purvanova, Bono and Dzieweczynski 2006). They found a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviors on employee perceptions toward work challenges, the importance of the work and the importance of work to them. Through transformational leadership style, the followers of will provide trust, admire, respect and their loyalty to the leader other than being motivated to do something more than what they are accustomed to do (Yukl 2006). Transformational leaders in contrast to transactional leaders in the term of not only they meet the needs of its employees, but also try to increase the level of requirements from low level to the higher level of development and maturity (Nguni et al 2006). Therefore, transformational leadership involves not only his
individual moral improvement but also collectively for complete social reconstruction (Yulk, 2006). This employee inspiring process depends on how leaders emphasize the value of the work and commitment of its employees and ultimately the strength of the formulation, communication and representation on the fundamental goals of long-term change of employee attitudes (Rowold, 2008).

Sun (2004) found that the elements of transformational leadership style as providing individual support and encouragement, intellectual simulation and role models can change the values and beliefs of the followers’ and further increase the level of commitment. Positive impact of transformational leadership on performance indicators and employee satisfaction measurement outstanding the result given by transactional leadership (Bass, 1985). The effects of transformational leadership style on job satisfaction, commitment, efficiency and organizational learning, improvement, and cultural environment has been proved by previous researchers (Sahin, 2004). According to Mullin (2005), the transformational leadership process produces motivation and commitment, create a vision that can transform organizational performance and enhance his ideals and values as well as provide a feeling of justice, loyalty and trust. A transformational leader may be identified by their traits, behavior and decision-making style that they used (Wagner and Hollenbeck, 2005).

**PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Adeyemi-Bello (2001) pointed out many studies on the effectiveness of this leadership style is focused on nonprofit organizations and very few studies looking at the same thing toward not for profit organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Hailey and James (2004) states, although the trend of research on NGOs leadership is relatively increasing, but most of it has been done in United States. They added that the study of NGO leaders found that, they have a high ability to balance their time and energy in accordance with the values and goals. Thus according to Bunchapattanasakda, Wiriyakosol and Ya-anan (2012), the importance of leadership as an vital tool in managing human resources cannot be denied and it has no exception to the NGOs.

Goulet and Frank (2002) pointed out that, generic approach showed no significant difference between public organizations, profit organizations and NGOs based on the organization value, management function and shared value. A striking similarity between the business institutions and NGOs is that their business can grow or closed if not being well managed (Bunchapattanasakda et.al. 2012). Although NGOs do not set profit as the main goal, other factors such as financial management, human resources (volunteers), goodwill, image and performance of the organization among the important factors to ensure the survival of the organization. According to Duan (2010), although NGOs cannot use profit as a tool for performance measurement, financial management, performance and services provided are the key elements of the process can be used.
Political party is seen as a critical organizational and noteworthy. Such as NGOs, political parties fighting for the rights of society through a selection process to determine who will govern the country or state. All political parties have the same goal of ensuring the well-being of the people, and the country's development to be going well for the nation. However, all political parties have different ideologies and approaches in achieving that goal. Political leaders are responsible to ensure that their party is always prepared and having an efficient administration. Therefore, it is necessary for a study to be done to see the impact of leadership style on the intention to remain the party officials as well as the most appropriate leadership style to be used by party leaders.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

According to the Social Exchange Theory, norms of reciprocity create a bond between the individual and a group in collective way and emphasize the responsibility to respond in a match for any benefits received (Watson and Papamarcos 2002). This exchange process will give a person to feel comfortable, happy, relieved, enjoy and others (Lawler and Yoon 1996) thus, increase the tendency for them to remain with the organization. This exchange process may also be motivated by altruistic values that emphasize unconditional exchange in social interaction (Druckman 1998). Followers can be motivated by their faith because it gives inner satisfaction (Lussier and Achua 2007). Internal satisfaction will be the reason for them to continue the relationship with the organization.

H1: Spiritual leadership style has a significant relationship with the intention to remain of the party members.

Bycio et.al. (1995) in their study also found that transformational leadership elements such as inspiration and work challenge have a negative relationship with intention to quit among nurses. Ke (2008) also found a negative relationship between intentions to quit with leaders who practice transformational leadership style. Desire to quit is an attitude contrary to the intention to remain. According to social exchange theory, the exchange term is uncertain and it remains as long as they believe that the process of change occurs (Blau 1964). With the advent of charismatic leaders, party officials will be more confident to fight for the party ideology that is certainly in line with their needs and instincts. Ideology of the party may probably the exchange value to party officials, regardless of the basis of relevant national, religious or progress of a people.

H2: transformational leadership style has a significant relationship with the intention to remain of the party members.

McMurray et.al (2012) pointed out, NGOs are at their most effective performance
when volunteers involved in sharing a common values and have similar views on the goals of the organization and management methods practiced. Bunchapattanasakda et.al. (2012) noted that, volunteers typically participate in NGOs and remained with them because they believe in the ideals and inspiring leaders. According to Benz (2005), NGO workers depending on job satisfaction in determining their organizational commitment. However, their job satisfaction does not depend on the financial rewards and accolades, but is heavily influenced by the work involvement and the context of the work itself. This assertion is supported by Kosny and Eakin (2008) which states most workers in NGOs obtain job satisfaction and intrinsic rewards as guided by a strong value based on activity and participation.

