

# The Relationship between Transformational Leadership Practiced and the Level of Job Satisfaction among Lecturers in MARA Professional College, Malaysia

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**Abstract:** The quality and level of job satisfaction among lecturers play a significant role in implementing transformation to improve the education system. The main reason for the decreasing of job performances among lecturers is due to the low level of job satisfaction. This study aimed to examine the relationship between a director's transformational leadership style and the level of job satisfaction among lecturers at MARA Professional College. This is a survey study employing descriptive and inferential quantitative method. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Job Descriptive Index (JDI) instruments were distributed to 64 participants that were chosen using simple random sampling from the 75 population of MARA Professional College lecturers. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22. The findings revealed that the level of practice of the director on transformational leadership was low. In addition, there was a significant relationship between the transformational leadership practice of the director and the level of job satisfaction among lecturers at MARA Professional College. The level of job satisfaction among the lecturers was influenced by the director's leadership practice, thus a director can increase the level of job satisfaction among the staff by practicing the transformational leadership style in managing a college. The findings are expected to assist the organization of MARA Professional College to identify the level of work pressure faced by the lecturers.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Higher Education, Transformational Leadership

## 1. Introduction

The direction of an organization is influenced by the leadership practiced by the leaders. A study conducted by Tang Keow Ngang (2006) discovered that variables of a leadership style practiced by an administration contributed 91% to the change of variance in educational motivation. The transformational leadership pioneered by Avolio and Bass in 1994 consisted of four constructs: charisma, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation. Koh (2008) discovered that transformational leadership practiced by leaders was able to increase productivities as well as increase the motivational level of work among teachers in schools.

There are various leadership theories introduced, however, the transformational leadership is said to have a very close relationship with a high level of job satisfaction among staff (Vicky, 2001). Additionally, a study by Black & Porter (2000) discovered that many calibre leaders in the world are practicing the transformational leadership style in managing their organizations. Among them are Bill

Gates from Microsoft, Steve Jobs from Apple, Michael Dell from Dell Computer Corporation and Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com. This has further developed interests among researchers to study the influence of the transformational leadership style among leaders.

Previous studies were conducted to examine the influence of transformational leadership on work satisfaction among teachers and they focused more on educational institutions of the mainstream. Among the studies are a study conducted in a cluster secondary school by Aziah & Abdul Ghani (2007); Tafri (2010), a study in a religious school (Hatim, 2019), and a study in a secondary technical school (Mohamad Zabidi, 2009). Since this study investigated the scenario in the MARA Institute of Education, it involved the lecturers at MARA Professional College.

Reduced productivity, poor teaching quality and increased intention to leave the institution are behaviours frequently displayed by educators when they are lacking of motivation (Rathakrishnan, Ng & Tee, 2016). There are reports stating that educators chose for early retirement because they were burdened with their side tasks (Syed Sofian & Rohany Nasir, 2010). This was also felt by the lecturers at MARA Professional College as they as felt burdened with their main tasks as well as their side tasks. This was proven in a study conducted by Muhamad Zaid (2014) which discovered that lower higher administration engagement has made educators feeling more pressured and resulted in jobs dissatisfaction.

Though there was no study conducted on the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers at MARA Professional College, the overall findings from a number of studies investigating the same issue in other higher institutions revealed that lecturers or support staff experienced pressure and less motivated at their work place. Wan Ibrahim and Syarif Muhidin (2015) reported higher education teaching staffs were moderately satisfied with their profession as academician in educational institution. There were lecturers at Community College experienced 5 different levels of stress: tension, frustration, worry, somatisation and depression in which these had affected their job performances (Syardila, 2012). The issue of job performances among lecturers need urgent attention as this could inhibit the planning of certain educational organization in producing holistic human capital. The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between transformational leadership practiced by director and the level of job satisfaction among lecturers at MARA Professional College.

## **2. Literature Review**

In this section, the literature review of transformational leadership, job satisfaction and the relationship between transformational leadership style of leaders and job satisfaction among educators will be explained.

