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THE EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP STYLES TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION IN MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SECTOR: RMCD

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Abstract:

The aims of this study were to explore the effect of leadership styles towards job satisfaction in Malaysian public sector. In order to investigate the effect a quantitative design is used to measure the styles of leadership such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and entrepreneurial leadership. The data was obtained through online questionnaire used Google Form via WhatsApp. It was analysed to examine the effect of leadership styles towards job satisfaction in Malaysian public sector. The total of population for this study was 777, and the respondent was the worker inside Penang Royal Malaysian Customs Department. However, only 126 respondents answered the questionnaires given. The results of the survey revealed entrepreneurial leadership styles has the highest effect towards job satisfaction. The entrepreneurial leadership style helped in increasing the job satisfaction of the employees selected for this research. As the RMCD is one of the agencies to collect indirect taxes for government sector and drive Malaysian economic growth and improve the well-being of the people.

Keywords:

Public Sector, Job Satisfaction, Leadership Style, Effect

Introduction

Public sector are resources that help organisations in carrying out administration and achieving goals. Public sectors play an important role in determining the success or failure of an organisation. For organisations to fulfil their aims and objectives, officers and employees must work together. As a result, research on employee job satisfaction is critical in both corporate and academic settings. According Pushpakumari (2008) to individuals who are highly content with their occupations have positive attitudes about their work, whereas those who are dissatisfied with their jobs have negative attitudes toward their work. Job satisfaction has a considerable, beneficial, and direct effect on organisational engagement and performance outcomes (Fang, et al., 2009). According to Amarjit et al., (2010), job satisfaction comes through employees' capacity to clearly comprehend the organisation's aims and ambitions. Ibrahim, Wan Sulaiman and Hafidz (2018) argue that job satisfaction is very valuable and exists in every individual who works because when satisfaction is achieved, tasks can be performed well.

Job satisfaction is an indicator of the manifestation of a sense of fun, comfort, and peace or a positive feeling that results from work experience or an attitude that results from the individual's emotional satisfaction with his job (Affendi, 2014). Job satisfaction shows the employee's enthusiasm in doing a given task without feeling stressed. Therefore, job satisfaction is the main key that leads to job satisfaction factors for example, salary factors, supervision, work atmosphere of colleagues and promotion. The study shown to the 'Job Descriptive Index' by Balzer & Smith (1997), dimensions of job satisfaction include salary, the job itself, supervision, relationships with colleagues and promotion opportunities. Ying and Ahmad (2009) discovered that leadership behaviour influences employee satisfaction-moderated organisational culture; West & Bocarnea (2008) discovered a significant relationship between service leadership and organisational commitment and job satisfaction; and Arocas & Camps (2008) discovered that payroll strategy and job enrichment strategy have positive relations with job satisfaction.

The current size of the country's government servants as of year 2021 are 1.7 million staff. The following resident institutional units make up the government sector which are all federal, state, and local government agencies, all social security funds at all levels of government; and all non-profit and non-market organisations that are managed and funded by government agencies. As the primary revenue collector, Royal Malaysia Customs Department (RMCD) must not only keep contributing, but significantly grow revenue collection on a yearly basis. These are done with great care to avoid compromising the industrial sector's performance. The department must guarantee that, although its supervision over the connected sectors is limited but effective, it is also present to offer a helping hand and prod the industries to flourish and succeed. Simultaneously, preventative action, particularly in preventing the admission of negative forces that may endanger the country's security or cause moral degradation, must be carried out on a constant basis.

Officers face a significant challenge in ensuring that their subordinates are happy in their jobs. A satisfied employee is more efficient and effective in the workplace. Many managers do not have adequate awareness and skill for generating suitable atmosphere among staff and to apply precise style at workplace (Mehrad & Fallahi, 2014). According to Opkara (2002), research found that employee's job satisfaction is influenced by certain factors, for example, job performance, promotion opportunities, the job itself, relationships with colleagues and supervision. The attitude of individuals toward their work reveals their level of job satisfaction.

Employees who are highly satisfied have a positive and favourable attitude toward their work, whereas dissatisfied workers have a negative attitude toward their job. (Asghar & Oino, 2018). In a press release by Jobstreet.com in 2017, 78% of 1,145 of the respondents from the survey conducted is unhappy at work which 21% of the respondent influenced relationship with immediate supervisor. Other than that, a survey namely Kajian Indeks Keterlibatan Penjawat Awam (IKPA) Perkhidmatan Awam conducted by the Malaysian Department of Public Services in 2018 reported that, there is a slight decrease between 0.9% to 9.4% in job satisfaction among government servant compared to the same survey conducted in 2015, with the view that they are not involved in the decision -making that involving their work.

