

The Relationship between Leadership Style and Staff Job Satisfaction at the College of Education, Addis Ababa University

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between the department heads leadership styles and the academic staff job satisfaction at Addis Ababa University in the College of Education. Fifty five academic staff in the College of Education completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS). The result indicated that department chairs in the college have shown all range of leadership styles-transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles. Similarly, the staff self reported level of job satisfaction is above average. The study also indicated that there is a significant relationship between transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles of the department chairs and job satisfactions of the academic staff. On the other hand, the relationship between transactional leadership style of the department chairs and staff job satisfaction and the transformational leadership of the department chairs and the intrinsic job satisfaction of the staff is not significant. The results of this study will provide insights into the level of staff satisfaction and the leadership styles of the department chairs at College of Education. It may also indicate the need to consider other more situational variables in the study of leadership and job satisfaction.

Key words: leadership style and job satisfaction

Introduction

Educational institutions are not free from the turbulent environments facing modern organizations. They need to develop a mechanism to serve as a learning environment to cope with these changes (Hui and Law, 1999). The expansion of higher learning institutions, the increase in enrolment, financial constraints, integration of technology in the teaching learning process and brain drain are some of the internal challenges that face higher education institutions. On the other hand, the world economic crises and the shift from the industrial age to the knowledge age are external threats.

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College of Education, as one of the oldest faculties in Addis Ababa University, could be taken as a representative of the situation in the University. The college is at the center of the reform agenda in the way teachers are getting trained. The college also plays an essential role in the nationwide university teachers' capacity building program. As a result, transforming institutions of learning to the current sociopolitical demand and building the base for quality education for the future generation is a responsibility of the leadership in College of Education.

However, leaders in higher education have been greatly criticized for their failure to apply the knowledge gained from literature and management to maintain and advance their institution in today's complex internal and external environments (Leary, Sullivan and Ray, 2001). Blanchard (1996) argues that institutional success at the time of change depends on effective use of leadership. Similarly, leadership requires staff that are satisfied and committed to the internal and external environments. Understanding the leadership styles of department chairs in place and the level of self reported staff job satisfaction may contribute to facilitating the change process in understanding the role of leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Accomplishing the mission of higher education institutions is dependent up on the leadership ability to motivate the staff towards the goal and objectives of the institutions (Austin, 1984). Similarly, higher education institutions are expected to reform their mission, and better utilize their intellectual resources (the academia) in order to meet the challenges of the century. The current pressures imposed on higher educations such as internationalization, globalization, increasing role of knowledge in the economy, information communication technology and government funding call for leadership intervention. In this connection, Manning (2004, p.2) has the following to say, "In this extraordinary moment in human history, much of what we know about business has been turned on its head down. Executives who don't see

the new realities-and adapt to them with lightening speed-will be left behind in the race for customers and profit.”

Higher education institutions are not outside this change and are being challenged by the needs of the society. Thus, the need to respond positively to the change and manage it effectively is an urgent engagement of the leadership in hinge education institutions (Ford, 1996; Harked and Sharma, 2000).

Many studies have been conducted to assess the leadership styles and job satisfaction levels in various organizations. They indicated that administrators who demonstrate a transformational leadership style have staff with increased job satisfaction. Staff with increased job satisfaction demonstrates higher levels of organizational commitment. Such administrators have less staff turnover (Griffith, 2004; Yu, Leithwood and Jantzi, 2002; Ross and Gray, 2006). Studies have also identified leadership behaviors that are related with job satisfaction at different levels (Dumdum, Lowe and Avolio, 2002). However, there is no agreed conclusion that indicates specific leadership style that contributes to institutional success (Ehrle and Bennet, 1988).

None of these studies took the Ethiopian situation and in particular the higher education learning institutions into account. At the time when most Ethiopian higher learning institutions in the country are in a change process, investigating the relationship between the leadership style of the department heads and the staff self-reported job satisfaction seems relevant. This study, therefore, tries to identify the perceived leadership styles of the department heads as identified by the academic staff and the level of job satisfaction of the academic staff.

