

GENDER STEREOTYPE AS A DETERMINANT OF PERCEIVED TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

This study utilizes Full Range Leadership (FRL) model to examine the relationship between students' gender stereotypes and perceived teacher leadership behaviour. This study adopted Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which is developed with the model to measure the transformational and transactional leadership behaviour as perceived by the students. A sample of 800 students from all the eight departments in the Faculty of Education in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (482 female and 308 male) was drawn. The data were collected from both the undergraduate and postgraduate students, and they were analyzed through multiple regression. The result revealed gender discrimination in some constructs of the teacher leadership behaviour as rated by students.

Introduction

Leadership has been a concept that excited interest of many scholars and lay people alike. Since leadership quality determines the success of an organization, the concept needs to be properly understood by every practicing managers. It is a generally belief that if the leadership is effective the organization will be effective, and if the leadership is disciplined, the members of such organization will definitely be disciplined.

The past decades of school reform achieved at least important advancement when teachers were invited to participate in the nationwide effort to restructure schools. Their unprecedented level of

involvement made teacher leadership a central issue and an emerging trend. Teacher leadership and administrator leadership are two different types. Teacher leadership refers to that set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere. It is not primarily managerial in nature; its emphasis is primarily on collegiality. Unfortunately, what leadership in education connotes now is more than how schools have been but how they ought to be. This is why Senge (2000) says:

Leaders are designers, teachers, and stewards. These roles require new skills: the ability to build shared vision, to bring to the surface and challenge prevailing mental models, and to foster more systematic patterns of thinking. In short, leaders in learning organizations are responsible for building organizations where people are continually expanding their capacities to shape their future, that is, leaders are responsible for learning.

Many studies have been conducted at one time or the other on leadership, yet it is important to view leadership from a broad perspective and justify different styles adopted in leadership situations. Of course, it is also necessary to study effect of gender differences in the rating of leadership styles being exhibited among the instructors or institutional leaders. This study therefore adopted full range leadership to explore the relationship between student stereotypes and perceived teacher leadership behaviour.

The Full Range Leadership refers to the behaviour commonly associated with the best and the worst leader. The full range leadership model comprises transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire but this piece utilizes only two of the three styles proposed by this model. Stereotypes focus on inherent and observable attributes such as education, race, gender, and age. For instance, it is a belief that female managers are strict in administration, or that they are always bossy.

It imperative to state that several studies have investigated on one thing or the other about full range leadership but this study examines leadership style of the teachers through students paying much attention to their gender. Also the study focuses on institutional setting, which distinguishes it from others. It is pertinent to have better

understanding of the instructional clientele and their expectations in order for the institutions to maintain the provision of the value added. It is therefore important that we understand students' needs in relation to one of the distinguishing features of the teacher. It is on this note that this study seeks to address one of these needs by employing the full range leadership model to explore gender differences in students' perception of teacher leadership behaviour.

Research Problem

This study seeks to evaluate gender stereotype effects on students' rating of teachers with a focus on teachers' leadership style. The study therefore adopted full range leadership to examine the impact of male and female students' perception of teacher leadership style.

The Full Range Leadership Theoretical Framework

The Full Range Leadership proposes that certain characteristics outcome variables results from transformational and transactional leadership behaviours. The laissez-faire, which is the third component of the model, was omitted purposely because it is an absence of leadership; it is not suitable in any progressive and knowledge-work organization like institutional setting. Outcomes from transformational and transactional leadership behaviours include the degree to which the leader might elicit extra effort from his/her followers, leader effectiveness, and satisfaction with the leader. Transformational leadership style comprises idealized influence otherwise known as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviours provoke emotional response in followers (Druscat, 1994). They stimulate followers to change their beliefs, values, capabilities, and motives in order to raise performance beyond self-interest for the good of the organization (Bass, 1990). Transactional leadership consists of contingent reward, active management-by-exception (MBE-A) and passive management-by-exception (MBE-P), which are combined in this study. This leadership focuses on follower motivation through (extrinsic) rewards or discipline. Consequently, leaders who adopt this style of leadership clarify kinds of rewards and punishment that followers expect for various behaviours (Bass, 1998). Leaders may actively monitor deviations from standards

to identify mistakes and errors – MBE-A, or they may wait (passively) for subordinates to err before initiating corrective action – MBE-P (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership is based on the notion of a social exchange.

