

THE EFFECT OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON
EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT AND
THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF
COMMUNICATION

ALI MURAD ALI AL TAHER AL RAEESI

UNIVERSITY PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS

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THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION

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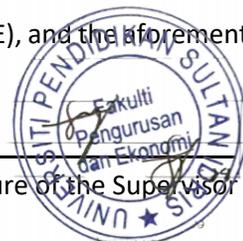
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APPRECIATION

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To my family, you have been my cheerleader, support and inspiration. Your love and understanding throughout my study and several travels made have all motivated me to succeed. Thanks for being part of this journey with me, I'm really fortunate to have you all.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of leadership styles on the employees' commitment. This study also aimed to examine the mediating role of communication in the relationship between leadership styles and employees' commitment, in the context of the Dubai Immigration Department (DID). This quantitative study utilized the survey research design. Using proportionate sampling and random sampling techniques, 444 employees of the DID participated in this study. A set of questionnaires was used to collect the required data. The data analysis was conducted using Structure Equation Model (SEM) to test all the hypotheses pertaining to the causal relationship among the variables. The findings of the data analysis revealed that the leadership styles including transformational ($\beta=0.007$, $p<0.01$), transactional ($\beta=0.117$, $p<0.01$), and passive leadership ($\beta=0.105$, $p<0.01$) are all positively affected employees' commitment in the DID. The data analysis also discovered that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership ($\beta=0.096$, $p<0.01$), transactional leadership ($\beta=0.065$, $p<0.01$), and passive leadership ($\beta=0.148$, $p<0.01$) with communication. Additionally, the findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between communication and employees' commitment ($\beta=0.097$, $p<0.01$). In determining the mediating effect, this study discovered that communication partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership style ($\beta=0.061$, $p<0.01$), transactional leadership style ($\beta=0.006$, $p<0.01$), passive leadership style ($\beta=0.131$, $p=0.003$) and employees' commitment. Furthermore, the transformational leadership style has the greatest potential to influence commitment among DID employees. The findings of this study provide insights for policy makers and practitioners to improve leadership styles and communication in the workplace that can promote the commitment of the employees. For further study, it is suggested to conduct longitudinal effects of leadership styles on employee commitment with other mediating and moderating factors at other government sectors.

KESAN GAYA KEPIMPINAN TERHADAP KOMITMEN PEKERJA DAN KESAN KOMUNIKASI SEBAGAI PENGANTARA

ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan gaya kepimpinan terhadap komitmen pekerja. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengkaji peranan pengantara komunikasi dalam hubungan antara gaya kepimpinan dan komitmen pekerja, dalam konteks Jabatan Imigresen Dubai (JID). Kajian kuantitatif ini menggunakan reka bentuk kajian tinjauan. Menggunakan teknik persampelan berkadar dan persampelan rawak, seramai 444 pekerja JID mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Satu set soal selidik telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data yang diperlukan. Analisis data dijalankan menggunakan Model Persamaan Struktur (SEM) untuk menguji semua hipotesis yang berkaitan dengan hubungan di antara semua pemboleh ubah kajian. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahawa gaya kepimpinan termasuk transformasi ($\beta=0.007$, $p<0.01$), transaksi ($\beta=0.117$, $p<0.01$), dan kepimpinan pasif ($\beta=0.105$, $p<0.01$) semuanya memberi kesan positif terhadap komitmen pekerja JID. Hasil analisis data juga menunjukkan terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara kepimpinan transformasi ($\beta=0.096$, $p<0.01$), kepimpinan transaksi ($\beta=0.065$, $p<0.01$), dan kepimpinan pasif ($\beta=0.148$, $p<0.01$) dengan komunikasi. Selain itu, dapatan kajian ini juga mendedahkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara komunikasi dan komitmen pekerja ($\beta=0.097$, $p<0.01$). Dalam menentukan kesan pengantaraan, hasil analisis data mendapati bahawa komunikasi menjadi sebahagian pengantara hubungan antara gaya kepimpinan transformasi ($\beta=0.061$, $p<0.01$), gaya kepimpinan transaksi ($\beta=0.006$, $p<0.01$), gaya kepimpinan pasif ($\beta=0.131$, $p=0.003$) dengan komitmen pekerja. Selain itu, gaya kepimpinan transformasi mempunyai potensi terbesar untuk mempengaruhi komitmen dalam kalangan pekerja JID. Dapatan kajian ini memberi maklumat kepada pembuat dasar dan pengamal untuk menambah baik gaya kepimpinan dan komunikasi di tempat kerja bagi menggalakkan komitmen pekerja. Untuk kajian lanjut, adalah dicadangkan agar menjalankan kajian longitudinal tentang kesan gaya kepimpinan terhadap komitmen pekerja dengan faktor pengantara dan penyederhana yang lain di sektor kerajaan yang berbeza.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| AVE | Average Variance Extracted |
| CC | Continuance Commitment |
| CE | Communication Effectiveness |
| CISL | Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership |
| CR | Construct Reliability |
| CSE | Core Self-evaluation |
| DID | Dubai Immigration Department |
| EC | Effective Commitment |
| EP | Employee Performance |
| GDRFA | General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs |
| GDRFA-D | General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs – Dubai |
| GLOBE | Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness |
| IC | Individual Consideration |
| II | Idealized Influence |
| IM | Inspirational Motivation |
| IS | Intellectual Stimulus |
| MLQ | Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire |
| NC | Normative Commitment |
| OCB | Organizational Citizenship Behaviour |
| OCQ | Organizational / Employee Commitment |