The study has attempted to answer the following basic research questions:

- A) What are the dominant leadership styles of the department heads in the College of Education?
- B) What is the staff self-reported job satisfaction level in the College?
- C) What is the relationship between the leadership styles of the department chairs and the self reported job satisfaction of the academic staff?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the perceived leadership styles of the department chairs and the self reported job satisfaction level of the academic staff at College of Education. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. to identify the leadership styles of the department chairs;
2. to describe the level of staff job satisfaction; and
3. to investigate the relationship between the perceived leadership styles of the department chairs and the self-reported job satisfactions of the academic staff.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the leadership styles of department chairs and job satisfaction of academic staff in College of Education. This College is chosen because it has 15 departments that are from science and social science streams.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes to shading light on the relationship between leadership styles and staff job satisfaction in academic institutions. Second, it also tries to address issues related to department level leadership styles and factors which contribute to increasing staff performance such as job satisfaction.

Third, this study will help department chairs to re-evaluate their leadership style so as to get willing and motivated followers. Finally, the study will be useful as baseline document to prepare leadership development programs for department chairs in higher education institutions.

Definition of Terms

Leadership is a dynamic process which involves creatively managing tensions between, for example, tradition and change, having clear goals and giving people the independence to peruse them, endorsing academic values but coping with external forces, adopting both short term objectives and long term issues. It strives to create conditions that enable high quality research and teaching to raise the awareness of staff to welcome change (Ramsden, 1998, p. 126-7).

Job satisfaction is defined as 'one's response to various facets of the work environment (Wheless, Wheless and Howard, 1983, p. 146).

Review of Related Literature

Leadership Styles

One leadership theory that has gained recent and widespread attention is transformational leadership which is defined in terms of four leadership characteristics: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation (Bass and Avolio, 1994). First, idealized influence is the ability of the leader to be regarded as a role model due to the personal characters or charisma which is regarded as moral behaviors of the individual leaders. Second, inspirational motivation is the ability of leaders to provide a clear sense of mission, which leaders in turn convey to members and develop a sense of loyalty and commitment. Third, individualized consideration is the leader's treatment of each member as a unique individual and the leader's willingness to delegate projects to

individual members, which stimulate and create learning experiences. Fourth, intellectual stimulation is the leader's provision of opportunities for group members to rethink traditional procedures and examine situations in new and novel ways. Such leadership style is considered as a way of enhancing institutional effectiveness at a time of change.

However, in a situation where everything is stable and no turbulence is observed in the organization, transactional leadership style is found to be effective (Kirkbride, 2006). In transactional leadership, leaders can be supported to achieve their goals through offering either reward or punishment. Such leadership style which was thought as opposite of transformational leadership is found to be making enquiries about effective leadership close to complete. Thus, transactional leadership characteristics, management-by-exception (active and passive) and contingent reward are characteristics observed on leaders. Management- by-exception (passive) refers to leaders' characteristics of taking action when there are deviations from standards. As a result, such leaders are found to have poor performance monitoring system. On the other hand, management-by-exception (active) refers to leaders' behaviors where the leaders follow every action, monitor, and control the system before any deviation occurs. This leader's characteristic is found to be negatively related to innovation and creativity in organizations. Contingent reward is one of the classical characteristics of transactional leadership style. Contingent reward leader characteristics focus on the leaders' ability of setting its goals and providing any form of reward for the achievement made (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Yukl, 2006).

