

Full Length Research Paper

The impact of leadership styles on employee commitment in Madda Walabu University

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Received 3 July, 2018; Accepted 23 May, 2019

Effective leaders are able to contribute directly by enabling competent and committed employees through encouraging them to perform well. Studies in the area of organizational behavior literatures have indicated that among the major factors affecting organizational success and failure are leadership styles and employee commitment. The aim of this paper was to examine the impact of leadership styles on academic staffs' commitments in Madda Walabu University (MWU). The total academic staffs in the two campuses (Robe and Goba) were 914. The sample of the study consists of 231 persons, included 209 academic staffs and 22 leaders. Two separate instruments namely, multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) and organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ), were used to measure the impact of leadership styles on employees' organizational commitment respectively. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership behavior and organizational commitments. There is weak, but positive and significant relationship between transactional leadership style with continuance commitment and normative commitment, and there is no relationship for transactional leadership style with affective commitment. Significant and positive correlation exists between laissez-faire leadership style and continuance commitment, but insignificant and negative relation with weak correlation between laissez-faire leadership style and affective commitment; however, the one that does not have any statistically significant correlation of normative commitment with laissez-faire leadership style.

Key words: Leadership styles, employee commitment, MWU.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we are experiencing a rapidly changing environment with various shifts in every domain of human activity (Lok and Crawford, 2004). Life at work place continues to change in many ways by different factors. For example, competition among organizations is getting stiff, demographically, workforces are diversifying and

technology is rapidly changing. The changes in the work place are so fast and require the highest quality of product and service. In order to be competent in these pressures, employee commitment is crucial. As cited by Teshome (2013), researchers indicate that the commitment of employee (Brockner et al., 1992; Meyer et al., 2004; Allen and Myer, 1990) and leadership style

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style (Bass, 1997; Bass et al., 2003; Trottier et al., 2008) are the major factors affecting the success or failure of an organization. Allen and Myer (1990) also argue that employee commitment can result in the effectiveness of leadership, employee performance improvements, reduce turnover and absenteeism if properly managed. Many organizations have good understanding for the value of enhancing employees' commitment and the importance of understanding its antecedents that employees are committed to those jobs where they are happiest. People who are jovial at work place find their occupation more meaningful and more interesting; they are more in tune with the purpose of their organization, they feel more attractive felling (Lantos and Craton, 2012) and Job satisfaction, and some of its facets are found as significant predictors of organizational commitment (Boles et al., 2007). In fact, several factors affect commitment of employees to a company or an organization. Among the many factors which could enhance employee organizational commitment are recognitions, promotional opportunities, pay raises and chances for cross-training and advancement.

Human resource is one of the most important assets of an organization which increases the efficiency and the effectiveness of the organization; and also, it acts as a pure source of competitive advantage which is inimitable (Beheshtifar and Herat, 2013). According to Rafiq Awan and Mahmood (2009), employee commitment shows that quality of leadership exists within an organization. From the different sources, it is possible to argue that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and employee commitment. A number of research papers indicate that the relationship between the style of leadership and employee commitment is positive. One of the most important things to create committed employees is leadership style. The case in MWU academic staff is different. The sense of belongingness is very less, which has increased high turnover and absenteeism. Therefore, the researchers are encouraged to study on the impacts of leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership) on employee commitment of instructors (affective, normative and continuance) in MWU academic staff.

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the employees' perceptions about leadership styles and employee commitment dimensions in MWU academic staffs.
2. To examine the relationship between transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles and employee commitment dimensions at MWU academic staffs.
3. To examine the impacts of leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) on employee commitment dimensions in MWU academic staff.

The study is expected to contribute to different bodies in many ways. First the findings of this study will add to

the wealth of knowledge in other leadership and employee commitment studies. It could also be helpful for individuals who want to conduct further studies in related topics and other organizations those face similar problems.

Inevitably, this study will contribute to the growing body of research on the impacts of leadership styles on organizational commitment by examining the three important leadership styles and their impact on organizational commitment. It is believed that this study will add value to the literatures on supervisors' leadership styles, especially in the Ethiopian settings, since there were limited literatures done on similar settings. The results of the study will also help MWU to practice leadership style that will develop organizational commitment, and will also contribute a lot to anyone who is interested by providing information on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the paper deals with the review of literatures on leadership styles, employee commitment and their relationships.