### **2.1 Transformational Leadership**

According to Edmond (1979), Bush and Forman (1998), the quality of school leadership was seen as the key to school excellence. This is supported by a study from Syukur (1988) who explained that the administration of leaders generally focused on matters which were related to division of tasks and coordination of relationship to produce efficiency within an organization. These are the evidence that direction of an education institution is heavily influenced by the leadership practiced by the leaders.

This study applied the Bass Transformational Leadership theory (1985) which can be categorized into four aspects: ideal influence, intellectual stimulation, individual considerations and inspirational motivation. This transformational leadership components are believed to assist leaders in driving organizations to be more effective at developing school visions with the cooperation of everyone in the organizations.

Abdul Ghani (2005) confirmed that school leaders who practiced the transformational leadership were able to increase the development of quality and attitudes among teachers. Additionally, Rolfe (2011) stated that leaders who practiced the transformational leadership were leaders who have insights, are catalysts, are motivated and goal-oriented, are far-sighted with staff, and develop better

practices. Koh (2008) further stated that the transformational leadership practiced by leaders of excellent schools developed the thinking among educators through their leadership skills.

## **2.2 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is an important aspect in a person's life because many individuals spend longer time at workplace. According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is a happy emotional situation as a result of a person's interpretation about her or his job as a fun and comfortable situation. However, Baron (1986) defined job satisfaction as an individual affective response indicating a person's evaluation towards an organization. Job satisfaction is a feeling gained from certain tasks to fulfil the job values in line with individual's needs (Corsini, 1999). According to S. N. Penny (2009), job satisfaction is a satisfaction felt by an individual by comparing between input used and results which is in line with intended objectives.

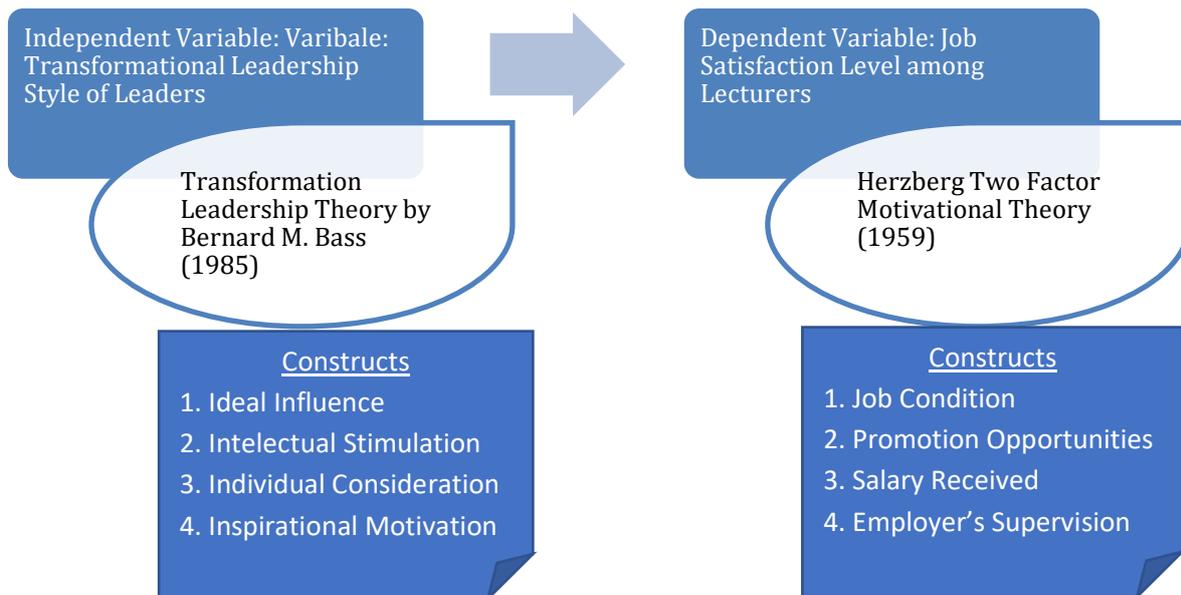
This study applied the construct in Herzberg Dual Factor Motivation Theory (1959) to investigate the level of job satisfaction among lecturers in MARA Professional College. This theory confirms that the hygiene factor plays a role as the cause to reduce job dissatisfaction, while the motivator factor plays a role as a catalyst to increase the job satisfaction level. Generally, according to Herzberg, hygiene factors is the factors that able to ensure the staff having minimum effort, thus, only motivator factors can contribute towards superior achievements.