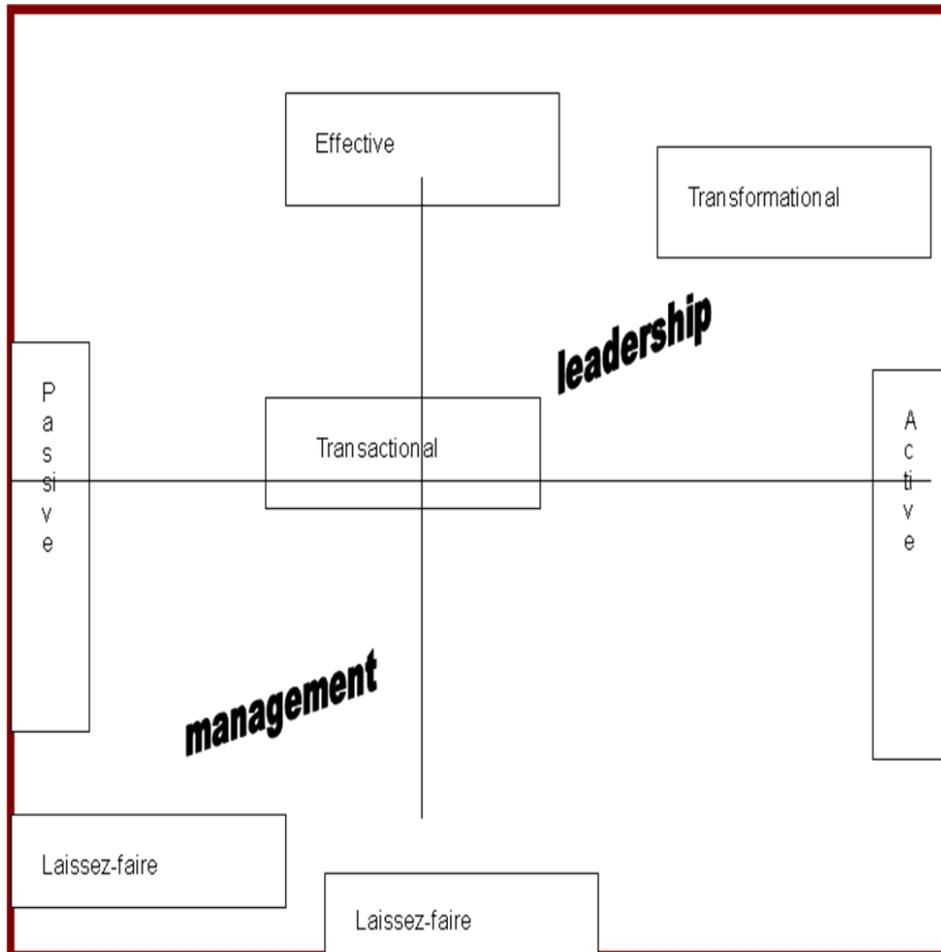
Practice has shown that there are leaders who withdraw from their leadership role and who do not provide either direction or support in their institutions. These leaders are termed as *laissez-faire* leaders. *Laissez-faire* leaders are often indifferent to the needs of their followers. They do not take any responsibilities. Such leaders avoid decision making and show lack of interest in what is going on (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Even though there have been extensive studies on the behaviors of leaders and leadership styles, there is no single agreement about the nature and type of leadership and leaders behavior that grantee productivity in institutions and transformation of institutions (Ehrle and Bennett, 1988). Bass and Avolio (1998 and 1990) developed a full range of leadership model which combined transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. This leadership model attempts to show from non-leadership to the more transformational leadership style.

Research shows that the effectiveness of leadership is evaluated based on its outcome (Ehrle and Bennett, 1988; Bass and Avolio, 1994). Bass and Avolio, (1994) indicated that job satisfaction of subordinates can be viewed as the effect of effective leadership.

Conceptual Framework

Bass and Avolio's (1991, 1995, 1997) full range theory of leadership provides a useful model to form a conceptual framework for this study. According to Bass and Avolio (1991, 1995, 1997), the full Range of Leadership model development includes the indicators of the transformational, transactional, and no transactional (Laissez-faire) leadership factors. This theory includes leadership styles that are highly transformational at one end to the laissez-faire leadership style that is highly indifferent at the other end, as shown in the next figure.



Full Range of Leadership Model: Relationship of Leadership Style and Follower Outcomes (Bass and Avolio, 1997)

Bass (1996, p. 8) says, "Fundamental to the full-range leadership model is that every leader displays each style to some amount." He indicated further that the potential for effective leadership is achieved through both transactional and transformational leadership. Bass and Avolio (1995) refined the components of the full range model to include: idealized influence

(attribute), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Other components also include contingent rewards, management-by-exception (active), management-by-exception (passive), and laissez-faire. On the other hand, these elements of full range leadership model are found to be related with performance which in turn is affected by staff satisfaction level and staff demographic composition.

Effective leadership, according to Burns (1978), involved the leader's ability to make group members become less interested in themselves and more interested in the group. To develop and build group members' commitment to common goals and purpose, transformational leaders, through interpersonal relations, maintain employees' moral and psychological needs. Moral needs include a sense of goodness, righteousness, duty, and obligation while psychological needs include esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization. Such leaders' behaviors are reflected in the transformational leadership style. Bass (1985, 1990 and 1996) further elaborate that transformational leaders alter the behaviors and attitudes of individual members either through human relations or through provisions of clear institutional directions. In Kirkbride's (2006, p.6) opinion, transformational leadership involves "the provision of a compelling and clear vision, mobilizing of employee commitment through personal identification and involvement, and the institutionalization of change". Similarly, Yukl (2006) argues that effective leaders monitor operations and assess performances to detect problems to be solved. In addition, every leader is supposed to exhibit to a certain degree, all these characteristics. Thus using the full range model practically helps not to miss important characteristics of leaders (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Kirkbride, 2006).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as 'one's response to various facets of the work environment' (Wheeler, Wheeler and Howard, 1983, p. 146). One of the facets of the work environment in higher education that indicates the staff

morale is the perception of the staff about their value of their immediate supervisor, the department chair. Lucas (1994) indicated that staff members are motivated when they are feeling that they are perceiving opportunities for personal and professional growth and when they are participating in decision making activities. These motivational needs are addressed through the staff and the department chair's interaction which could contribute to the staff job satisfaction and readiness for change. Success of an institution seems to be dependent on the way staff feel about their work and how satisfied they are about it.