The concept of leadership

Leadership can be defined as a complex social process, rooted in aspects of values, skills, knowledge as well as ways of thinking of both leaders and followers. Thus, it is all about the continuous process of establishing and maintaining a connection between who aspire to lead and those who are willing to follow (Hersey et al., 2007). James and Collins (2008) and Leavy and Mckiernan (2009) state that the fact that organizations face several challenges as a result of constant changes of external environments, such as changes in technology, economy, stiff competition, social, political and political legal conditions and internal environment, call for flexibility in resource utilization and in the encouraging of continuous learning. As a result of these, leaders are expected to make the right decision apart from contributing in terms of generating new ideas and knowledge in organizations in order to respond to the changes. Leadership styles are considered in the following sections as transactional, transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles.

Transactional leadership style

Bolden et al. (2003) argue that this approach focuses on getting some sorts of benefits from the relationships created between leaders and followers in the process of leadership. The benefits drive from a contract which realizes rewards for followers in return for commitment the leaders need from followers to make an organization successful. It focuses on the role of supervision,

organization and group performance. This shows that the theory bases leadership on a formula of rewards and punishments (Bass and Avolio, 1993).

Transformational leadership style

The connection formed between leaders and followers is the focus of this theory. Transformational leaders have the concern for motivating and inspiring followers by showing group members to understand that the accomplishment of the task is utmost good. Transformational leaders focus on the group members' performance; however, they also have the intention of making each individual utilizes his or her maximum potential. High ethical and moral standards are what leaders with this style value the most. The central concept here is change and the role of leadership in envisioning and implementing the transformation of organizational performance (Bolden et al., 2003).

Laissez-faire leadership style

The two leadership styles which were considered above are said to actively interfere and try to prevent problems by making use of different approaches. Research findings indicate that they are contrasted with the third leadership style, known as laissez-faire leadership style (Bass, 1990) as cited in Bučiūnienė and Škudienė (2008). James and Collins (2008) state the laissez-faire leader as an extremely passive leader who is reluctant to influence subordinates of higher level of freedom can reach the stage of handing over one's responsibilities as a whole.

Employee commitment

A variety of antecedents and outcomes about commitment have been identified in the past thirty years (Shore and Tetrick, 1991; Hunt and Morgan, 1994). According to Batemen and Strasser (1984) as cited in Lok and Crawford (1999), organizational commitments are studied for the following reasons:

1. Employee behavior such as performance and effectiveness.
2. Attitudinal, affective and cognitive as job satisfaction, the nature of employee's job.
3. Role such as responsibility.
4. Personal characteristics of the employee such as age and job tenure.

Dimensions of employee commitment

There are three dimensions of employee commitment;

affective, continuance and normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

Affective commitment is related to the forming of emotional adherence to an organization, identifying oneself with, and having to desire keeping membership to an organization. Therefore, affective commitment shows the need of employees to remain with an organization willingly (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Meyer et al., 2004).

Continuance commitment emanates from employees desire to remain with an organization taking into account the costs of leaving an organization. The knowledge about costs associated to employee leave and the willingness to remain with the organization as a result of investment already made. In this dimension of commitment such factors as years of service and unique benefits which employees may get from an organization are included (Hunt and Morgan, 1994).

Lastly, normative commitment considers a feeling of personal obligation to continue to serve an organization. High levels of normative commitment makes employees stay with an organization as they feel they must remain (Allen and Meyer, 1990). It was argued that normative commitment is only natural due to the way we are raised in the society. Commitments in marriage, family and religion may explain normative commitment. Commitment to place of employment makes employee feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization (Meyer et al., 2004).

The relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment

Organizational management literatures reported the existence of relationships between leadership styles and commitment (Wu, Tsai, Fey, and Wu 2006). The relationships between leadership styles and employee commitment were found to be positive by many studies. For example, it was concluded by Lo et al. (2010) that the styles of leadership in supervising employees are useful dimensions as they can design followers' organizational commitment in many important ways. Similarly, Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009) found out that the behavior of leadership in an ethical manner has a positive effect on followers' organizational commitment as well as subordinates' trust in leaders.