## **2.3 Relationship between Transformational leadership style of Leaders and Level of Job Satisfaction among Lecturers**

There are many studies, such as Abdul Kudus (2000), conducted which revealed the style of transformational leadership practiced by leaders is able to increase the level of job satisfaction among teachers. Aziz (2018) revealed that transformational leadership practiced by headmasters in Miri, Sarawak affects the level of job satisfaction among teachers in primary school. Mohamad Zabidi (2009), Mohd Aziz (2008), Tafri (2010), Serina (2008) and Nursuhaila (2007) stated that there was an indication on criteria of transformational leadership among principals and the perceptions of respondents about the four dimensions of transformational leadership among principals was high. Additionally, Loy (2003) discovered that the practice of transformational leadership among principals had a big influence towards the level of job satisfaction among teachers. Apart from this, Rohaiza (2011) conducted a survey on the relationship between the transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction which involved 189 teachers as the respondents in secondary schools in Hulu Perak. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between the transformational leadership practiced by principals with the job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers felt appreciated and become more productive when they were frequently acknowledged by their principals.

## **3. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework that has been developed for this study is based on Transformational Leadership Theory by Bernard M. Bass (1985) with Herzberg's Two Factor Motivational Theory (1959) can be described as the following diagram:



**Fig. 1** Conceptual Framework based on Transformational Leadership Theory and Herzber's Two Factor Motivational Theory

#### 4. Methodology

This study used a descriptive and inferential quantitative survey method. It focused on the relationship between the transformational leadership practiced by the director with the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers in MARA Professional College. This study was conducted systematically starting from determining the research objectives to the development of items for the questionnaire, data analysis and reporting the findings. This study involved the dependent variables referring to the level of transformational leadership practiced while the independent variables referring to the job satisfaction among the lecturers as respondents.

The population of the study was the lecturers of MARA Professional College. There were 75 lecturers identified as the research population and according to the Determining Sample Size Table by Krejcie and Morgan, 63 samples were needed as the respondents for this study. The selection of samples was based on simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is sampling in which each element in the population has equal opportunities to be chosen as samples.

This study used the questionnaire as the research instrument to collect the data needed. A questionnaire is an instrument used to collect data which provides an explanation statistically, on relationships and on analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2002).

The questionnaire selected to test the transformational leadership practiced by the director used Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) introduced by Avolio & Bass (2004). This instrument was adapted by some researchers including Mohamad Zabidi (2009) and Abullah (2010) with the reliability index of 0.90 to 0.94 for all the four transformational dimensions.

The questionnaire used to test the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers was Job Descriptive Index (JDI) instrument which was developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) and published by Bowling Green University. This instrument is to measure the effective feedback of job satisfaction specifically in the aspect of the job itself, salary, promotion, supervisor and supervision among colleagues. This instrument is adapted according to the needs of researchers.

All the data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22. Variables of the items in the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics to find the mean and standard deviation. Conclusions from the data analysis using descriptive statistics are easily understood because the information can be presented in simpler ways.

While inferential statistics was used to test the research hypotheses, Pearson-r correlation was used to identify the relationship of the director's transformational leadership and the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers.