| | |
|------|--|
| OI | Organizational Identification |
| PASL | Passive Leadership |
| PCSR | Perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility |
| SLE | Staff-level Employee |
| TFL | Team-focused Transformational Leadership |
| TL | Transformational Leadership |
| TSL | Transformational Leadership |
| TXL | Transactional Leadership |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |

APPENDIX LIST

- A Participants Recruitment Letter
- B Questionnaire Sample
- C Hypotheses Testing & Results
- D Publication Acceptance Letter

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The subject of leadership is widely researched by authors of different disciplines, practice and backgrounds. In fact, leadership is often of keen interest due to the role a leader plays in an organization or a society, within small groups or big associations with financial or non-financial benefits. However, leadership does not exist or cannot be practiced without the influence of dependent or/and independent factors as later examined in this study. The extent to which leadership influences other factors and vice versa, is posed to contribute to knowledge, as well as constitute the underlying rationale for conducting this study. Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the association between leadership styles, employees' commitment, and communication within the Dubai Immigration Department (DID).

This chapter gives the initial aspects of the study and outlines the research objectives and questions. Next, the research background, problem statement, scope and conceptual framework are addressed in this chapter. Apart from this, the operational definitions of this study are presented and the organization of the study are briefly discussed towards the end of this chapter. Finally, the final section of this chapter summarizes the chapter. Overall, this chapter has introduced the purpose of this study, established the rationale and context for this study as well as briefly explained the scope of study.

1.2 Research Background

The benefits of effective leadership styles have been studied for decades, however, specifically the different dimension of leadership styles influencing the employee commitment has remained as the topic of debate. The key to success in the management of an organizational environment is the achievement of opportunity in guiding and motivating people to do to the best of their teamwork abilities in their routine life and particularly in modesty (Yukl, 2010). For a long period of time, leadership has been practiced as getting things done through other people. This entails viewing individuals as resources for achieving goals. With the existence of a hierarchical connection, leadership has then been defined as the capability to affect the conduct of others (Zhou & George, 2003). Apart from this, leadership can be defined as a way to influence, for instance, the process by which a person or a group of people motivate another group of individuals to focus their efforts on

the objectives decided by a leader, the goals that are common among a leader and a team member (Yang et al., 2011). Conversely, there is no connection between these definitions. Every definition has concepts different from others, hence distinctive concepts enable an extraction of a single meaning of leadership and an understanding of the elements that can form positive leadership in the context of a business firm. Having the ability to guide is not to practice authority over others, however, to let them have a desire to understand instructions and implement the decisions accordingly in the same manner; leaders should take opinions and suggestions from companions for betterment, and implement them accordingly (Yang, et al., 2011).