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction

According to Sinha (1974), Baro & Mahavidyalaya (2014), job satisfaction can be understood to mean “a pleasant emotional state resulting from a person’s assessment of his or her desires in line with what is in his or her job”. Job satisfaction is located as an inner principle feeling that is created by various elements at work environment (Mehrad & Fallahi, 2014). Jung, Bozeman & Gaughan (2017) stated that job satisfaction is influenced by demographic factors such as gender, minority status, salary, and working hours. Job satisfaction refers to the level of employee satisfaction in the organisation towards their job and work environment (Affendi, 2014).

Job satisfaction also describes how an employee likes their job (Locke, 1969) Some views state that job satisfaction is important because it is one of the key aspects in shaping a motivated and high -performing employee (Mullins, 2002). According to Robbins (2003) job satisfaction is defined as a person's general attitude towards his job. This definition has a broad meaning. In other words, job satisfaction is a complex summation of several job elements that are different and separate from each other (discrete job elements). George & Jones (2002) also define job satisfaction as a group of feelings and beliefs that employees have about their job. Job satisfaction evokes positive and negative feelings towards employees towards their jobs. Meanwhile, when an employee is employed in a business organisation, they will come with needs, desires and experiences that determine the expectations they have rejected. Job satisfaction is related to employee behaviour at work (Davis et al., 1985). Job satisfaction is an employee's feeling of success and performance at work. Basically, it is seen to be specifically related to productivity and personal well-being.

Leadership

Leadership influences people to achieve the organisation’s vision and goals (Robbins & Judge, 2012). The leadership can improve the performance become a competitive advantage (Patiar & Wang, 2020). Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. (Northouse, 2016). In a study of the literature on leadership, Stogdill (1974, p. 7) noted that there are almost as many diverse definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define it. Rost (1991) found more than 200 different definitions of leadership in documents written between 1900 and 1990. His analysis provides a brief overview of how leadership has been defined over the past century. In 1927, leadership was defined as “the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation” (Moore, 1927).

Leadership Style

Substantial attention should be dedicated to the precise leadership style at an organisation (Mehrad & Fallahi, 2014). Trait Leadership Theory focuses on the quality and characteristics of the leader, meanwhile, Behavioural Leadership Theory assesses the leader when preparing the organisation planning and deliver it to followers by building mutual trust relationship and respecting to the ideas. Leaders are expected to have good characteristics, and subordinates should be able to access them. Leadership style in this study is measured by Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership and Entrepreneurial Leadership.

Transformational Leadership

According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is associated with leaders' capacity to encourage and urge their followers to go beyond their personal interests in order to establish a commitment to the organisation's objectives and goals. Yukl (1989) describes transformational leadership as a process that significantly influences employee attitudes and behaviour and improves their commitment to the vision and goals. Transformational leadership is a leadership fertilizer that stimulates and transforms their followers to achieve remarkable results, Robbins & Coulter (2009). Ingram (2009) states a transformational leader performs tasks that go beyond daily tasks and devises strategies to take a company, department or work team to the next level for performance and success. Transformational leadership has a greater effect on group work performance than transactional leadership (McMurray et al, 2012).

Transactional Leadership

The definition of transactional leadership style is inseparable from leadership related to followers who motivate by calling on their personal interests. Transactional leadership involves values, such as honesty, responsibility, and two-way/reciprocal communication. things, such as the leader knows what the subordinates want and will explain what the subordinates will get if the job is in accordance or not in accordance with expectations. Leaders exchange the efforts of subordinates in return (Bass, 1985). Leaders will respond to personal interests if those interests are proportional to the value of the work done by subordinates.

Entrepreneurial Leadership

Entrepreneurial leadership exists between the intersection of entrepreneurial meanings and leadership. Leadership is a process of influence (Silva, 2014) while entrepreneurship as the process by which opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated, and exploited (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Whereas entrepreneurial leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree on what needs to be done collectively to achieve common objectives (Silva, 2014). Entrepreneurial leadership is a powerful and necessary leadership style. Entrepreneurial leadership is reasonable given the new and unexpected environment that businesses face in today's volatile markets (Tarabishy et al, 2005). Meanwhile, Kuratko (2007) said that when making decisions, entrepreneurial leadership considers factors including the environment and morality. He concluded that entrepreneurial leadership has a valid role in the creation, expansion, and endurance of non-profit organisations.

According a study conducted among lecturers in higher education by Lope Pihie et al (2011), Laissez-faire was inversely connected with the lecturers' job satisfaction, but transformational and transactional leadership styles were favourably correlated. Since most of the leadership style studies are combining transformational leadership and transactional leadership, adding entrepreneurial leadership to the list will help leaders to find suitable leadership style as

executives in the public sector are positioned as owners or operators of companies that conduct business in a fictitious market governed by performance indicators (Currie & Lockett, 2007).

Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional study because data was collected over a two-week period from a sample of targeted employees who were required to answer questions to obtain information pertaining to this study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Therefore, the time frame prepared by researcher for distributing the questionnaire and collecting the data was three (3) weeks. The cross-sectional study is descriptive research that is observational in nature. One of the primary reasons for using a cross-sectional study was time constraints and the fact that this method is cost-effective that makes it easier for the researchers to perform this study. The study setting will be non-contrived because the type of study in this research is a correlational study. This is because the study is being done in a natural setting and the respondents in the field study were public sector employees in Malaysia. In other words, the research is carried out within normal working hours. Less research interference allows respondents to freely express their thoughts and react to questions without being subjected to discrimination. The target population for this study were Penang RMCD employees from Grade of WK44 and below. They were public employees who serve with RMCD under the Ministry of Finance in Malaysia. The study focused on Customs subordinates whose working under the supervision of Grade WK48 Customs officers and above. Based on the data provided by the Personnel Department of Penang Customs, the total number of employees under this category was 777. Approximately 254 employees were the sample size based on the table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) of RMCD. The sampling technique that has been used was cluster sampling as the number of populations for Penang RMCD employees is huge. The target population is first divided into groups in cluster sampling. Then, a random sample of clusters is taken, and for each chosen cluster, either all or a subset of the elements are included in the sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In order to collect data, this study used online questionnaire approach by using Google Form to collect data from the targeted population. The questionnaires were distributed via online survey using Google Form and WhatsApp Messenger. Although the questionnaires were distributed within three weeks through several reminders, the response rate could not reach the total number of 254 respondents due to time constraints. The number of questionnaire return was 134 or 49.6% of the response rate. This study using SPSS version 16 to analyse the result.

Finding

Coefficient Analysis

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	0.065	0.239		0.271	0.787
	Transformational Leadership	0.157	0.060	0.152	2.608	0.010
	Transactional Leadership	-0.026	0.065	-0.019	-0.390	0.697
	Entrepreneurial Leadership	0.847	0.058	0.785	14.527	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Based on the analysis, the largest beta coefficient is 0.785, which is for entrepreneurial leadership. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable which is job satisfaction, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for. The second largest beta coefficient is 0.152, which is for transformational leadership. This means that this variable makes the moderate unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable which is job satisfaction, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for.

This regression result shows that the estimated coefficient (β) for the transactional leadership is -0.019. The "sig" or significance value being 0.697 indicates that the relationship between transactional leadership and the job satisfaction is not statistically significant. A significance value close to 1 means that there is a high probability that the relationship between the two variables is due to chance, rather than a real effect. In other words, the transactional leadership has little to no effect on the job satisfaction. Transactional leadership is more suited in order to achieve targets, the employees are also habitual of transactional leadership style and they assume themselves that their leader will be strict and follows rules and regulation so most of the private organization prefers to motivate their employees by using Transactional rewards such as promotion, bonuses and punishments but different with public sector. This is because employees are feeling relaxed when they come to know that their leader will not be going to punish them. This is also due to basic purpose is to achieve their targets without caring about the satisfaction of the employees. Results clearly indicating that employees are not satisfied with their jobs yet their productivity level is increased because of the fear that they will be punished if their tasks will not be completed. Or another reason is might be employees are hoping for promotions or bonuses.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of leadership styles towards public sector employees job satisfaction in Malaysia. Researchers have examined the effect of different leadership styles which are transformational, transactional and entrepreneurial leaderships towards job satisfaction as research questions. By using the quantitative data that focuses on cluster sampling and through online survey distribution, the present study addressed the leadership styles from the employees' point of view, which were identified in a survey of 126 Penang RMCD employees. Based on the results of the statistical tests conducted for analysis purposes, this research study explained the relationship between the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction of Penang RMCD employees. SPSS inferential statistical tests such as descriptive analysis, Pearson's correlations, and regression were helpful in analysing the data, interpreting it, and drawing conclusive evidence from it.

This research has made important contributions to the Royal Malaysian Customs Department as a public sector in considering these styles of leadership to be applied into the managerial level for the future. The findings of this study can also serve as a guidance for the management level of RMCD in Penang and subsequently for the Ministry of Finance Malaysia or anyone involved in the field of leadership to further improve the quality of the prevailing leadership style, especially in the RMCD. From the findings of this study, employers, especially officers, needs to implement an effective leadership style to ensure job satisfaction of subordinate officers. Therefore, RMCD needs to take care of the well-being of RMCD employees, especially subordinates, so that they can continue to be satisfied with their work and be able to

commit to RMCD, continue to excel and be highly praised, especially by customers and Malaysian society.

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