H1: Spiritual leadership style to affect the desire to remain a party of officers from Transformational leadership style.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the method of survey data collection. Neuman (2003) states the survey method is the most effective way to find answers to research questions on self-reported belief, perception and behavior.

TARGETED RESPONDENTS

Unit of analysis for this study is focus on individual from two political parties of UMNO and PAS in Selangor State. Both party are dominant party that representing Malay ethnic in Malaysia. The definition of party officials are person who being elected in the internal party election. The total numbers of targeted respondents consisting of UMNO and PAS committee are 1122 by taking the minimum amount for the Committee of 638 for UMNO and PAS 484 base on both party constitutions.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

This study used purposive sampling method of sample selection. This method is subjective because researchers rely on experience, information and consideration. In purposive sampling, the respondents were selected based on their suitability and ability to provide information relevant to the objectives of a study, although sometimes it does not represent the entire population (Carson et.al 2001). Based on a total population of 1122 and the determination of the total sample schedule Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in a population of 1200, the minimum required number of samples is 291. Total of 367 questionnaires were returned and 357 are useable for purposes analyses that's equal to 28.5% response rate.
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Transformational leadership measurements are adapted from Multifactor Leadership Questionnaires - MLQ developed by Bass (1985). Adaptation of the questionnaire was made to suit the organization settings and the sample. Charismatic leadership has 17 items, 7 items for individual consideration and intellectual simulation is measured with 3 items. For the measurement of spiritual leadership style, the instrument developed by Fry, et.al (2005) is used. This instrument uses elements of vision, hope and faith and altruistic love as the basis to measure the construct. 5 items for vision, 5 items for hope and faith and 7 items to measure altruistic love. All items are well adapted to the political organization and objectives of the study. The instrument to measure intention to stay was developed based on research of Nik Mutasim (2001). However, the adaptation must be made to adapt to environmental questions and the position of the respondent organizations. This is because, the desire to quit the party officials do not necessarily lead to action outwardly but left the party in psychology with no commitment or support while still be a member of the party. 4 items used for this measurement.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

RELIABILITY TEST

Reliability means that the measurement tools (in this study questionnaire) are consistently reflect the construct that being measured (Field, 2009). In certain circumstances, there are items that were dropped to increase the reliability of the measurement of a construct. Therefore, there are several items were dropped to increase the reliability of the constructs in this study as shown in table 7.1. According to Hair, et.al (1995), the recommended reliability level is 0.6 and above. However, George and Mallery (2001) suggested that the value of $\alpha > .9$ considered as very good, $\alpha > .8$ is good and $\alpha > .7$ are acceptable. Therefore, all constructs used in this study are reliable and suitable for further analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. Items</th>
<th>Drop Items</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Kr1, Kr9 &amp; IC1</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention To Stay</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>.747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents Profile
Table 2 Respondents Demographic Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>96.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>&lt; 20 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 – 25 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26 – 30 years</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31 – 35 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36 – 40 years</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 41 years</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>47.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Qualification</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>30.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>40.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration Being Committee</td>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 – 3 years</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>27.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 – 6 years</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 – 8 years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 9 years</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>36.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Govt. Servant</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>30.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>29.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>84.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Hypothesis Testing

Correlation analysis result shown that both leadership styles are having significant relationship towards intention to stay at 99% of confident level as depicts in the Table 7.3. From the analysis, it is found that spiritual and transformational leadership style has a significant relationship with the intention to remain with the party members at \( p = .316 \) and \( p = .246 \) respectively. Thus, both hypothesis 1 and 2 were accepted.
The Relationship Between Spiritual and Transformational Leadership

Table 7.4 shown the results from a simple regression analysis between leadership style and intention to stay. It is found that both independent variables having a significant relationship toward dependent variable. Nevertheless, the p values for both independent variables are different. Spiritual leadership style is found to be significant at p < .000 compare to p = .012 for transformational leadership style. Thus, spiritual leadership style has stronger β coefficient at .258 compared to transformational leadership style that has .138 for it β coefficient value. To sum up result from Table 7.2 and Table 7.3, it can be conclude that spiritual leadership style is giving a stronger effect toward followers’ intention to stay. Thus, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>3.272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transform</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Simple Regression Coefficients

CONCLUSION

Appointment of the party leader is determined by the party members in an internal selection process. Thus, leaders may not be a major factor in ensuring the followers or supporters to remain with the party but the policies and ideology pursued. Leadership in politics according to Burns (1978) only affects the human process that is performed when people with certain motives and purposes and in competition or conflict with the individual, institutional, political, psychological
and other resources are manipulated in order to increase and satisfy the motives involving followers.

In the context of this study, spiritual leadership style and transformational leadership styles differed considerably from the point of motivating factor of their followers. Transformational leadership style focuses on character motivation and trust in leaders. Instead spiritual leadership style focuses on close relationships between leader-follower. The elements of calling and membership as proposed by Fry (2003) between leaders and followers as well as greater confidence on the leaders ability, encourage them to work in a team and leave the interests of individuals to achieve a common goal.

Therefore, spiritual and transformational leadership styles are not mutually exclusive relationship. A leader may require appropriate leadership style to the situation and supporting factors to be an effective leader, particularly on the political leadership. Uncertain political environment requires creative leader to faced the challenging and fulfill the needs their followers.

REFERENCES


The Relationship Between Spiritual and Transformational Leadership


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