## 5. Findings

The findings of this study are divided into 3 sections which is analysis on the transformational leadership level of director, analysis of the job satisfaction level among lecturers and analysis of the relationship between the director's transformational leadership and lecturers' job satisfaction.

### 5.1 Analysis on the Transformational Leadership Level of the Director

Based on Table 1, overall, the transformational leadership practiced by the director in MARA Professional College was at the low level (mean=2.476; s.d.=0.858). Based on the four dimensions, the ideal influence dimension (mean=2.907; s.d.=0.837) had the highest mean. This is then followed by the inspiration motivation (mean=2.432; s.d.= 0.959) and intellectual stimulation (mean=2.295; s.d.=0.891) dimensions. The individual consideration dimension (mean=2.268; s.d.=0.891) had the lowest mean and was less practiced by the director compared to other dimensions. The analysis results of the transformational leadership level practiced by the director in MARA Professional College are as follows:

**Table 1.** Mean Score of Transformational Leadership Practiced by Director

Dimesions	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Level
Ideal Influence	2.907	0.837	Medium
Individual Consideration	2.268	0.891	Low
Intellectual Stimulation	2.295	0.906	Low
Inspirational Motivation	2.432	0.959	Low
Transformational Leadership	2.476	0.858	Low

### 5.2 Analysis of the Job Satisfaction Level among Lecturers

Job satisfaction level among the lecturers in MARA Professional College was measured involving four constructs in 20 items. Based on Table 2, overall, the lecturers' satisfaction was at a high level (mean=4.021; s.d.=0.704). Additionally, in general, all the constructs were at a high level in which the construct on employer's supervision (mean=4.216; s.d.=0.648) had the highest mean value and this was followed by the salary received (mean=4.114; s.d.=0.789), job conditions (mean=3.936; s.d.= 0.906), while the construct on promotion opportunities (mean=3.819; s.d.=0.974) had the lowest mean value compared to other constructs. The mean value score and the level of satisfaction among the lecturers are illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Mean Score of Job Satisfaction Level Among Lecturers

Constructs	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Level
Job Condition	3.936	0.906	High
Promotion Opportunities	3.819	0.974	High
Salary Received	4.114	0.789	High
Employer's Supervision	4.216	0.648	High
Job Satisfaction among Lecturers	4.021	0.704	High

### 5.3 Analysis of the Relationship between the Director’s Transformational Leadership and the Lecturers’ Job Satisfaction

From the results of the analysis and hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between the director’s transformational leadership and the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers ( $r=0.268$ ;  $\text{sig.}=0.034<0.5$ ). Table 3 illustrates the findings of the Pearson correlation analysis on the four dimensions of transformational leadership and the overall mean values on the job satisfaction among the lecturers. The findings revealed a significant relationship at a low level as all  $r$  values were under 0.399. The analysis results and the hypothesis testing indicated that the correlation of inspirational motivation dimension and the lecturers’ satisfaction ( $r=0.025$ ;  $\text{sig.}=0.049<0.5$ ) had the highest  $r$  value. This is then followed by the ideal influence dimension ( $r=0.362$ ;  $\text{sig.}=0.004<0.5$ ) and the individual consideration dimension ( $r=0.244$ ;  $\text{sig.}=0.054<0.5$ ). While the intellectual stimulation and the lecturers’ job satisfaction ( $r=0.178$ ;  $\text{sig.}=0.162<0.5$ ) were the dimensions with the lowest  $r$  value compared to other dimensions.

