The Relationship Of Leadership Styles Of Selected West Virginia Deans And Department Chairs To Job Satisfaction Of Departmental Faculty Members

Paul A. Leary
Marshall University Graduate College

Michael E. Sullivan
Marshall University
Graduate College

Debra Ray McCartney-Simon
Glenville State College

Abstract

This article reviews research findings that examined the relationship between leadership styles of selected West Virginia deans or department chairs (those who were immediate supervisors of the respondents) and self-reported faculty job satisfaction. The results of the study indicated that there was a relationship between leadership styles and faculty job satisfaction. The strongest relationships were those (a) between extrinsic job satisfaction and both dimensions of the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), (b) between overall job satisfaction and both dimensions of the LBDQ, and (c) between intrinsic job satisfaction and leadership style of the dean or department chair. Analysis of the demographic variables of the study demonstrated that only the number of years the respondent had served under the current dean or department chair.

Leadership, while often offered as the solution to most organizational problems (Bolman & Deal, 1992), appears to be problematic across the United States (Green, 1997; MacTaggert, 1994; Maxcy, 1994). Traditional measures of leadership indicate that leadership in higher education is in serious trouble as well (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Tucker, Bass, & Daniel, 1992). Leaders in higher education have been greatly criticized for their failure to apply the literature on leadership and management to maintain and advance their institutions in today's increasingly complex internal and external environments (Tucker, et al., 1992).

Despite much research on leadership behaviors, no clear-cut conclusions have been rendered as to what specific leader behaviors consistently contribute to productivity within an institution (Ehrle & Bennett, 1988). However elusive the concept, leadership has long been recognized as the stalwart of any organization. In 1947, The Report of the President’s Commission on Higher Education for Democracy emphasized the need for effective leadership in the following quote:
We cannot pin our faith on social drift, hoping that if each individual pursues his own ends with intelligence and good will, things will somehow right themselves. We cannot rely on the process of automatic adjustment. We must develop a positive social policy, both within and among nations. We must plan, with intelligence and imagination, the course we are to take toward the kind of tomorrow we want. (Goodchild & Weschler, 1989, p. 636)

The research conducted in this study attempted to identify leadership styles of West Virginia deans or department chairs and the effect of those styles on self-reported job satisfaction of departmental faculty members. To complete the study, three instruments were used, including The Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), The Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS), and a demographic survey.

**Leadership Styles**

The most influential research in leadership behavior, incorporating the surveying of subordinates to gain perceptions on leadership, was pioneered in the 1950s and 1960s at the Ohio State University (Bensimon et al., 1989; Yukl, 1989). The Personnel Research Board of the Ohio State University, as one of the Ohio State Leadership Project studies, developed the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) at a time when little in the way of leadership theory existed (Halpin, 1957; Stodgill, 1963, 1970, Yukl, 1989). Since the development of the LBDQ, much of the research on leadership behavior has followed the pattern established by the pioneering research at the institution (Yukl, 1989).

The LBDQ was established as a method whereby group members would be able to describe the leader behavior of designated leaders in formal organizations (Halpin, 1957; Stodgill, 1963). The instrument contained items describing the manner in which a leader might behave, along with the respondent rating of the way in which the leader is perceived to engage in each type of behavior (Halpin, 1957).

Two broadly defined dimensions of behaviors were established as encompassing a wide variety of leader characteristics. Those dimensions were Initiating Structure and Consideration (Charters, 1963; Gorton & Snowden, 1993; Halpin, 1957; Hemphill, 1955; Stodgill, 1963, 1970; Yukl, 1989).

Initiating Structure refers to the leader’s perceived ability to clearly define the leader’s role and to let followers know what is expected (Gorton & Snowden, 1993; Hemphill, 1955; Stodgill, 1963, 1970). The Initiating Structure dimension of leadership involves attempting to set well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and ways of getting the job completed (Halpin, 1957; Hemphill, 1955). Initiating Structure behaviors describe leaders who are task-oriented and stress the global activities of directing, planning, coordinating, and problem solving (Bensimon et al., 1989; Gorton & Snowden, 1993; Hemphill, 1955).

The Consideration dimension of leadership behavior refers to behavior indicating friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the interactions between the leader and members of the group (Halpin, 1957; Hemphill, 1955; Stodgill, 1963). This dimension of leadership behavior is more relationship-oriented (Bensimon et al, 1989; Yukl, 1989).

**Job Satisfaction**

Workers at every level form impressions regarding whether they are valued and respected from important cues that emanate from their environment, especially those that come from the leaders directly above them (Gmelch & Miskin, 1993; Fryer & Lovas, 1991). These impressions are translated into feelings, either positive or negative, that become the principal component of a worker’s morale. Morale is a key factor in determining an employee’s commitment to work and the degree of job satisfaction to which he or she professes (Fryer & Lovas, 1991).