Similarly, the study conducted on the employees' perceptions of leadership style among Malaysian managers and its impact on organizational commitment by Marmaya et al. (2011) found out that leadership tends to be more transformational than transactional. Contrary to the above results, a study conducted by Rafiq and Mahmood (2009) on the relationship among leadership style, organizational culture and employee commitment in university libraries indicate that the leadership style, particularly autocratic and laissez-faire has no impact on the commitment of subordinates (Rafiq and Mahmood

2009). However, positive relationship between employees' organizational commitment dimensions and leadership styles was found in the study conducted by Bučiūnienė and Škudienė (2008). The findings of the research specifically found positive relationships between normative and affective employee commitments and a transformational leadership style. Different from this, a laissez-faire leadership style was negatively related to employees' affective commitment.

Similarly, the research result showed consistent manifestation in that transformational leadership style influence organizational outcome positively. For example, lower employee turnover and high organizational citizenship behavior were resulted by transformational leadership style (Dvir et al., 2002 as cited in Mannheim and Halamish (2008)); hence, high commitment of employees (Bučiūnienė and Škudienė, 2008). Moreover, Bycio et al. (1995) as cited in Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009) found that affective, continuance and normative commitments are explained by transformational leadership style in a research targeted at examining on how transformational leadership and transactional leadership affected employee levels of affective, continuance and normative commitments.

According to Avolio et al. (2004), contrary to the previous research, transformational leadership at the indirect senior level had a more positive relationship with employees' organizational commitment as compared to the relationship between commitment and ratings of transformational leadership of the followers' immediate supervisor. The findings of Brown (2003) as cited in Bučiūnienė and Škudienė (2008) found out a strong correlation between transformational leadership style and affective, a weaker but still strong positive relation with normative and no relationship with continuance commitments, respectively. The study conducted by Brown and Dodd (1999) show that the relationships between transactional leadership dimensions and affective and normative commitments were found, but the relationship was a statistically significant one with that of normative commitment. Mannheim and Halamish (2008) argued that the enactment of transformational leadership resulted in employees start to consider organizational interest to come first to their own interest.

Employee commitments can be improved by management style. For instance, Eisenberger et al. (1990) as cited in Avolio et al. (2004) have the view that rewards and support obtained from managers as the perceived supports and rewards increases more trust of the organization. The authors further claim that employees who feel they are cared for by managers show the necessary commitment with knowledge of their responsibilities, higher involvement in their organization, and with greater innovation.

To conclude, leadership styles and employee commitments are considered by a number of literatures from several perspectives. One can see a number of articles repeating the same issues surrounding the topics

and findings, and the authors show that the results are similar but from different perspectives. Many studies indicate that there was a strong relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment (Lo et al., 2009; Lo et al., 2009; Bučiūnienė and Škudienė, 2008; Rafiq and Mahmood, 2009; Ponnu and Tennakoon, 2009).

RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach that the researchers determined to be effective for this research was quantitative research approach as the research questions require such approach. Based on the information obtained from the human resource department of MWU (2016), the total number of academic staffs was 914. This number was thought to be considered as the population of the study. The researchers considered 551 academicians who were actually working in MWU during the study periods; however, because of time and budget constraints, the study did not consider expatriate teachers (82) and academic staffs who are on leave for 2nd and 3rd degree (281). Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select samples, while purposive, stratified and simple random sampling methods, and stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used for leaders and employees (academic staffs), respectively.

Primary data were considered for this study and were collected with the help of structured questionnaires. The questions in the questionnaires were closed ended questions and two data collection tools were used, namely multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) and organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ), to gather quantitative data on leadership styles and employees' organizational commitment, respectively. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviations were used to analyze the data. Moreover, inferential statistics such as correlation, t-test and regression analysis were used to determine the relationship between variables and to analyze impacts of leadership style on academic staff commitment in MWU.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was targeted at two campuses of the university which consists of seven colleges, one school and Goba referral hospital. The sample plan of this study was composed of 22 leaders who are college deans, department heads and 209 academic staffs (instructors). Though a total of 231 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, only 192 questionnaires were successfully completed and returned of which 22 were from leaders and 170 were from instructors. The total response rate was 83.12%, and the analysis of this research is based on the number of questionnaires collected.

The data in table 1 above indicate that, from the total respondents about 72.7% are males and 27.3% are females. From the age group, the majority's age was between 26 to 35 years (54.5%), but there is no leader whose age is under 26 showing that the entire leaders' ages are above 26 years.

Most of the leader respondents are above 6 year work in current organizations (54.5%). Significant numbers of

Table 1. Summary of deans and department heads (Leaders) profile.