According to history, leadership has undergone several paradigms and a voluminous body of knowledge. It is determined that leadership is an inevitable part for effective organizational and social functions. In fact, theories of leadership started with the focus on the traits or behaviour that leaders adopt while leading a group of people (Rusliza & Ebrahim, 2016). It is ascertained that leadership moves a group towards a common goal that would not be met if a leader has not been there (Graham, 1997). In organizational leadership, there are different styles for different leaders or for different managerial focuses (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Some are more focused on tasks and goals, others on healthy relationships; others are flexible and adapt to situations that require different postures (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

The components of leadership styles are in line with employee commitment and the effects of communication in developing the relationship remained undeveloped (Murad et

al., 2020; Brown et al., 2019; Wang, 2011; Lies et al., 2007). In view of these considerations, the main question that guides this study is *'What leadership style can generate appropriate employee commitment through communication in an organization?'*

In recent studies, leadership is identified as to positively influence excellent internal communication and employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Men, 2014). Internal communication within an organization in this sense is considered as one of the ways to describe and explain organizations (Deetz, 2001). Over the decades, communication, especially internal communication, has been identified by authors to play an important role in developing positive employee attitudes especially job satisfaction (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004), organizational commitment (Jo & Shim, 2005) as well as employee-leadership relationships (Men, 2014). Furthermore, internal communication within an organization has also been identified to be helpful in helping individuals and groups within organizations to coordinate activities in achieving goals, decision-making, problem solving and to facilitate change management processes (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010). While these arguments of different authors over decades allude to positive relationships between leadership, communication and employees, the specific focus of each author as noticed in this paragraph differs.

Regardless of research focus or scope, leadership is identified to have an impact on organizations, departments, and teams, as well as work environment leaders who want the best outcomes, therefore, depending on a single leadership style should be avoided (Goleman, 2000). For example, Men (2011a) wrote on the credibility of a leader and how

it has an impact on employees and reputation of an organization. It further explained the impact of leadership styles and employee empowerment on organizational reputation (Men & Stacks, 2013). Moreover, there is also an argument for excellent leadership and its impact on public relations that is external to what transpires within an organization (Meng & Berger, 2013; Meng, Berger, Gower & Heyman, 2012). These backgrounds provide strong justification for this study to investigate in the field of leadership, employee commitment and communication especially in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

1.2.1 Dubai Immigration Department (DID)

The Dubai Immigration Department or Department of Naturalisation and Residency Dubai (DNRD) issues the permits for entry and exit in Dubai and UAE. It also issues work permits, visit visa, residence visas and other categories of visas at the entrance and exit in the UAE. The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs – Dubai (GDRFA-D) is the government agency in Dubai that manages the foreign nationals' residency and the arrival and transfer of global passengers at and from the Dubai Emirates. In 2015, about 66 million transactions were completed by the GDRFA-D and about 48 million travelers were received from Dubai International Airport which showed a considerable increase from previous year (GDRFA, 2020). On the basis of these figures, 100 million international travelers are expected to be served by the Dubai International Airport by the last quarter of 2020.

GDRFA associates the hard work registered during this period and being ranked one of the best border directorates in the world to their employees. GDRFA Dubai has built a solid association with its customers by providing exceptional service and attention and assisting them in resolving their concerns in compliance with the law. Hence, there is little information available about the type of leadership style used in DID, as well as the association among leadership styles, communication, and employee commitment. Although it can be deduced that there is strong communication within the DID, the extent to which the current internal communication used by the leadership positively influences employees' commitment remains unknown.

The directorate, with the objective of making the UAE one of the finest world countries in terms of getting security and safety, provides innovation-based services in the areas of port access, residency, and citizenship, in order for the UAE to be the safest and finest destination (GDRFA, 2020). Again, this vision refers to the duties of the department to the public and country. While this is expected in a government entity with such important responsibilities, it is important to examine the relationship between leadership, employees' commitment and communication. This is to ensure that leaders within the several units and departments develop excellent leadership styles that can influence employees' commitment as well as generate positive impact on public relations as researched by Meng et al. (2012), and Meng and Berger (2013).