In higher education, faculty morale, based on Fryer and Lovas’ (1991) contentions, results from perceptions faculty members hold regarding their value to the dean/department chair. Faculty members will be
motivated (a) when given a chance to feel intellectually and emotionally challenged by their work, (b) when perceiving opportunities for personal and professional growth, (c) when afforded the opportunity to participate in decisions affecting their own development, (d) when encouraged to feel they are part of an important ongoing enterprise, and (e) to know that they make a difference and are given recognition and visibility (Lucas, 1994). These motivational needs of faculty, addressed through the interactions with their dean or department chair, are believed to contribute to faculty personal growth and development, job satisfaction and willingness to change (Kearney & Hays, 1994).

**Questions**

In order to determine the relationships between leadership styles and job satisfaction, parameters for the study were established by the following questions:

1. What is the relationship of the dean or department chair’s leadership style to subordinate’s job satisfaction?

2. What is the relationship between extrinsic job satisfaction as reported on the MCMJSS and leadership style when the perceived leadership style relates more strongly to the Consideration dimension? What is the relationship when the leadership style relates more strongly to the Initiating Structure dimension?

3. What is the relationship between intrinsic job satisfaction as reported on the MCMJSS and leadership style when the perceived leadership style relates more strongly to the Consideration dimension? What is the relationship when the leadership style relates more strongly to Initiating Structure?

4. What is the relationship between the demographic variables of the study to overall job satisfaction? What is the relationship of the demographic variables to extrinsic job satisfaction? What is the relationship of the demographic variables to intrinsic job satisfaction?

**Method**

**Population and Sample**

The population of this study consisted of full-time faculty members at 11 public institutions of higher education in the state of West Virginia, which granted baccalaureate degrees and beyond. The population for this study consisted of 2,279 faculty members. Of the 328 randomly selected faculty members in the sample, 165 returned completed, usable survey responses. This number represented a return rate of 50% plus 1. Of the 165 responses, 116 were returned after the first mailing and accounted for 69% of the returns. Twenty-six completed surveys, 16% of the total number of returns, were received after the second mailing and the remaining 23 surveys, 15% of the total returns, were collected by using telephone interviews. Analysis of the data indicated that all 11 institutions were represented.

**Instrumentation**

The three instruments used in the collection of data for this research were the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) (requiring an employee rating of the immediate supervisor), the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS), and a demographic survey. All were completed by individual instructional faculty members at the 11 public institutions of higher education surveyed.
The LBDQ provided a method whereby group members described the leader behavior of designated leaders in formal organizations. The data allowed the researcher to calculate perceived leadership styles of the deans or department chairs at their respective West Virginia institutions.

The instrument contained 40 items that described specific ways in which leaders behave. Only 30 items were scored; 15 for each of the two dimensions. The remaining 10 items were retained in the instrument in order to keep the conditions of administration comparable to the conditions used in standardizing the questionnaire (Halpin, 1957). The respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which each type of behavior was exhibited by the leader, the dean or department chair. The score for Consideration and Initiating Structure, as designed by Halpin (1957) was determined by calculating the sum of the 15 items in each dimension. The range of scores was 0 to 60 (Halpin, 1957).

Reliability for the LBDQ was determined by the split-half method. The estimated reliability, using this method, was .83 for Initiating Structure scores and .92 for Consideration scores (Halpin, 1957).

Validity, the degree to which a scale measures what it purports to measure, was tested on the various subscales of the LBDQ by Stodgill (1963) when he employed the assistance of a playwright who developed scenarios based on patterns of behavior using items from the subscales of the LBDQ. Role performances for each scenario were made into a motion picture. Observers rated the supervisory roles using the LBDQ. No significant differences were found between the two actors playing the same role. Since the roles were designed to portray behaviors represented by the various subscales and since these same items were used to evaluate the supervisor, Stodgill (1963, 1970) concluded that the LBDQ subscales measured what they purported to measure.

The MCMJSS, used for measuring job satisfaction, was designed to measure eight facets of perceived job satisfaction. Four items measure intrinsic job satisfaction and four items measured extrinsic job satisfaction. The response format consisted of a 6-point Likert-type scale with 1 being the lowest score for job satisfaction and 6 being the highest score. The intrinsic factors were related to self-esteem/self-respect, personal growth and development, achievement, and expectations. The factors on the MCMJSS indicating extrinsic job satisfaction characteristics were respect and fair treatment, being informed, the amount of supervision by the immediate supervisor, and opportunity to participate in the methods, procedures and goals of the organization (McKee, 1990).

In a study of organizational development in public schools, Mohrman, Cooke, Mohrman, Duncan, and Zaltman (1978) established reliability coefficients for the MCMJSS of .87 and .82. In another study conducted by Mohrman, Cooke, and Mohrman (1978) related to participation in decision making, the reliability coefficient for intrinsic satisfaction was established at .86 and the reliability coefficient for extrinsic satisfaction was established at .71. The MCMJSS has been widely used in job satisfaction research including studies by McKee (1990), Proffit (1990) and Hardman (1996).

