

# **Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction**

Tie Fatt Hee  
Mohamad Zabidi bin Abdullah

## **Abstract**

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. Principals' transformational leadership style was determined using a questionnaire adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Teachers' job satisfaction was measured based on Herzberg's two factor theory (1966) and adapted from a research conducted by Tay (2007). A total of 73 teachers from a secondary school participated in the study. The results showed that the mean score for the charismatic dimension was the highest in the transformational leadership domain. There were no significant differences in the mean ranking of the principal's transformational leadership according to gender and years of teaching experience. The results also showed that there were no significant differences in the mean ranking for job satisfaction according to gender. However, the results showed there is a moderate but significant relationship between the principal's transformational leadership and teacher's job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership style, Teacher's job satisfaction, Charismatic dimension

## **INTRODUCTION**

Principals perform a variety of tasks in school. As a change agent, leader, and manager, principals determine the effectiveness of the school as an organization. A successful school organization is often led by a dynamic and effective leader who has the ability to influence the staff to achieve the mission and vision of the school. Transformational leadership is important as it leads to change in the structure of the organization and a shift in thinking among the staff. As society progresses with individuals seeking change and improvement, transformational school leaders play an important role. The leadership style of the principal and success of a school is closely related to each other. It influences students' achievement and teachers' job satisfaction as well as school effectiveness. Nevertheless, teachers have expressed dissatisfaction with their job due to stress and burn-out due to a number of reasons such as lack of time, the routine nature of the profession, and increased administrative responsibilities. Some teachers seek early retirement due to job dissatisfaction.

The findings of a study showed that there is a significant relationship between the transformational leadership practised by the head of a department and teachers' job

satisfaction (Abu Bakar Abdul Kudus, 2000). Generally, there is limited research on the relationship between the transformational leadership of principals and teachers' job satisfaction. Transformational leadership often encourages and provides motivation to its followers to achieve the objectives of the organisation. It is related to charismatic leadership where the leader is able to inspire and foster the intellectual development of its subordinates. Similarly, the Herzberg Two Factor Theory states that the motivate factor and the hygiene factor determines success in work performance. Thus, transformational leadership appears to be closely related to job satisfaction.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Studies concerning the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction are very limited. The study is significant as the findings would enable school leaders to inspire and motivate teachers to work more effectively. The results of a study among secondary school teachers showed that there is a relationship between principal's transformational leadership and school climate (Maziah Yusof, 2005). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5x-Rater was used to analyze transformational leadership. The mean for the level of transformational leadership was 3.98. A similar result was obtained in another study among secondary school principals (Nursuhaila Ghazali, 2007).

Principals tend to focus more on transformational leadership to improve their school as they empower teachers and distribute the task and responsibilities (Chan & Gurnam, 2009). Nevertheless, the result is not conclusive as a study among 46 secondary school teachers showed that there is a weak relationship between these two variables (Eshamuddin, 2005). The study which used the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) found that the relationship was at  $r = 0.079$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . However, a study by Nursuhaila Ghazali (2007) found that there were no significant differences between the principal's transformational leadership and gender, age, and years of teaching experience. The findings were different from another study among 308 secondary school teachers from 38 schools. The latter study showed that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction (Mohd Aziz Mohs Aziz Saad, 2008).

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between the transformational leadership of the principal and teachers' job satisfaction in a secondary school.

## Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions, that is: -

- (a) What are the teachers' perception of the transformational leadership practices of the principal according to gender and years of teaching experience?
- (b) What is the level of teachers' job satisfaction according to gender and years of teaching experience? and,
- (c) Is there a relationship between the transformational leadership of the principal and teachers' job satisfaction?

## Methodology

The survey method is used in the study. The subjects consist of 73 secondary school teachers. It comprises 52% male and 48% female teachers. Most of the subjects have 11-15 years of teaching experience (36%). About 30% had 6-10 years of experience and only 16% had 16-20 years of teaching experience. A small group had 1-5 years of teaching experience (6%).

The instrument that was administered to the teachers consists of three parts: - (a) demography characteristics of the subjects; (b) items on transformational leadership, and (c) teacher's job satisfaction. The questionnaire used the Likert Scale. A modified version of The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) that was introduced by Avolio and Bass (2004) was adapted and used to assess the perceptions of teachers towards the transformational leadership of the principal. A pilot study among 15 teachers found that the Alpha Cronbach value for the four items was follows: - charismatic leadership 0.81; individual consideration type of leadership 0.85; intellectual stimulation type of leadership, 0.71, and motivation and inspiration, 0.74. Teachers' job satisfaction was assessed based on Herzberg Two Factor Theory and adapted from a study conducted by Tay (2007). The Alpha Cronbach value obtained for the pilot study was .893 for the item transformational leadership whereas the value for job satisfaction was .885. A value of .924 was obtained when the two items were combined.

## Findings

### Transformational Leadership of Principals

The mean score for the perceived transformational leadership of the principal is shown in Table 1. The mean obtained for the transformational leadership of the principals was 4.05. In terms of the various dimensions, the mean score for the dimension on charismatic leadership was the highest, that is, 4.40. However, the dimension for individual consideration was the lowest at 3.80.