Regardless of this gap or lack of empirical data on leadership, employees' commitment and communication, it is important to acknowledge the progress made by the

organization and potential challenges for leadership and communication. Starting with two departments in October 1971, the directorate has grown to having different departments with multiple units. For example, the main departments of DID are illustrated in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Departments and Units within DID

| Departments | Units |
|--|--|
| Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Of Naturalization & Passports - Of Entry Permits - Of Monitoring and Investigation - Of Administrative and Financial Affairs - Of Information Technology |
| Department of Airports and Land Border Points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dubai International Airport - Hatta Border Point |
| Department of Seaports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Port Rashid - Shindagha Port - Hamriya Port - Jebel Ali Port - Dubai Drydocks |
| Offsite Centers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abu Hail - Bin Suqat - Al-Dewan - DNATA - Emirates Airlines Office - DNATA Aviation Centre - Hyatt Regency |

Adapted from GDRFA, (2020a)

As illustrated in Table 1.1, the categories and focus of each unit and department differs, but all contribute towards the common goal of DID. The values of the directorate such as leadership and excellence, institutional loyalty, customer happiness, innovation and creativity, learning and development, teamwork and sustainability, are all elements that align with the variables being examined in this study. Leadership style is a main variable that motivated this study. In Addition, communication and employees' commitment, the two other variables being researched in this study are essential to other factors in the organizational values for DID.

Based on the roles and responsibilities attached to the leaders in the immigration Department in the UAE, the function of the leaders is based on four dimensions: deploying a policy, devising a strategy, mobilizing teams, and making alliances by creating a motivating company culture. By this function one can understand that leaders must have attitude and know how to delegate these great functions to his team (GDRFA, 2018). In fact, governance seeks to achieve compatibility between government organization policies and the vision of the country and Dubai in particular (GDRFA, 2020).

It is understood that a successful leader must have influence over his followers in ways that they must understand him and communicate his vision among team members. To this end, in the immigration department leadership exists as an act of power that leads to a change of attitude (Holten & Brenner, 2015). Moreover, it is also an act of power associated with various responsibilities, such as decision-making, planning, delegating and maintaining team cohesion (Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007).

Therefore, having effective leadership styles for the organization to retain competent employees is crucial to its survival (Anastasia, 2015). According to Awan and Mahmood (2009), employee commitment reflects the quality of leadership in an organization. Thus, it is possible that leadership style as well as the communication approach or strategy would have a significant impact on the relationship on employees' commitment. This premise influences, and justifies the rationale for undertaking this study, in addition to the problem statement explained in the next section.

1.3 Problem Statement

The goal of the current study is to investigate the link between a leader's interaction style and employee commitment. The recent studies (Abasilim et al., 2019; Keskes, 2014; Mosadeghrad & Ferdosi, 2013; Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016) on leadership and employee commitment emphasized on more research, to further understand leadership styles and communication ways that are helpful in increasing employee commitment. In addition, there are specific problems observed by the researcher in the public sector in Dubai which are briefly discussed in this section.

However, previous studies (Abasilim et al., 2019; Ali et al., 2020; Cho et al., 2019; Donkor et al., 2021; Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016), often used a specific leadership styles attributes to measure employee commitment, leading to a lack of empirical research on government employees as a holistic approach. The dramatic change in the global economy

has caused many challenges in many organizations (Marcy et al. 2018). While these challenges are not publicly acknowledged in the UAE, there is a growing commitment problem which has made a wide split between the expectations of employers and employees leading to high turnover within the public sector.

Similar challenges and gaps are identified in different UAE organizations (Leidar, 2018), including the public and private organizations in Dubai where organizations have been facing employees' commitment challenges. In fact, the biggest problem for Dubai businesses is instilling a sense of dedication in their workforce. Panayiotis et al (2011) argued that if employees are not dedicated to a firm, job instability, poor trust, uncertainty, and high stress will rise, resulting in a negative impact on an organization's performance.