**Table 3.** Pearson Correlation Between Transformational Leadership Practiced by Director and Job Satisfaction Level Among Lecturers According to Dimensions

Dimesions	R Value	P Value	Relationship Strength
Ideal Influence	0.362**	0.004	Weak
Individual Consideration	0.244	0.054	Weak
Intellectual Stimulation	0.178	0.162	Very Weak
Inspirational Motivation	0.250*	0.049	Weak
Overall	0.268	0.034	Weak

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

## 7. Discussion

The history of highly successful organizations teaches us that one of their success secret is tied with the will of leadership to implement transformative measures that tap personnel strengths (Lorna & Ji, 2015). Through the practice of transformational leadership, educators easily share information with colleagues, build more open relationship with leaders, are active and will be involved with programs outside the college (Tom et al., 2008). This opinion is supported by Zaidatol (2003) stating that the ability of a leader to manage, perform tasks fairly and always focus on the welfare of subordinates resulted in satisfaction among subordinates and they feel motivated towards tasks assigned. Nagasangari (2018) also stated intrinsic and extrinsic factors can motivate and influence academic staff from a state of uncertainty to that of job satisfaction so as to retain existing academic staff and make the profession an attractive option for new applicants.

The finding of this study shows transformational leadership traits can be traced in the leadership practiced by director of MARA Professional College. The data of this study was analyzed from lecturer’ perceptions. Based on the findings of the study also found that director have practicing all four dimensions in transformational leadership at a low level i.e. ideal influence, judgment individuals, intellectual stimulation and inspiring motivation. The results of this study are parallel with the findings of Mohamad Radzim, Azlin, Mohamad Yussoff and Jamallullail (2014) who found that headmasters in four SBTs in the state of Selangor also practiced transformational leadership at a low level.

The satisfaction, described by Huang and Hsiao (2007) as the precursor of dedication, may benefit from both evolving effects of human actions and increasing commitment, where people will be more committed to their work if they feel satisfied. Norhaily et al. (2021) stated job satisfaction also fully mediated between leadership and organisational commitment among teachers, and that teachers who are highly satisfied with their jobs attributed their commitment towards their school success.

This study show that job satisfaction level among the lecturers at MARA Professional College is high. In general, the results of this study explain lecturers feel satisfied in doing their daily works at college. These findings are allign with the research of Nur Amiza and Azlin (2014) who found that the level of job satisfaction of teachers from five SBT in The Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are also at a high level. Similarly, Raihana (2012) found the level of energy job satisfaction instructors at the MARA Institute of Education (IPMa) are at a high level. Furthermore, this is also in line with the study of Zuriman (2013) showing satisfaction teacher work in secondary schools in Kuala Terengganu Utara district also at the highest level.

Based on the findings, there is a weak, positive and significant relationship between the transformational leadership practiced by the leader and the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers in MARA Professional College. These findings are in line with a study by Habib & Zaimah (2012) which revealed that the transformational leadership practiced by the principal had a low relationship with the job satisfaction among educators. Additionally, these findings are also supported by Mohd Aziz (2008), Serina (2008), Jazmi Md Isa (2009), Mohamad Zabidi (2009), Tafri (2010) and Adnan Riaz et al (2010) studies which also discovered that transformational leadership and job satisfaction among teachers have a positive relationship. With the transformational leadership style, leaders can develop the spirit of cooperation among subordinates in making decisions.

## 7. Conclusion

The findings from this study enable the stakeholders such as Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) as the employer to obtain important information to improve aspects related to the leadership practiced in MARA educational institutions. In addition, the findings will also add to the current references and can be benefited by other researchers in the field of leadership. This can be seen from the aspect of the effectiveness of leadership among educational institutions leaders from the perspective of educators which affects an organization and its achievements. Generally, this study indicated that transformational leadership factors play an important role in nurturing and developing positive attitudes among teachers to achieve the targeted goal. This has proven that the transformational leadership practiced by the director influenced the level of job satisfaction among the lecturers.

This study also focused on the transformational leadership practiced by the director and its relationship with the level of satisfaction among the lecturers in only one MARA Professional College. It is hoped that future studies would have a larger population samples involving all the 6 centres of MARA Professional College in Malaysia so that the findings can represent real situations and can be consistent and thorough.

This study explained and proved that there is a relationship between the director's transformational leadership and the lecturers' job satisfaction. In the effort to improve education in the country, leaders need to always implement continuous improvement because the main challenge faced in the education system is making effective and quality educational services.

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