Teacher Leadership Style and Student's Gender

Several studies have addressed the relationship of subordinate satisfaction and leader effectiveness to transformational and transactional leadership styles. These studies have observed that transformational leadership is associated more with followers' motivation, satisfaction, willingness to exert extra effort to achieve organizational goals, and perception of leader effectiveness (Avolio & Yammarino, 2002; Bass & Avolio, 1993, 1995; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Shamir, Zakay, Breinin & Popper, 1998).

The findings of some of the studies about the relationship between transformational, transactional leadership and gender serve as the basis for our prediction in this study. In the course of the study, it was realized that students might be biased in their rating of the teachers due to some reasons best known to them. For instance, they may rate the teachers who award them good grades as demonstrating characteristics consistent with transformational behaviours because of the interest they might have developed in such teachers. However, this could not have happened because there is no way the grouping of items of the questionnaire could be known to them.

Transactional leadership style emphasizes task structuring and its accomplishment and focuses on the exchange that takes place between a leader and followers (Bass, 1998). The "transactions" or relationship between the leader and follower are enhanced by a sequence of bargains (DenHartog, Van Muijen & Koopman, 1997) and involves the use of incentives to influence effort as well as clarification of the work needed to obtain rewards (Bass, 1985).

Previous research identified association between components of transformational, transactional, gender and resultant outcomes (Eagly & Johnson, 2001; Rosener, 2000) these studies asserted that women, in comparison to men are more likely to be democratic, interpersonally oriented, and less task oriented in certain situations, which is the behaviours consistent with transformational leadership style. As a result, we propose that since female students are more likely

to exhibit characteristics that are consistent with transformational leadership behaviour, these students are likely to perceive and rate teachers as exhibiting transformational leadership attributes. On the contrary, Davidson & Ferrario (2002) reported that due to their agentic stereotypical inclination, male tend to respond to the task structure and identify more with transactional leadership components of leadership situation. Male students are therefore predicted to be identified with transactional qualities and may be more likely to rate teachers as demonstrating transactional leadership behaviours.

It is pertinent to state that both transformational and transactional teachers would attempt to sense student felt needs, transformational teachers may likely probe deeper to identify and arouse student's current and long-term considerations including the dormant or higher order needs. Transformational teacher would have the ability to convert the student's latent desires into current needs. Such teacher could broaden the scope and magnify the strength of student's wants, desires, aspirations, and needs. The result is a transfer of energies and motivational climate that encourages students to surpass their own expectations and personal objectives to realise instructional goals.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the above stated assertions, the following hypotheses were developed and tested in the study.

H1: There is significant relationship between female students' rating of their teachers and demonstration of transformational leadership style.

- (a) Female students are more likely to rate their teachers as charismatic.
- (b) Female students are more likely to rate their teachers as providing inspirational motivation.
- (c) Female students are more likely to rate their teachers as exhibiting intellectual stimulation.
- (d) Female students are more likely to rate their teachers as individualized considerate.

H2: There is significant relationship between male students' rating of their teachers and demonstration of transactional leadership style.

- (a) Male students are more likely to rate their teachers as employing contingent reward.
 - (b) Male students are more likely to rate their teachers as managing-by-exception.
- H3: There is significant relationship between female students' rating of their teachers and effectiveness, eliciting extra effort, and satisfaction.