There are fewer studies (Mulyana, et.al., 2022; Matiko, & Mbuti, 2021; Puni, Hilton, & Quao, 2021; Al Maat & Samsudin, 2020; Trofimov, et.al., 2019; Dlamini, et.al., 2017; De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010) that ponder on investigating leadership styles, employees' commitment and communication. Previously, Herbert (1981) highlighted that leadership style is a function, that requires participation, commitment, and closeness of supervision in an organization. In fact, employees are an important part for any industry and their job satisfaction and organizational commitment affect the turnover rate and the productivity of a company (Benkhoff, 1997; Randeree and Chaudhry, pending). Furthermore, leadership has a strong role to influence employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Lok & Crawford, 1999). Similarly, Sowmya, Chandrasekaran and Patterson (2018), informed that the unique setting and context found

in the public sector is very much defined by the UAE policy makers. They found that the range of three leadership styles containing basic characteristics, such as the type of branches, the age, and educational level are inter-related with communication, commitment, satisfaction, and effectiveness. Moreover, Cho et al. (2019), discovered that leaders must concentrate and choose to invest their transformational and transactional leadership behaviors requiring both physical and psychological resources in ways that maximize their Korean and the U.S. subordinates' affective organizational commitment (AOC). They further recommended that future research should address effectiveness of these two leadership styles and include affective commitment factors of supervisors, peers, and subordinates.

For example, Marcy et al (2018) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership (TL), organizational commitment (OC), motivation, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and employee performance (EP). The findings indicated that a relationship exists between these variables; the research did not examine other leadership practices that this study aims to do. Leadership is identified in recent studies to positively influence excellent internal communication and employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Verčič, Galić, & Žnidar, 2021; Men, 2014). It, however, noticed that, transformational leadership is always the focus of most studies rather than other forms of leadership. Therefore, this study has potential to contribute to knowledge by addressing the gaps in literature as well as advance scholarship in the field of leadership, communication, employee commitment and wider organizational management studies.

Leadership and communication within an organization remains a challenge in different organizations in the UAE (Leidar, 2018) especially those with many units and departments as the DID. It is evident that communication permeates social relationships and enables interaction between people and societies and takes place through the interaction between people, in collective dialogues, creating space for new knowledge and provoking thought (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). In fact, Sabanci, Şahin and Özdemir (2017) argued that communication can be understood as a flow of information, and occurs to solve business problems, when communication barriers are created, or conduct business tasks. It is noticed that while this is the expectation, it is often far from reality in several organizations (Men & Stacks, 2013) within many public sector departments including DID.

 05-4506832 Al-Hummadi, (2013) conducted a study in the Federal Electricity and Water Authority (FEWA) in UAE and discovered that there are few problems of satisfaction, performance and employee retention. For FEWA it is quite challenging to control employees' turnover and align them with their managers. As a result of FEWA's authoritarian leadership style, which minimizes contact between managers and employees, decision-making is highly centralized, and employee participation in organizational decisions is minimal. He added that employees working under such leadership style and structure tend to show low levels of satisfaction and motivation due to underprivileged promotions. This regularly encourages a weak sense of employee commitment, dedication and loyalty to the organization either private or public and increases employee's intention to switch the organization.

There are various empirical studies (Megawaty, Hamdat, & Aida, 2022; Alkhawaja, 2017; Al-Hummadi, 2013; Yang et al., 2012; Alnaqbi, 2011) identified that leadership styles have a great influence on employees' commitment. In fact, several studies have identified the impact and influence of leadership styles on employees' commitment. The more a leader is devoted to an organization's goal, the more they communicate that vision to followers, and the more likely followers are to offer improvements and raise issues that benefit an organization and perform effectively in their positions. In fact, the figures of the turnover rate in UAE organization was 11 % (2017) and 8% (2018) (Gulf News, 2021). Staff turnover decreased from 11% to 8% in the GCC Salary Report 2018-19, according to recruiting firm Nadia, with many businesses beginning to see the significance of establishing employee loyalty, thanks in part to new government programmes. In addition, Al-Busaeedi & Marni (2020) informed that leadership at different levels plays an important role and influences employee commitment. They added that many leadership approaches are pursued by middle management which is suitable according to the circumstances. The result is ineffective inspiration among employees. Nevertheless, this general reaction of employees is valid all the time. Otherwise, employees could be involved in mis-commit, disobey and resist the normal working flow. Consequently, the current productivity levels of an organization will be affected, and employees will be less motivated in finishing their duties. Therefore, with all these considerations in mind, the transformative leadership style would be the most appropriate for the middle management level. However, Abasilim et al., (2019) conducted a study among employees of the Lagos State Civil Service Commission in Nigeria and discovered that leadership style is frequently considered as one of the vital factors that can enhance employees' commitment and is seen as the live wire for achieving

organizational goals. It is highlighted that employees must be praised or recognized when they perform tasks or milestones that exceed expectations.

