



A Study of the Relationship between School Administrators' Leadership Styles and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Sergio D. Martinez ^{*}, Yu Sun, Esther Gergen and Carol Wheeler

Department of Leadership Studies, Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, TX. 78207

*Email: sdmartinez956@gmail.com

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Abstract

The primary focus of this study was to examine the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles, measured by the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X-short* (Bass & Avolio, 1995), and the teachers' perception of his or her organizational citizenship behavior, measured by the *Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale* (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter, 1990), beyond the impact of the teacher's age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education. A multiple regression analysis was used to predict the outcome of organizational citizenship behavior. Participants included teachers of all grade levels (pre-K-12), employed at a school district in south Texas. The sample size included (n = 160) teachers. Results indicated that the higher the rating of the school administrator's transformational leadership style, the higher the rating of the teacher's organizational citizenship behavior. Transformational leadership was found to be a positive predictor of altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, and civic virtue, while passive-avoidant leadership was found to be a negative predictor of sportsmanship.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Transformational Leadership, Passive-Avoidant Leadership

1 Introduction

Over the past few decades, leadership studies have gained in popularity. This study focuses on just one of these leadership theories, the Full Range of Leadership Model (Bass and Avolio, 2004). The Full Range Model ranges from transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership. Coined by Downton (1973), the development of transformational leadership was further developed by Burns (1978) and has since become part of the Full Range Model (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Transformational leadership is now considered one of the most widely researched leadership theories in the world (Northouse, 2010). Some even calculate that one-third of leadership studies have focused on transformational and charismatic leadership (Lowe & Gardner, 2001).

Noting how important leadership in the workforce really is, this study focuses on the leadership style of school administrators as perceived by their teachers. One of the main concerns teachers have every school year is higher accountability, and fewer resources (Lasky, 2005). However, when principals support and work collaboratively with their teachers, schools are more efficient, and perform at higher levels (Marks & Printy, 2003). Bogler and Somech (2004) have stated that when teachers work in a healthy and nurturing environment, they are more committed to their profession, creating a positive outcome for their school. Other studies have also found that an increase in organizational citizenship behaviors help to promote the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). For example, a study conducted on teachers in Singapore found that transformational and transactional leadership predicted organizational citizenship behaviors, suggesting that "training principals to be more transformational should help to create more effective schools" (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995, p. 331).

2 Literature Review

The Full Range Model

Transformational leadership is defined as a leader-follower relationship that yields trust, loyalty and respect, while inspiring followers to do more (Bass, 1985). According to the full range model, transformational leadership is comprised of the 5 I's: idealized influence

(attributes & behaviors), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Transactional leadership is defined as a contractual relationship where a leader promises his or her followers a reward in exchange for a service, or following commands (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership behaviors include contingent reward, and management by exception active. Passive-avoidant leadership is described as a leader who is non-existent, or only present when a problem occurs. He or she “avoids specifying agreements, clarifying expectations, and providing goals and standards to be achieved by followers” (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003, p. 208).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

This study also focuses on organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is defined as an “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by a formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988, p. 4). Organ (1997) further elaborated on the meaning of the word discretionary, calling it a behavior that is not enforced, or part of a specific job. Katz and Kahn (1966) also stated that organizational functioning depends on supra-role behaviors known as citizenship behaviors.

Organ (1988) identified the five facets of organizational citizenship behavior which include altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Altruism, often referred to as helping behaviors, are “discretionary behaviors that have the effect of helping a specific other person with an organizationally relevant task or problem” (Podsakoff et al., 1990, p. 115). Conscientiousness is defined as “discretionary behaviors on the part of the employee that go well beyond the minimum role requirements of the organization, in the area of attendance, obeying rules and regulations, taking breaks, and so forth” (Podsakoff et al., 1990, p. 115). Sportsmanship is defined as the “willingness of the employee to tolerate less than ideal circumstances without complaining” (Organ, 1988, p.11). Courtesy is defined as a “discretionary behavior on the part of an individual aimed at preventing work-related problems with others from occurring” (Podsakoff et al., 1990, p. 115). Civic virtue is defined as a “behavior on the part of an individual that indicates that he/she responsibly participates in, is involved in, or is concerned about the life of the company” (Podsakoff et al., 1990, p. 115).

Leadership Styles and OCB

Over the years researchers have studied the relationship between leadership styles and organizational citizenship behavior. In fact, multiple studies have reported that there is a significant relationship between the two. The following meta-analyses report that transformational school leadership was related to organizational citizenship behavior (Leithwood & Sun, 2012), and found a significant relationship between leader support and OCB (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002).

In addition to the meta-analyses, Humphrey (2012) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB. The results from that study found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and OCB, suggesting that the greater the perception of the leaders’ transformational leadership, the greater the measure of OCB. Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, and Chen (2005) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and followers’ organizational citizenship behavior. The results revealed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and follower’s OCB, suggesting that the greater the measure of leaders’ transformational leadership, the greater the measure of followers’ OCB.