	Variable	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	16	72.7
	Female	6	27.3
Job title	Assistant Lecturer	0	0.0
	Lecturer	18	81.8
	Assistant professor	4	18.2
Worked on the current organization	1 to 3 years	3	13.6
	3 to 6 years	7	31.8
	Above 6 years	12	54.5
Worked on the current position	6 month to 1 years	11	50.0
	1 to 2 years	8	36.4
	Above 2 years	3	13.6
Previous work experience	Yes	8	36.4
	No	14	63.6
Age group	Less than 26 years	0	0.0
	26 to 35 years	12	54.5
	35 to 45 years	7	31.8
	Above 45 years	3	13.6
Level of education	Bachelor degree	0	0.0
	Master's degree	18	81.8
	Doctorate degree	4	18.2
Marital status	Married	14	63.6
	Single	8	36.4

leader respondents have 6 months to 1 year work experience in the current position (50%). Meanwhile, the majority of the leaders (63.6%) have no previous work experience in the same position, and (36.4%) have work experience in the same position elsewhere. Regarding the current educational level, the majority of the leaders were Master's degree holders (81.8%). Most of the leaders are married (63.6%) whereas the remaining (36.4%) are single.

The data in Table 2 above shows that from the total academic staffs (employee) profile, from the total employee respondents, 87.1% are males and 12.9% are females. From the employee (instructor), the majority lie between 26 to 35 years (61.2%). From work on current organization employee (instructor) respondents, 3 to 6 year worked in current organizations (37.1%). Regarding educational level, the majority of the leaders were Master's degree holders (72.4%). From the total employee (instructor), 53.5% are single whereas the remaining (46.5%) are married.

The number of respondents for all leadership styles

variables was 192 while all organizational commitment respondents were 170. Based on organizational commitment questionnaires, leaders did not rate themselves on their perceptions because the objectives of the study were only targeted to determine the employees' perception about the leadership styles, and the dimension of organizational commitment not to examine the perception of leaders about themselves.

In Table 3, each subscales of transformational leadership's mean and standard deviation value was found to be between 2.96 to 3.61, and 1.007 -0.629, respectively. While each subscale of transactional leadership was found to be between 2.95 to 3.21 and 1.04 to 0.719, respectively. The mean and standard deviation for laissez-faire is 2.93 and 0.770 respectively.

These indicate that some leaders were using ideal levels of transformational leadership styles at the study area. Therefore, the ultimate goal of transformational leadership behaviors were achieved, some of these are instilling pride, coaching or training, stimulating a common vision, communicating positively and enhancing employee

Table 2. Summary of academic staffs (employee) profile.

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	148	87.1
	Female	22	12.9
Jobs title	Lab assistance	18	10.6
	Assistant Lecturer	16	9.4
	Lecturer	124	72.9
	Assistance professor	12	7.1
Worked on the current organization	6 month to 3 years	49	28.8
	3 to 6 years	63	37.1
	Above 6 years	58	34.1
Age group	Less than 26 years	26	15.3
	26 to 35 years	104	61.2
	35 to 45 years	33	19.4
	Above 45 years	7	4.1
Level of education	Bachelor degree	35	20.6
	Master's degree	123	72.4
	Doctorate degree	12	7.1
Marital status	Married	79	46.5
	Single	91	53.5

creativity. But the overall transactional leadership and laissez- faire styles mean scores for this study were extremely above the range of Bass and Avolio (1997) suggestion. This shows that some leaders demonstrated greater level of transactional and laissez- faire leadership styles at MWU. These behaviors here entail clarifying exchange rewards for performance for contingent reward, taking corrective actions prior mistakes to occur for management-by exception (active), failure to search for mistakes for management by exception (passive) and avoidance of intervention for laissez-faire.

Generally, the findings of this study shows that respondents perceived leadership style to be slightly more transformational ($M=3.33$) than to that of transactional ($M=3.07$) and laissez-faire ($M=2.93$). Therefore, this supports the findings of Trottier et al. (2008) that shows transformational leadership variables are slightly more important in terms of their overarching concept of leadership effectiveness in followers' perceptions of importance.

According to the results shown in Table 4, except idealized influence (behaviors), inspirational motivation, management by exception (active) and transactional leadership, there is significant difference between the two groups in all leadership dimensions because the values in the Sig (2-tailed) columns are all less than 0.05. Thus, it is an evident the main difference between leadership

styles that are being practiced and behaviors that are being perceived by the employees.