Table 1: Mean score for the transformational leadership style of the principal

Dimension	Mean
Charismatic leadership	4.40
Motivation and inspiration	4.00
Intellectual stimulation	3.80
Individual consideration	3.80
Mean	4.05

Teacher’s Job Satisfaction

The questionnaire consisted of 20 items with a response ranging from “very satisfactory” to “very dissatisfied”. Most of the subjects expressed that their job satisfaction was satisfactory (69.9%) or very satisfactory (16.4%). The mean score for teacher’s job satisfaction was 3.85.

Transformational leadership of principal according to gender and number of years of teaching experience

Table 2 Differences in the mean ranking of principal’s transformational leadership level according to gender and years of teaching experience

Demography	Group	n	Mean Rank
Gender	Male	38	37.41
	Female	35	36.56
Teaching experience	1 – 5 years	4	43.50
	6 – 10 years	22	29.30
	11 - 15 years	26	31.87
	16 – 20 years	12	44.54
	More than 20 years	9	57.72

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine if there is a difference in the perception of male and female teachers. Table 2 shows that the mean ranking of the male subjects (mean = 37.41) was higher than the female (mean = 36.56). The results showed that there were no significant differences in perception between the male and female subjects ( $z = -1.71, p > .05$ ). However, when the subjects were categorized based on years of teaching experience, the results showed that there was a difference in the mean ranking. The mean ranking for the 6-10 years of teaching experience group was the lowest (29.30) whereas the group with more than 20 years experience has the highest mean ranking (57.72). Based on the difference in the mean ranking, subjects with more years of teaching experience seems to record a higher perception on the transformational leadership practices of the principal. The Kruskal – Wallis test also showed a significant difference among the five groups with various years of teaching experience  $X^2(4, N=73) = 14.94,$

### Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

$p < .05$ ). Teachers' job satisfaction according to gender and years of teaching experience

Table 3: Differences in the mean ranking for job satisfaction according to gender and years of teaching experience

Demography	Group	n	Mean Rank
Gender	Male	38	38.22
	Female	35	35.67
Teaching experience	1 – 5 years	4	26.38
	6 – 10 years	22	33.77
	11 - 15 years	26	34.42
	16 – 20 years	12	41.04
	More than 20 years	9	51.67

The results in Table 3 showed that the mean ranking for the male subjects (mean=38.22) was higher than the female subjects (mean = 35.67). There were no significant differences in the perception between the male and female subjects ( $z = -.514, p > .05$ ). The results showed that the higher the number of years of teaching experience, the higher the job satisfaction level. The mean ranking for the subjects with 1-5 years of teaching experience was the lowest (26.38) while those with more than 20 years of experience has a mean ranking of 51.67. However, the tests for differences showed that there was no significant differences within the group,  $X^2(4, N=73) = 6.65, p > .05$ ).

### Relationship between transformational leadership of principal and teachers' job satisfaction

The results showed that there is a moderate but significant relationship between principal's transformational leadership and teacher's job satisfaction ( $r = .69, p < .05$ ). The positive relationship indicates that the subject's job satisfaction tend to be higher when the principal's transformational leadership level is higher. A further analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between the four dimensions of transformational leadership with teacher's job satisfaction. The results showed that there is a moderate but significant relationship between the charismatic dimension and job satisfaction ( $r = .65, p < .05$ ). The results were similar for the dimension on individual consideration ( $r = .59, p < .05$ ), intellectual stimulation ( $r = .56, p < .05$ ), and the dimension for motivation and inspiration ( $r = .55, p < .05$ ). The relationship for the dimension for charismatic leadership seems to be the stronger compared to the other dimensions.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of the study were similar to the findings in various research conducted by Nursuhaila Ghazali (2007), Maziah Yusof (2005), Aziah Ismail, Ghani Kunesan Abdullah & Abdullah Saad (2008). In addition, the result for the charismatic leadership dimension was similar to the finding by Nursuhaila Ghazali (2007). However, the study by Aziah Ismail, Ghani Kunesan Abdullah & Abdullah Saad (2008) showed that this dimension was not ranked the highest.

The principal involved in the study seems to exhibit charismatic leadership qualities and function as a mentor for the teachers with an optimistic attitude. The findings showed a high level of teachers' job satisfaction (3.85). This was similar with the findings by Eshamuddin Abdul Rahim (2005), and Abu Bakar Abdul Kudus (2006). The results also showed that there were no significant differences in the mean for the transformational leadership practices of the principal according to gender and years of teaching experience. This was similar with the finding by Nursuhaila Ghazali (2007). The results also showed that there is a moderate but significant relationship between principal's transformational leadership and teacher's job satisfaction.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Transformational leaders who are able to foster a close interpersonal relationship and develop a strong collegiality among teachers can succeed in improving job satisfaction among the staff. The development of the intellectual dimension of leadership is vital. Leaders play an important role in enabling teachers to become more innovative and creative in teaching. Transformational leaders should provide a conducive environment that allows for differences in opinion. Staff development programs should focus on the development of human capital with leaders providing support, guidance, and encouragement to subordinates.

## **CONCLUSION**

School leaders are role models for teachers and subordinates. Transformational leaders play an important role in ensuring schools function in a more effective and efficient manner. It also influences the job satisfaction of teachers. There is a need to encourage collaboration, empowerment, active participation, and development of values in school.

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