As a result, Herzberg's theory of motivation is taken as a base for studies of job satisfaction. Herzberg's theory defines motivators and hygienes as activities that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction which is intrinsic in nature is described as the employees' relationship to what he does whereas job dissatisfaction is considered as the employees' relationship with the context and the environment which are extrinsic (Herzberg, 1966). Factors that are considered motivators are achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and growth, whereas factors which are considered hygiene are policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, work conditions and salaries (Herzberg, 1966).

Earlier research has associated staff job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and effort to transformational leaders (Bass, 1985; Bass et al., 1987; Waldman et al 1987). Thus, leaders' behaviors directly affect staff, specifically their job satisfaction, which in turn relates to staff job performance (Miller and Sparks, 1984; Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Methodology

Participants

Participants of this study were all academic staff from all the 15 departments in the College of Education at Addis Ababa University. Of the total 240 academic staff (2009 annual report), 100 were accessed and given questionnaire through their departments fifty-five people completed and

returned the questionnaire. The intention was to involve all the academic staff in the study. However, due to various reasons those who were available during the time of the study were only 100. Thus, 100 participants were selected using availability sampling. This number indicated a return rate of 55%. Of the 55 returned questionnaires, 27 were returned within a week and the remaining were returned after the individuals were contacted two to three times. The returned questionnaires indicated that all the 15 departments are not represented. Most of the returned questionnaires were from staff members in Natural Science Education and Social Sciences and Languages Education.

Variables used in the Study

The variables investigated in this study were leadership styles and job satisfaction measured by Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and The Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale respectively. Perceived leadership style of department heads is taken as independent variable while the dependent variable was the expected staff job satisfaction.

Instruments

The instruments used to collect data for this study were Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass and Avolio, 1995 and 1997) and Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job satisfaction scale. Both were used in various research environments; however, there is no evidence on their applicability to the Ethiopian context.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which is a 45 item questionnaire was distributed to selected staff members to rate the frequency of actions and behaviors of the leader, on a 5 point Likert scale, from 0 (Not at all)-4 (Frequently, if not always). The nine leadership style indicators comprising the Full Range model of leadership styles are each measured by four items. Also, four items measure the follower outcome indicators of their willingness

to exert extra effort, and two items measure the follower satisfaction indicator.

However, these indicators of leaders' effectiveness, followers' willingness to exert extra effort and followers' satisfaction were not used in this study since the objective of the study was not to address such issues.

This questionnaire is found to be the most comprehensive, reliable and valid measurement of leadership style (Yukl, 2006). Bass and Avolio (1997) reported reliability coefficients of .74 to .94 for each of the nine indicators. Bass and Avolio (1997, p. 54) recommend using the followers' ratings "for research purposes due to the higher reliabilities."

The Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale was used to measure self-perceived extrinsic, intrinsic, and overall job satisfaction of the staff. The instrument consisted of eight items divided into two sections. Each section contained four items with a six-point Likert scale where responses ranged from one as the lowest possible score to six as the highest score.

Reliability coefficients for the scale were established by Mohrman using educators as respondents (Mohrman et al, 1997). The reliability for the intrinsic scale ranged from .81 to .87 and the reliability for the extrinsic scale ranged from .77 to .82.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data on perceived leadership styles of department heads and Job satisfaction of the academic staff were acquired and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 14.0. The mean score of each respondent's response to each question on the MLQ and MCMJSS was used to reflect how the respondents rated their leaders and their level of job satisfaction. Frequency distributions were completed for both MLQ and MCMJSS. Individual responses to the MLQ were derived by summing the items and dividing them by the number of items that make up the scale. A

Pearson correlation analysis was used to analyze the relationship between leadership styles of department heads and job satisfaction levels of academic staff. The items are organized as follows.