Euwema, Wendt, and Van Emmerik (2007) examined culture as a moderator between directive and supportive leadership and Group Organizational Citizenship Behavior. The researchers found a negative relationship between GOCB and directive leadership behavior, and a positive relationship between GOCB and supportive behavior. Similarly, Purvanova, Bono and Dzieweczynski (2006) examined the effects of transformational leadership, job characteristics, and organizational citizenship behavior. Results showed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and citizenship performance. A between-groups analysis also demonstrated a positive relationship between transformational leadership and citizenship performance.

3 Methodology

The participants sampled in this study included grade-level school teachers working for a school district in south Texas. Teachers were asked to rate their school administrator’s leadership style, and provide a self-report of his or her organizational citizenship behavior. The data collection consisted of a convenience sample. An online survey was distributed via a district-wide email. All eligible participants received an invitation for the study, an informed consent form, and a link to an online questionnaire. The email also provided a brief description, and instructions for how to participate in the study. All participants were prompted to select the option to “Accept,” or “Decline” their participation before moving on to the questionnaire. Those who declined to participate were redirected to an exit from the study page. Out of 652 eligible participants, 160 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 24.5%.

Instruments used for this study included a demographic survey which recorded the teachers’ age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education; a *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire* MLQ 5X- short (Bass & Avolio, 1995) which measured leadership styles; and an *Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale* (Podsakoff et al., 1990) which measured OCB. Items from the MLQ- 5X-short (rater-version) measured teachers’ perception of his or her school administrator’s leadership style (transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant leadership). The instrument consisted of 36-items, and a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 0 to 4, where 0 = never, 1 = once in a while, 2 = sometimes, 3 = fairly often, and 4 = frequently, if not always. The MLQ 5X-short reported discriminate validities ranging from .74 to .94, and a coefficient of .91 (Bass & Avolio, 2002).

The *Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale* (Podsakoff et al., 1990) is one of the most widely used scales measuring OCB. Items from the OCB scale measured the raters’ organizational citizenship behavior. The OCB scale is a 24-item questionnaire with a seven-

point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, and 7 = strongly agree. The instrument's reliability alphas ranged from .70 to .85, and all subscales provided an adequate level of discriminant validity.

All data collected for this study was transported into SPSS. A multiple regression analysis was used to find whether independent variables: transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant leadership predicted OCB altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue, beyond the impact of demographic control variables. Demographic variables were held constant by using hierarchical multiple regression. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze differences between race/ethnicity, and educational level. A t-test was also used to analyze gender differences on the measures of OCB.

Hypotheses:

H1: There is no relationship between a teacher's rating of his or her school administrator's Full Range of Leadership Style (Transformational, Transactional, or Passive-Avoidant) and teachers' rating of his or her Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Altruism, when controlling for the teachers' age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education.

H2: There is no relationship between a teacher's rating of his or her school administrator's Full Range of Leadership Style (Transformational, Transactional, or Passive-Avoidant) and teachers' rating of his or her Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Conscientiousness, when controlling for the teachers' age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education.

H3: There is no relationship between a teacher's rating of his or her school administrator's Full Range of Leadership Style (Transformational, Transactional, or Passive-Avoidant) and teachers' rating of his or her Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Sportsmanship, when controlling for the teachers' age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education.

H4: There is no relationship between a teacher's rating of his or her school administrator's Full Range of Leadership Style (Transformational, Transactional, or Passive-Avoidant) and teachers' rating of his or her Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Courtesy, when controlling for the teachers' age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education.

H5: There is no relationship between a teacher's rating of his or her school administrator's Full Range of Leadership Style (Transformational, Transactional, or Passive-Avoidant) and teachers' rating of his or her Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Civic Virtue, when controlling for the teachers' age, gender, ethnicity, tenure, and education.

4 Results

Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted using SPSS and the results are shown below. Table 1 shows a positive relationship in the teachers' perception of his or her school administrators' transformational leadership style and altruism ($r = .216, p < .01$), conscientiousness ($r = .209, p < .01$), sportsmanship ($r = .294, p < .01$), courtesy ($r = .210, p < .01$), and civic virtue ($r = .327, p < .01$). In addition, this table also shows a relationship between transactional leadership and passive-avoidant leadership ($r = -.291, p < .01$), altruism ($r = .178, p < .05$), and civic virtue ($r = .181, p < .05$). Lastly, table shows a negative relationship between passive-avoidant leadership and sportsmanship ($r = -.316, p < .01$).

