TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP TOWARDS WORLD CLASS UNIVERSITY STATUS: EMERGING GLOBAL MODEL PLUS

LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATIONNEL VERS UNE UNIVERSITE DE NIVEAU MONDIAL: UN MODELE EMERGEANT : GLOBAL MODEL PLUS

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this paper is to highlight issues relating to leadership for a particular university to achieve world class status. The whole idea is to develop an ‘Emerging Global Model-PLUS’ (EGM-PLUS) for practical implementation to fulfil the intended purpose. Our investigation is based on secondary data from past literature on transformational leadership, through meta-analytic approach where traits are identified. An irresistible advantage, we offer related propositions to universities in order to expedite ‘EGM-PLUS’ with impact.

KEY-WORDS: Transformational Leadership, World Class Status, ‘EGM-PLUS’S Model

1. INTRODUCTION
In the wake of the competitive era of education today, universities attempt to advance themselves in academic programmes, research and innovation, towards academic excellence and a world class university (WCU) status. The trend today is emphasising reputation, recognition and key performance indicators including ranking of universities as the population, at large, goes for education in this technology-driven orientation. New trends of education are directing towards this change and the Vice Chancellors and Presidents of the universities strive hard to realise such aspiration.

As we stand on the line, attempting to embark on the journey towards WCU, certain reservations are inevitable and appropriate mechanisms to smooth out the transformation must be formulated. This might be susceptible to the university as a whole and a driving force must be identified.

WCU is a status whereby a university is recognised for its prestige in programs, research, publications, faculties, students, innovation, collaborations, industry linkages, entrepreneurship, through certifications like ISO, MQA and relevant recognitions.

To fulfil such purpose, a particular university needs to transform where several essentials become crucial. Based on several literatures, it is clear that issues involving transformation and shift for universities towards world class status sphere around leadership.

Leadership is a critical factor in WCU as it steers the direction and implementation of processes towards this goal. The ultimate aim of this paper is to develop a practical model that be applied by the university as a whole and then handed down, that is deliverable by various units and faculties. This model is called EGM-PLUS (Emerging Global Model PLUS).
2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

World class status has always been the aspiration of any university, being in an education industry. The literature reveals that effective leadership in an organization is critical. Leadership is recognized as a complex enterprise, and as recent studies assert, vision and collaboration are important characteristics of effective leadership. What is it about certain leaders that enable them to lead their organizations to change? There is a clear progression in the research literature from static to dynamic considerations. The evolution leads to the question addressed in the next section: What are the characteristics of transformational leaders? These leaders of change are those referred to as ‘transformational’ leaders. Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership, describing it as not a set of specific behaviours but rather a process by which "leaders and followers encourage one another to higher levels of morality and motivation". Burns stated that transformational leaders are individuals that appeal to higher ideals and moral values such as justice and equality and can be found at various levels of an organization.

In well over 100 empirical studies, transformational leadership has been found to be consistently related to organizational and leadership effectiveness (Bryman, 1992; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Transformational leaders believe in the need for a change. They, then, articulate a vision of the future of the organization, and provide a model that is consistent with that vision. Afterwards, they foster the acceptance of group goals, and provide individualized support (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). As a result, followers of transformational leaders often feel trust and respect towards the leader and are motivated to do more than they are expected to do. In this way, transformational leaders change the beliefs and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization.

3. OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this paper is to provide a relevant basis for universities to expedite preparation towards WCU status, particularly leadership, as highlighted in our literature.

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

i. To identify traits of emerging leadership.
ii. To formulate conceptual ‘Emerging Global Model - PLUS’ (EGM-PLUS) for leadership.

4. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

Our research approach is simple and is based on meta-analysis of past studies on leadership. Here, we synthesized traits of transformational leadership based on seven (7) studies, as presented in Table 1. Evidence about the effects of leadership is provided by these seven studies. We distinguished common traits and proposed a conceptual framework that will provide a strong foundation to cope with any emerging global challenges and development. Such a specification is now timely and suitable for a typical university which aspires to rise up and prepare for WCU.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Traits of Transformational Leadership</th>
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| 1 Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman & Fetter (1990) | Vision  
Role model  
Cooperation  
Leader’s expectation  
Individualised support  
Intellectual stimulation |
| 2 Hay (2007) | Idealised influence  
Individualised consideration  
Inspirational motivation  
Intellectual stimulation |
| 3 Bennis & Nanus (1985) | Idealized Influence (leader becomes a role model)  
Inspirational Motivation (team spirit, motivate, and provide meaning and challenge)  
Intellectual Stimulation (creativity & innovation)  
Individual Consideration (mentoring) |
| 4 Schein (1985) | Focus of Attention  
Goal-Directed Activity  
Modeling of Positive Behavior  
Emphasis on Human Resources |
| 5 Avolio, Bass & Jung (1999) | Charisma  
Intellectual stimulation  
Individualized consideration |
| 6 Bass (1985) | Idealized influence  
Inspirational motivation  
Intellectual stimulation  
Individual consideration |
| 7 Leithwood & Jantzi (2000) | Vision and goals  
Intellectual stimulation  
Individualized support  
Symbolized professional practices and values  
Demonstrate high performance expectations  
Develop structures to foster participation in decision making |