Table 1: Dimensions of Transformational, Transactional and Laissez Faire Leadership

Leadership	Scale Definition	Number of Items	Mean Score
Transformational leadership			2.64
Idealized influence_ total (attribute and behaviors)	The leader instills pride and faith in followers by overcoming obstacles and confidently expressing disenchantment with the status quo	8	2.7
Inspirational motivation	The leader inspires followers to enthusiastically accept and pursue challenging goals or mission or vision of the future	4	2.69
Individualized motivation	The leader communicates personal respect to followers by giving them specialized attention and by recognizing each followers' unique needs	4	2.54
Intellectual stimulation	The leader articulates new ideas that prompt followers to rethink conventional practice	4	2.6
Transactional leadership			2.13
Contingent reward	The leader provides rewards contingent on performance	4	2.66
Management by exception (active)	The leader takes corrective action in anticipation of problems	4	2.03
Management by exception (passive)	The leader takes corrective action when problems arise or things do not go as planned	4	1.77
Laissez faire leadership	Avoidance or absence of leadership	4	1.82

Table 1 indicates that the department chairs that were assessed by the staff members were showing all the ranges of styles in the full range model of leadership. The difference between the extent of being transformational or

transaction seems to be not very much high. However, from the mean score the inclination to be transformational is somehow more than average whereas the inclination to be transactional is average. In the transactional style, even though contingent reward is the most highly rated behavior of the leaders as perceived by the staff, management by exception (passive and active) and Laissez-faire are the least rated behaviors of the department heads. As a result the total mean of the transactional leadership style which includes contingent reward and management- by exception (passive and active) is almost the average. Laissez-faire leadership style which is assumed to be non leaders' behavior is rated very low. This indicates that though the extent is very low department chairs are showing certain level of being non leaders.

Similarly, the extent of being transformational is reflected in all the behavior of transformational leaders where intellectual stimulation has the highest mean score (2.6), followed by Idealized Influence (behavior and attribute with 2.7 and 2.7 mean score) Inspirational Motivation (2.69) and Individual consideration (2.54). According to these result, the staff have perceived that their immediate supervisors or the department chairs are very often showing transformational leadership style.

Similarly, individual scores of the MCMJSS were also organized as follows.

Table 2: Self- reported Job Satisfaction Mean Score

	Variables	Mean score
1	Intrinsic Satisfaction	4.27
2	Extrinsic Satisfaction	3.85
3	Overall Satisfaction	4.06

The above table indicates the mean scores of the staff self reported job satisfaction level. As can be seen in the Table 2 the overall staff satisfaction of the sample respondents is above average (3.00). Similarly, staff self reported intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction are 4.27 and

3.85 mean score respectively. This shows that the staff job satisfaction is moderate.

Table 3: Relationship between Leadership Style and Overall Staff Job Satisfaction

Leadership Style	R value for job satisfaction
Transformational	0.423*
Transactional	-0.064
Laissez-faire	-0.601*

** R value is significant at 0.05*

Table 3 indicates that there is a strong relationship between overall job satisfaction and the two leadership styles (transformational and laissez-faire). The result indicates that the more the department chairs are transformational the higher the staff satisfaction and the more the department chairs are laissez faire the least the staff job satisfaction. However, the relationship between departments chairs transactional leadership style and staff satisfaction is not significant (-0.064).

Table 4: Relationship between Leadership Styles and Intrinsic and Extrinsic Staff Job Satisfaction

Leadership Style	R value for intrinsic job	R value for extrinsic job
Transformational	-0.028	0.675*
Transactional	-0.445*	0.241
Laissez-faire	-0.644*	-0.437*

** R value is significant at 0.05*

Similarly, as can be observed from Table 4, though there is significant relationship between transactional and laissez-faire leadership style and intrinsic staff job motivation, there is no observed significant relationship between transformational leadership style and intrinsic job motivation of the

staff. On the other hand, there is significant relationship between the leadership style of the department chairs and the extrinsic job satisfactions of the staff.

Implications and Discussions

The result of this study indicated that Department Chairs have shown all types of leadership styles. The correlation between certain leadership styles of the department chairs demonstrated a significant relationship to self-reported job satisfaction of the staff. This correlation is most evident in the relationship of overall job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction to the transformational and laissez faire dimensions of the full range model of leadership. As the degree of perceived transformational leadership behavior of the department chairs gets greater, the degree of overall job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction reported by the staff increases. On the other hand when the degree of perceived laissez-faire leadership style of the department chairs increases the overall staff satisfaction (both the intrinsic and extrinsic staff satisfaction decrease). The correlation between the transactional leadership style of the department chairs and the overall job satisfaction (both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction) of the staff is not significant. Similarly, there is no significant relationship between perceived transformational leadership of the department chairs and intrinsic job satisfactions of the staff.