The relationships between transformational leadership style and employee commitment

The correlation result between transformational leadership style with affective commitment shows (0.413**), that of continuance commitment (0.401**) and normative commitment (0.374**) are moderate, positive and significant relationship with the same P value. The P value = 0.000, suggest that there is significant positive relations of transformational leadership on three employee commitment dimension. As leaders behave to build trust, team spirit, encourage creativity, act as mentors and coaches, emphasize development and recognize accomplishments, employees feel emotionally attached to their organization.

The relationships between transactional leadership style and employee commitment

The result of this study further demonstrates that there is weak but positive and significant relationship between transactional leadership style with continuance and

Table 3. Mean score and standard deviation of employees.

Dimension	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Idealized influence attributed	170	2.96	1.007
Idealized influence behavior	170	3.46	0.699
Inspirational motivation	170	3.61	0.629
Intellectual stimulation	170	3.30	0.764
Individualized consideration	170	3.35	0.587
Transformational	170	3.33	0.552
Contingent reward	170	3.21	0.719
Management by exception(active)	170	3.05	0.779
Management by exception(passive)	170	2.95	1.040
Transactional	170	3.07	0.53
Laissez-faire	170	2.93	0.770
Affective commitment	170	3.13	0.926
Continuance commitment	170	2.70	0.798
Normative commitment	170	2.71	0.705

Table 4. T-test results for equality of mean scores by the two samples on MLQ.

Variable	T- test for equality of means	T	Df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Idealized influence attributed	Equal variances assumed	-3.436	190	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed	-4.052	30.022	0.000
Idealized influence behavior	Equal variances assumed	-0.923	190	0.357
	Equal variances not assumed	-0.960	27.381	0.345
Inspirational motivation	Equal variances assumed	-0.754	190	0.452
	Equal variances not assumed	-0.722	26.111	0.476
Intellectual stimulation	Equal variances assumed	-3.597	190	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	-4.064	29.001	0.000
Individualized consideration	Equal variances assumed	-2.983	190	0.003
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.164	27.729	0.004
Contingent reward	Equal variances assumed	-3.435	190	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.227	25.840	0.003
Management by exception (active)	Equal variances assumed	1.959	190	0.052
	Equal variances not assumed	1.698	24.899	0.102
Management by exception (passive)	Equal variances assumed	3.750	190	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	4.567	30.887	0.000
Laissez-faire	Equal variances assumed	6.782	190	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	7.499	28.542	0.000
Transformational	Equal variances assumed	-3.304	190	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.906	30.091	0.000
Transactional	Equal variances assumed	1.797	190	0.074

Table 5. Pearson correlation matrix between leadership styles and employee commitment dimensions.

Variable	Test	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment	Total employee commitment
Transformational	Pearson/Corl	0.413**	0.401**	0.374**	0.484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	170	170	170	170
Transactional	Pearson/Corl	0.095	0.296**	0.224**	0.241**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.217	0.000	0.003	0.002
	N	170	170	170	170
Laissez-Faire	Pearson /Corl	-0.124**	0.230**	0.026	0.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.106	0.003	0.738	0.575
	N	170	170	170	170

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.01$ (1 %) level (2-tailed), $n = 170$.

normative commitments (0.296**) and (0.224**) respectively, but transactional leadership style does not have statistically significant relation with affective commitment (0.095). The positive correlation between transactional leadership style with continuance and normative commitments indicates leadership behaviors involve rewards, showing problems and the need for positive reinforcement with respect to how employees perceive should remain with the organization (Bass and Avolio, 1993). However, the non-existence of relationships between transactional leadership style and affective commitment indicate leadership behaviors to involve make rewards available in exchange to satisfy agreed objectives, indicating problems, may not be related to how employees feel about wanting to stay and need to stay with the organization.

The relationships between laissez-faire leadership style and employee commitment

The result of this study indicates that there is weak but positive and significant correlation between laissez-faire leadership style and continuance commitment (0.230**), but there is insignificant and negative relationships between laissez-faire leadership style and affective commitment (-0.124**). However, laissez-faire leadership style does not have relationship with normative commitment (0.026). These show that the leadership behaviors involve leaving problems without taking any action, displaying in difference, and not taking care of achievements. But insignificant and negative with weak relation between laissez-faire leadership style and affective commitment indicates strong negative effect on the affective commitment. In summary, leadership behaviors that ignore problems, show neutral positions and overlook successes are negatively correlated to affective commitments of employees in MWU.