Research Instrument

The study used a modified version of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 1995) to measure full-range leadership. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) focuses on individual teacher behaviours as observed by the followers (students) and assesses the leadership behaviours that motivate students to achieve expected performance. The instrument measures six constructs of the transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' willingness to put extra effort into the demonstration of their tasks, teachers' effectiveness, and satisfaction. The items of the questionnaire are based on a 4-point scale. The questionnaire was pilot tested and evaluated through a test-retest method. The reliability result gave a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.79.

Research Procedure

The sample for the study consisted of eight (800) students drawn from all the eight departments in the Faculty of Education of University of Ibadan using simple random sampling technique. One hundred (100) students were randomly selected in each department. The sample included four (400) undergraduate students (295 female and 105 male) the mean age of which was 17.4 years with an age range of 18-30 years with a standard deviation of 2.72. While four hundred (400) postgraduate students (187 female and 203 male) were involved in the study. The mean age of 25.36, their ages ranged from 22-50 years old with a standard deviation of 7.21.

The data collected were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. This was to establish the relationship between male and female students' perception of their teachers leadership style.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study are presented according to the hypotheses generated for the study.

Table 1: Regression Analysis of Male and Female Students' Perception of Teachers' Leadership Style

Multiple R (adjusted) = 0.8694
 Multiple R² = 0.7559
 Standard Error of Estimate = 8.59

Analysis of Variance

| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F | p |
|---------------------|-----------|-----|----------|--------|-----|
| Regression | 102665.06 | 7 | 14666.44 | 198.72 | .05 |
| Residual | 58449.60 | 792 | 73.80 | | |
| Total | 161114.66 | 799 | | | |

Table 1 shows the result of a combination of six subscales of transformational and transactional leadership styles regarding gender differences in students' perception of their teachers' behaviours. As indicated in the Table 1, a combination of the six subscales of both transformational and transactional leadership is reflected in the value of a coefficient of multiple regression R (0.8694) and multiple regression square R² (0.7559) and F-ratio 198.72, which is significant at the .05 level. The result indicates that the hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported for the combined transformational, and the transactional leadership style.

Table 2: Parameter Estimate of Male and Female Students' Perception of Teachers' Leadership Style

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| Charisma | .740 | .410 | .308 | 1.80 | NS |
| Inspirational Motivation | 1.1493 | .675 | .696 | 2.50 | .05 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 2.398 | .739 | .814 | 2.86 | .05 |
| Individualized Consideration | 1.263 | .517 | .805 | 2.243 | .05 |
| Contingent Reward | .903 | .313 | .424 | .569 | NS |
| Management-by-Exception | 2.1569 | .696 | .4111 | 3.412 | .05 |

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows the result of each construct of teachers' leadership style, the standardized regression weight (β), the standard error of estimate, T-ratio and the level at which the T-ratio is significant. As indicated in the table, the T-ratio associated with only inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are significant at the .05 level. In hypothesis 1 (a-d), we predicted that female students are more likely to rate their teachers as demonstrating transformational leadership behaviour and its constructs. This indicates that this hypothesis was supported for these three constructs. As shown in the Tables above, the results also support the hypothesis that female students compared to their male counterparts are less likely to rate their teachers as exhibiting transaction leadership style overall (Table 1) and management-by-exception. While the hypothesis that female students are likely than their male counterparts to rate their teachers as employing contingent reward was rejected. These results indicate that regardless of gender, students generally view instructors

as exhibiting a system of contingent reward. However, unlike their female counterparts, male students are likely to rate teachers employing transactional leadership style and as demonstrating a system of management-by-exception.