Table 1. Pearson Correlation Matrix

	Age	Tenure	TF	TA	PA	Alt.	Conscien.	Sports	Courtesy	Civic V.
Age										
Tenure	.739**									
TF	.000	-.103								
TA	.069	-.059	.651**							

PA	-.073	-.015	-.587**	-.291**					
Alt.	.157*	.081	.216**	.178*	-.086				
Conscien.	-.002	-.005	.209**	.097	-.088	.609**			
Sports	-.044	-.048	.294**	-.030	-.316**	.229**	.209**		
Courtesy	.164*	.080	.210**	.133	-.129	.675**	.473**	.301**	
Civic V.	-.009	-.151	.327**	.181*	-.082	.560**	.459**	.375**	.431**

Note. Correlation Matrix includes Demographics variables, Leadership Styles, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors.
 ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 2 shows that age and transformational leadership were the only significant predictors of altruism. Age accounted for 2.5% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = .157$. This finding suggests that the older the teacher, the greater their measure of altruism. Transformational leadership accounted for an additional 4.7% of the variance, with a standardized $\beta = .216$, indicating that the greater the teacher’s perception of his or her school administrator’s transformational leadership style, the greater his or her measure of altruism.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Model Summary for OBC- Altruism

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Beta	r_p	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.157 ^a	.025		.157		3.985	1	158	.048
2	.267 ^b	.071	.047	.216	.219	7.898	1	157	.006

Note. (a) Age, (b) Transformational Leadership.

Table 3 shows the results of leadership styles and conscientiousness. Transformational leadership accounted for 4.4% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = .209$. This finding suggests that the greater the teacher’s perception of his or her school administrator’s transformational leadership style, the greater their measure of conscientiousness.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Model Summary for OBC- Conscientiousness

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Beta	r_p	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.209 ^a	.044		.209		7.212	1	158	.008

Note. (a) Transformational Leadership.

Table 4 shows the results of leadership styles and sportsmanship. Passive-avoidant leadership accounted for 10% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = -.316$. This finding suggests that the lower the teacher’s perception of his or her school administrator’s passive-avoidant leadership style, the greater his or her measure of sportsmanship.

Table 4. *Multiple Regression Model Summary for OBC- Sportsmanship*

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Beta	r_p	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.316 ^a	.100		-.316		17.508	1	158	.000

Note. (a) Passive-Avoidant Leadership.

Table 5 shows the results of leadership styles and courtesy. Age and transformational leadership were the only significant predictors of courtesy. Age accounted for 2.7% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = .164$, suggesting that the older the teacher, the greater his or her measure of courtesy. Transformational leadership accounted for an additional 4.4% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = .210$. This finding suggests that the greater the teacher's perception of his or her school administrator's transformational leadership style, the greater his or her measure of courtesy.

Table 5. *Multiple Regression Model Summary for OBC- Courtesy*

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Beta	r_p	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.164 ^a	.027		.164		4.394	1	158	.038
2	.267 ^b	.071	.044	.210	.213	7.447	1	157	.007

Note. (a) Age, (b) Transformational Leadership.

Lastly, when measuring leadership styles and civic virtue, Table 6 shows that transformational leadership was the only significant predictor. Transformational leadership accounted for 10.7% of the variance explained, with a standardized $\beta = .327$, suggesting that the greater the teacher's perception of his or her school administrator's transformational leadership style, the greater his or her measure of civic virtue.

Table 6. *Multiple Regression Model Summary for OBC- Civic Virtue*

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Beta	r_p	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.327 ^a	.107		.327		18.911	1	158	.000

Note. (a) Transformational Leadership.

5 Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between school administrators' leadership style, and the teacher's perception of his or her organizational citizenship behavior. The implications from the results of this study indicate that if school administrators exhibit a higher level of transformational leadership, teachers would measure higher in organizational citizenship behavior. Consequently, if research suggests that organizational citizenship behaviors promote the effective functioning of the organization (Organ,

1988), and transformational leadership predicts organizational citizenship behavior, school districts may benefit from providing leadership training to principals focusing on transformational leadership.

However, this study did not come without limitations. For example, this study involved a convenience sample of teachers employed at a single school district in South Texas. Secondly, in reviewing the descriptive statistics, the subscales of sportsmanship and courtesy resulted in ceiling effects, which may have underestimated their correlations. Therefore, recommendations to improve this study include collecting a larger and more diverse sample of participants. The researcher may collect data from teachers from various school districts across the state, or other regions across the country. Further research on this topic could also benefit from data collection that includes other professional, or paraprofessional employees working under a school administrator. Nevertheless, key takeaways from this study revealed that the greater the measure of school administrators' transformational leadership style, the greater the measure of teachers' organizational citizenship behavior. Also, age was the only demographic variable to predict altruism and courtesy, implying that the older the teacher, the greater his or her measure of altruism and courtesy. Lastly, passive-avoidant leadership was found to be a negative predictor of sportsmanship, suggesting that the lower the teacher's perception of his or her school administrator's passive-avoidant leadership style, the greater their measure of sportsmanship.

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