Transformational leadership, in Adebayo's (2005) opinion, is collectively oriented. It typically creates a vision that inspires group members to give priorities to group goals and needs. The significant correlation between perceived transformational leadership of the department chairs can be the result of their ability to strike a balance between individual capabilities and needs. The degree of the department chair's involvement in leading followers towards achieving group goals also matters much (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Kirkbride, 2006; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter, 1990). It is true that through their collective and visionary approach, transformational leaders buffer employees' distress and job dissatisfaction,

and motivate followers to collaborate and achieve a greater result than expected during change (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Bass 1999).

Similarly, the correlation between laissez-faire leadership styles and staff job satisfaction is opposite. In higher learning institutions where the responsibility of the staff is shaping generation for future such leaders that influence overall goal achievements and satisfaction of staff negatively are not tolerable.

However, the absence of significant relationship between transactional leadership style of the department chairs and the overall job satisfactions and extrinsic job satisfaction of the staff and transformational leadership styles of the department chairs and intrinsic job satisfaction of the staff are slightly different from previous research results and literature implications (Leary, Sullivan and Debra, 2001). The context in which the department chairs are working has to be taken into account in interpreting this finding. Department chairs in College of Education at Addis Ababa University are hardly in a position to provide rewards contingent on performance. They do not appear to be able to take corrective action in anticipation of problems or when things do not go as planned. This is also indicated in the data, except in providing a reward for performance, the rest of the behaviors of transactional leaders have almost 'average' and 'below average' mean score. On the other hand, this can further be supported by the extrinsic job satisfaction aspects that are related with policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, work conditions and salaries. With the exception of the interpersonal relation aspect all of these aspects of job satisfaction are beyond the departmental levels of the higher learning institution. This could be taken as a possible explanation for the finding noted in this study.

On the other hand, the absence of correlation between transformational leadership styles of the department chairs and the intrinsic job satisfaction (expressed in terms of personal development, achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and growth of the staff) might be attributed to the exceptions and levels of self-esteems of the staff where the staff have

the feeling of alienating themselves from the leadership. In addition, intrinsic job satisfaction, that is the degree to which the staff feels satisfied, is determined by internally motivating factors. Most staff in higher education seems to be involved in a work environment where they can shape their own future. This can be related to the autonomy and freedom of thinking in the academia (Hall, Pearson, and Carroll, 1992; Poulin and Walter, 1992). As a result, external factors from the leaders appear to have less effect on intrinsic job satisfaction than the effect that they have on extrinsic job satisfaction (Leary, Sullivan and Debra, 2001).

Therefore, a possible explanation for such a result can be the status and institutional situations of the sample used in this study. The individuals included in this sample were predominantly male academic staff members who have expert knowledge in their respective fields. Perhaps the content and quality of their work, personal status, reward strategy and working environment contribute more to their level of job involvement than what the leadership style can contribute.

Conclusion

To sum up, the study indicated that even though there is heterogeneity among staff with respect to what they found satisfying and/or satisfactory (Evans, 1997), there is a relationship between leadership styles and staff job satisfaction. This could be further explored by correlating specific leadership behaviors in every leadership style with specific components of job satisfaction. Leadership could contribute in creating satisfied staff that could support the leadership in place to achieve institutional objectives. In addition, department chairs have to reevaluate their leadership and institutional role to increase their followers' satisfaction and adjust their behaviors which could decrease staff job satisfaction. The absence of correlation identified in certain leadership style signifies that the department chairs are in a position where they can motivate and control their staff. Therefore, institutions need to develop a structure and system in which the department chairs play a significant role in bringing the aspired institutional development through

crating satisfied staff. Above all, the need for a leadership development program for department chairs seems evident and timely. Therefore, future research in this area has to focus on involving a large number of respondents, alternative research tools and institutional variables.

This study is not generalizable due to several limitations. To begin with, its scope was very limited and the return rate of the questionnaire was very low. In addition, the number of respondents was so small that it cannot represent the whole college. And also the current situation in the college (as a result of the institutional transformation in the university) might have an impact on the staff perceptions of their department chairs. The absence of data related to the participants' demographic and higher education related variables in the study is yet another important limitation to be mentioned. Finally, even if the data gathering instruments used in the study have been validated and used in various contexts, their validity and reliability in Ethiopian higher education environment has to be explored further.

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