Table 3: Parameter Estimate of Male and Female Students' (Undergraduate) Perception of Teachers' Leadership Style

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| Charisma | .242 | .403 | .298 | 1.52 | NS |
| Inspirational Motivation | .471 | .545 | .676 | .862 | NS |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 1.6892 | .675 | .696 | 2.145 | .05 |
| Individualized Consideration | 1.763 | .699 | .458 | 2.220 | .05 |
| Contingent Reward | .823 | .443 | .328 | .455 | NS |
| Management-by-Exception | 2.4809 | .626 | .426 | 3.40 | .05 |

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Separate regression analyses were run for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Table 3 and 4 provide the results of these analyses. Except for charisma and inspirational motivation constructs, which are not statistically significant, the undergraduate student sample results as shown in Table 3 support the hypothesis that female students are more likely than their male counterparts to rate teachers as demonstrating transformational leadership behaviour. The table indicates that the hypotheses are supported for intellectual stimulation, and individualizes consideration. Also, the table shows that undergraduate's gender discriminate student's perception of teacher's use of contingent reward system, which is contrary to our prediction.

That is, female undergraduates are more likely (not less likely) than their male counterparts to rate teachers as exhibiting a construct of contingent reward.

Table 4: Parameter Estimate of Male and Female Students' (Postgraduate) Perception of Teachers' Leadership Style

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| Charisma | 1.761 | .696 | .472 | 2.52 | .05 |
| Inspirational Motivation | 2.3421 | .756 | .573 | 3.211 | .05 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 1.6342 | .872 | .693 | 2.615 | .05 |
| Individualized Consideration | .743 | .499 | .458 | .343 | NS |
| Contingent Reward | .543 | .341 | .228 | 1.25 | NS |
| Management-by-Exception | 1.7429 | .922 | .726 | 2.720 | .05 |

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that female postgraduate students compared to their male counterparts were more likely to rate as employing transformational leadership, charisma, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation except in individualized consideration which is not significant. This result indicates that gender appears to discriminate student perception to teacher's transformational leadership behaviour. Also, regarding transactional leadership behaviour, Table 4 shows results that support the hypothesis that female postgraduates compared to their male counterparts are less likely to rate teachers as exhibiting transactional leadership behaviour, and as managing-by-exception. While the hypothesis that female are less likely than their male counterparts to rate teachers as demonstrating contingent

reward was rejected for the postgraduate students. These results indicate that regardless of gender, postgraduate students generally view teachers as exhibiting a construct of contingent reward but unlike female counterparts, male postgraduate students are more likely to rate teachers as demonstrating transactional leadership style and as employing a construct of management-by-exception.

Lastly, there is no statistically significant result for the analysis of the hypothesis 3, which states that female students are more likely to rate teacher as effective, eliciting extra effort, and satisfaction. Yet, the results of all the aforementioned analyses give us the result to this hypothesis. For instance, Table 1 indicates that female students are more likely than their male counterparts to rate teachers as demonstrating transformational leadership style overall. Also, result of Table 2 shows significant support for three of the transformational leadership style constructs. The results of the undergraduate students also support our hypotheses on two constructs of transformational leadership style. Since researches have indicated satisfaction, leader effectiveness, and the degree to which leader elicit followers' extra effort as the outcome variables of transformational leadership style, and with the above stated results of the transformational leadership style, one can conclude that our hypothesis is supported. That is, female students are more likely to rate teacher as effective, eliciting extra effort, and satisfaction. It should be noted that our inability to find statistically significant correlation between the outcome variables and gender might be as a result of the emphasis on gender equality in academic settings. As stated above, the findings of Bass (1998), Rosener (2000), Eagly & Johnson (2001) and Druscat (1994) supported our prediction in the hypothesis 1 and 2. However, the results did not hold for contingent reward but contradicted our hypothesis in the undergraduate sub-sample thereby supporting Comer, Jolson, Dubinsky, & Yammarino (2005) who argue that female subordinates tend to prefer exhibiting contingent reward.

Conclusion

Indeed, this study is timely because leadership in academic setting has now demanded much attention. Also, the study contributes to the full range leadership model, which has not been focused by most leadership scholars in this area of the world. There is no doubt that this

study will serve as a focus and pacesetter for the examination of gender – leadership behaviour relationship in institutional setting.

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