A demographic survey of variables related to faculty in institutions of higher education was also included. Participants were asked to respond to the demographic survey in order to determine if a relationship existed between job satisfaction and the following:

1. Gender of the leader.
2. Gender of the respondent.
3. The number of years of service in current position.
4. Age of the respondent.
5. Years of service under the current leader.
Data Analysis

Frequency distribution and descriptive analyses were completed on the *Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ), as well as the *Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale* (MCMJSS) and the demographic variables. On the MCMJSS, individual surveys were examined to determine the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction scores as well as an overall job satisfaction score for all participants in the study. An overall mean and standard deviation were determined for each score. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction. Both measures were included in the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). A significance of .05 was set for analysis of the data collected for this study. Demographic data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Findings

The data analyzed relative to the LBDQ and the MCMJSS indicated a strong relationship between overall job satisfaction and both dimensions of leadership style (see Table 1) and extrinsic job satisfaction (see Table 2). The results indicated that the more evident the characteristics of the Consideration dimension or the Initiating Structure dimension of leadership behaviors, the greater the degree of self-reported job satisfaction. A greater degree of extrinsic job satisfaction was reported when the leader behaviors fell within the Consideration dimension. The correlation between leadership style and intrinsic job satisfaction was statistically significant, but not as strongly correlated (see Table 3).

When the job satisfaction survey was divided into the intrinsic and extrinsic scales and ANOVAs were performed for each dimension, four of the demographic variables were statistically significant in their relationship to intrinsic satisfaction including (a) the number of years the respondent had been in current position, (b) the number of years the respondent had served under the current dean or department chair, (c) the degree granted by the institution, and (d) the degree held by the respondent. There were no statistically significant findings relating any of the demographic survey items to the extrinsic scale of the MCMJSS.

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<th>Table 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Styles and Job Satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Init. St.</td>
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*Pearson Correlation Coefficients

**Calculation of percentage accuracy using the Coefficient of Determination
Table 2
Leadership Styles and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>r-value/Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>r² x 100</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
<td>0.70003*</td>
<td>49%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Init. St.</td>
<td>0.53528*</td>
<td>29%**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Pearson Correlation Coefficients

**Calculation of percentage accuracy using the Coefficient of Determination

The data collected by the demographic survey revealed a statistically significant relationship between overall job satisfaction and the amount of time the respondent had served under the current dean or department chair. The longer a faculty member had been supervised by the dean or department chair evaluated for the current study, the higher the degree of self-reported job satisfaction. The remaining demographic variables indicated no statistical significance in relationship to overall job satisfaction.

Implications and Discussions

The results of this study indicated that the correlation between leadership style of the dean or department chair demonstrated a significant relationship to the self-reported job satisfaction of faculty members. This correlation is most evident in the relationship of extrinsic job satisfaction to the Consideration dimension of the LBDQ. The greater the degree of perceived "consideration" behaviors in the dean or department chair, the higher the degree of extrinsic job satisfaction reported by faculty members. Both dimensions of leadership behavior had a significant positive correlation to increased overall self-reported faculty job satisfaction scores. Generally, overall job satisfaction scores increased as one or the other dimensions of leadership behaviors were attributed to deans or department chairs. The correlation of the study which
indicated the least effect on job satisfaction was between the Initiating Structure of the LBDQ and intrinsic job satisfaction. The Consideration dimension of the LBDQ was also weakly correlated with reported intrinsic job satisfaction scores. Generally, neither dimension of leadership behavior contributed to an increase in intrinsic job satisfaction.

Halpin (1957) described the Consideration dimension as behavior that is indicative of friendship, warmth in a relationship, mutual trust, and respect. There is a logical connection between the behaviors identified as consideration behaviors in supervisors and higher degrees of reported job satisfaction in subordinates. These behaviors correlate with Maslow’s (1965) hierarchy of needs and the data are consistent with the work of Cohen (1990), Ford and Gillette (1969), and Fryer and Lovas (1991), which states that individual’s basic needs must be met prior to expectations of higher order contributions.

The lower correlations between both leadership dimensions and intrinsic job satisfaction in this study were reasonable and logical. Intrinsic job satisfaction indicates that the degree to which a respondent feels satisfied is determined by internally motivated factors. Internal factors come from within the individual. External behaviors from a leader or supervisor appear, based on the results of the current study, appear to have less effect on the intrinsic satisfaction than on extrinsic job satisfaction.

The current study discovered a significant correlation between job satisfaction and leadership style. Educational Administration programs could be improved by correlating specific individual leadership characteristics identified in the LBDQ and the relationship of the individual leadership characteristics to specific components of job satisfaction. This, in turn, could result in more satisfied employees.

The data from the current study could be very useful to practicing administrators, especially those results pertaining to the two dimensions of leadership as measured by the LBDQ. By allowing employees to complete a leadership instrument such as the LBDQ, administrators could analyze their own leadership style and incorporate components of those leadership dimensions that increase faculty job satisfaction. Behaviors that related to decreased job satisfaction could be identified and the leader could work on modifying such behaviors. Such action by the leader should improve job satisfaction of faculty members.

The current study did not allow for the determination of generalizability of the results across states because the data were collected in only one state. The results did indicate that the respondents were not extremely satisfied or extremely dissatisfied. The scores for job satisfaction ranged from a low of 3.0 to a high score of 5.7.

References