As shown in Table 5, the greatest amount of variance

in continuance commitment explained by all independent variables (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) was 23%. It is clear from the regression analysis that the transformational leadership style has strong impact on continuance organizational commitment. This is because this variable made a good unique contribution to explaining the dependent variables with beta value ($\beta = 0.403$) at significant level $p < 0.000$, whereas the rest independent variables (transactional and laissez-faire) made less contribution with beta values (0.0870 and 0.258) at insignificant levels (0.257 and 0.443) respectively. Meanwhile, transformational leadership significantly ($\beta = 0.481$, $p < 0.000$) explained variance in the affective commitment. Like in continuance commitment, the transactional ($\beta = -0.37$, $p < 0.645$) and laissez-faire ($\beta = 0.062$, $p < 0.408$) styles insignificantly explained variance in the affective commitment. As we have seen in the Table 6 above, the independent leadership styles predicted affective commitment ($R^2 = 16.2\%$). On the other hand, the transformational ($\beta = 0.348$, $p < 0.000$), affected normative commitment significantly but transactional ($\beta = 0.089$, $p < 0.275$) and laissez-faire ($\beta = 0.047$, $p < 0.541$) affected normative commitment insignificantly and almost no contribution in predicting this dependent variable.

Conclusions

Achievement of organization's goals requires effective leaders and dedicated and committed employees. The main objective of this paper was to investigate the impact of leadership styles on employee commitment in MWU. Based on the results of this study, the researchers concluded that leaders were demonstrating ideal levels of transformational leadership style. On the other hand, the results indicated that leaders perform at greater level using transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

Further conclusions can be made that leaders and

Table 6. Summary of multiple regression analysis.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Adj. R ²	B	Beta(β)	T	Sig	Collinearity statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
Transformational leadership	Affective organizational commitment	0.162	1.210	-	2.308	0.022	-	-
Transactional leadership			0.699	0.481	5.394	0.000	0.824	1.213
Laissez-faire leadership			-0.064	-0.37	-0.461	0.645	0.782	1.279
Transformational leadership	Continuance organizational commitment	0.233	-0.412	-	-0.955	0.341	-	-
Transactional leadership			0.580	0.403	5.429	0.000	0.824	1.213
Laissez-faire leadership			0.130	0.087	1.138	0.257	0.782	1.279
Transformational leadership	Normative organizational commitment	0.136	0.752	-	1.856	0.065	-	-
Transactional leadership			0.443	0.348	4.418	0.000	0.824	1.213
Laissez-faire leadership			0.117	0.089	1.096	0.275	0.782	1.279
Laissez-faire leadership			0.043	0.047	0.613	0.541	0.879	1.137

subordinates had different perceptions on leadership styles exercised. There is major difference between leadership behavior which are practiced by the leaders and the perceived leadership behavior by subordinates.

Transformational leadership is significantly related to all employees' commitment dimensions. Laissez-faire leadership has significant and positive correlation to continuance commitment and insignificant with negative correlation on affective employees' commitment, but does not have any significant correlation to normative commitments compared to transformational and transactional leadership.

From regression analysis, the greatest amount of variance in continuance commitment explained by all independent variables (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) was 23%. It is clear from the regression analysis that the transformational leadership behavior has the strong impact on continuance organizational commitment, and also the result of regression analysis indicated that the transformational leadership had a significant impact on all organizational commitment dimensions

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers suggest the following points for MWU. From the findings on this study, there is a relationship between transformational leadership and employees' commitment. Transformational leadership has significant direct association with organizational commitment. Leaders of MWU (department heads and college directors) are recommended to give more attentions for transformational leadership style because it has significantly affected all dimensions of employee commitment. We suggest that the leaders should pay more attention to minimize laissez-faire leadership style by means of developing efficient teamwork, cooperation and trust to co-workers.

The way forward for future research

As the scope of this study was limited to MWU academic environment, further research would be useful to include non-academic staffs of the university and other higher education institutions. On the other hand, only quantitative approach was employed for this study. The future research may include qualitative research approach to make it mixed research approach in order to cancel the disadvantages from one by another. Moreover, it is good if future research assess causal relationships between leadership style and employee commitment in the teaching environment.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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