**TABLE 1 - Content Analysis and Summary of Traits for Transformational Leadership**

Table 2 delineates several traits for transformational leadership, offered by the given literature. The top five (5) most common traits, ranked in an order of the highest frequency counts are listed below:

i. **Role Model:** The leaders serve as charismatic model to their employees. The leaders are very charismatic and influential.

ii. **Individualized Support:** Leaders support their employees on the various needs they may have.

iii. **Vision/Inspirational Motivation:** Leaders inspire vision to their employees.

iv. **Intellectual Stimulation:** Leaders get employees to be creative, always inquisitive and open to new things. It entails promoting employees to be more pro-active and have analytical thinking towards resolving problems.

v. **Cooperation:** Leaders get employees work in an environment where everyone helps each other.
We then offer an additional trait deemed important in today’s private organizations and public entities, namely ethics. In this case, we emphasize on having ethical leaders on board, who must have the right behaviours and right attitudes in order to carry out responsibilities. A necessity in leadership today, ethics is current if the organization requires stability and sustainability.

Based on the above simple analysis, we now offer the identified traits and included the additional trait of ethics, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Following this conceptualization, each trait of transformational leadership, namely intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, role model, individualized support, cooperation, and ethics, has its own unique and distinct qualities. Ethics is added as one trait which is found to be a very important element that needs to be instilled in transformational leadership. It is the goal of this study to examine the empirical merit of these six distinct types of transformational leadership that is contributory to the EGM-PLUS.
We now offer three propositions indicating expectations at University, faculty and individual levels, presented in the following paragraphs.

Leaders must recognize the shifting importance of core businesses and support functions. The success of this shift lies in identifying the critical functions required in enlisting and developing key personnel at various levels who will become agents of change.

4.1 Proposition 1: University Level

*Transformational leadership is important in making a particular university as a World Class University.*

There is no one way to define leadership and no best way to describe a successful dean. Deans have to have passion for work, empathy for others and social skills to build rapport and common ground. They identify relevant challenges, focus people on crucial issues and move them away from unnecessary distractions (Heifetz, 1994). They tend to go towards relation building and depend on shared governance. Thus, we offer the following:

4.2 Proposition 2: Faculty Level

*Faculty Deans are leaders who are transformational.*

Deans regularly work with the top management, other deans, faculty, program heads and external entities, each influencing and benefiting in specific ways. Effective deans exhibit leadership traits such as vision, integrity, and perceptiveness. They possess the ability to encourage communication and compromise as they work on behalf of the faculty. It is then envisaged that:

4.3 Proposition 3: Individual Level

*Intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, role model, individualized support, cooperation, and ethics are dimensions of transformational leaders of Deans in a university.*

Individually, the leaders should practice the ‘walk-the-talk’ kind of management style to understand the ground work that is going on. Playing as role model, the leaders will witness themselves as to how their subordinates are mobilized that will show impact.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The traits identified for the EGM-PLUS have to be aggregated together to be a World Class University. Some of these traits are most likely to contribute more strongly than others, however knowing the relative explanatory power of each trait will at least be interesting as knowing the total amount of variation it explains.

6. CONCLUSION

Many “blind spots” and “blank spots” continue to exist in our theoretical and empirical knowledge of leadership. Transformational leadership, as we know it, will likely continue to evolve in the years to come and this will likely be accompanied by even greater uncertainty and ambiguity. Moreover, it is necessary to collectively determine the purpose of the university and to make changes in our university system that positively impact student learning. This guiding purpose will help us determine what we are likely to do, and where we are likely to go from here.

The possibility of being able to acquire and use these traits identified holds great promise for those participating and leading universities to reform towards a World Class University. The highly competitive climate of the global education industry is a major push factor for any university to seriously re-look its current role, vision and stewardship as a collective effort. This is necessary to remain not only as a relevant but as a significant component of the Malaysian educational system of the future.
In order for a particular university to be at the forefront of international educational institutions, the university needs to implement transformational leadership at the three levels of the university administrative hierarchy; namely, the university, the faculties and each individual staff.

The EGM-PLUS model proposed will enable the university to be dynamic and forward looking. The final outcome is for transformational leadership to permeate the entire fabric of a particular university, thus making it the pioneer of educational reformation in the international arena, instead of reacting to external changes. The leadership model fosters impacts such that each academic staff is positioned to push the deans towards educational excellence. Consequently, the deans pull the academic staff in a similar direction via initiatives towards excellence from the university. As a result, their followers are mobilized for such transformation to take place.

It is hoped that such mechanisms offered to leadership of universities will be acceptable towards realizing the aspiration of WCU status. A recognition that every university should achieve, transformational leadership remains the hub to mobilize the whole process.

For future work, it is recommended that along with implementing the EGM-PLUS model, we should specify targets and milestones to monitor outcome. Afterwards, we will be able to learn how much speed and effectiveness might generate better results in meeting the indicators for a WCU.

REFERENCES