Globally, the situation is the industry and public sector is dramatically changing and this requires taking efficient and effective leadership styles to be practiced. In fact, public sector like DID should introduce and devise new/ better approaches of leadership that might appreciate employees' retention, job satisfaction and commitment that lead to improve the top to the bottom communication and overall organization performance. Leaders require focusing on employees as they are an organization main asset.

Though an institutional governance report exists to illustrate and communicate good application of governance within an organization, it's also an oblique indication of the nature of the link between communication, leadership, and employee dedication. Yukl (2008) argued that in order to affect the performance variables, a variety of leadership behaviours, administration programmes, structural patterns, and outside activities can be applied. In almost every field, an organization's success can be traced straight back to the leadership's objective and desire.

Ineffective communication between leadership and employees' commitment in DID is another problem that motivates this study. The act of communication must be in balance with what is communicated, because communication, especially leadership communication requires credibility (Men, 2011a). Beyond this, to effectively communicate within an organization, it is important to understand a situation, key qualities and valuable

sources of information as well as actions required by leadership styles and organizations (Putri, Mirzania, & Hartanto, 2020; Meng, et al. 2012). While this requirement for effective communication between leadership and employees is understood and clearly stated in literature, it is not the reality in DID, hence this is the importance of this study.

The search for the impact of the appropriate style of leadership required for better employees' commitment through communication has motivated this study. The problem statement further justifies the focus on how leadership styles influence employees' commitment and the role of communications in enhancing leadership practices that improve employees' commitment. According to Boerner, Eisenbeiss and Griesser (2007) leadership appears as an organizational tool that associates communication, interpersonal relationships, planning, and commitment to success and conflict resolution. Meaningfully, associating communication is the link between employees and leadership and between the organization and its surrounding environment. Communication is the process in through which make our world meaningful is the goal (Fey & Denison, 2003). Therefore, leaders need to devise new approaches which would empower employees' commitment and inspire them to move forward and thus organizational performance will be improved. Within the DID, there is a scarcity of study on the nature of the interaction between leadership practices, employee commitment, and communication.

However, Keskes, (2014) informed that previous studies have discovered contradictory findings about the relationship between transformational leadership and continuance commitment (Novianti, 2021; Simosi & Xenikou, 2010; Rafferty & Griffin,

2004). Keskes, (2014) recommended for further research on leadership styles influencing employee commitment. In addition, Ali et al. (2020), Cho et al. (2019), Saputra, & Mahaputra (2022) recommended that there is a need to conduct further research on employee's commitment and leadership styles. Similarly, Donkor et al. (2021) and Almutairi (2016), investigated the mediating effects of organizational commitment on leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) and subordinate performance in state-owned enterprises in Ghana. It is recommended that there is a need to further extent similar research in public sector organization and departments. On the similar note, few other researches such as Yahaya & Ebrahim (2016) and Eliyana, & Ma'arif (2019) informed that very few studies on transformational leadership on employee organizational commitment have been conducted, especially in developing countries. The authors recommended further expansion of organizational commitment theory by Meyer and Allen (1997) and further investigated the attributes of leadership styles and organizational commitment in other sectors.

The researcher intends to bridge this gap by conducting a research that uses the DID as a case study to inspect the association between leadership practice, employee commitment and communication. While this research focuses on understanding the relationship between these variables within the organization, findings may also benefit other organizations, and contribute to knowledge.

1.4 Research Objectives

The aim of the study is to investigate the effects of leadership styles on employees' commitment in the DID. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- i. To identify the types of leadership styles, employees' commitment and communication in DID.
- ii. To determine the effect of leadership styles on employees' commitment in DID.
- iii. To determine the effect of leadership styles on communication in DID.
- iv. To determine the effect of communication on employees' commitment in DID.
- v. To investigate the role of communication as a mediating factor in the relationship between leadership styles and employees' commitment.

These goals are motivated by a desire to discover and investigate the role of communication in the link between leadership styles and employee commitment in DID. The general purpose of this study is to present recommendations based on the findings that can enhance communication, leadership styles and employee commitments in DID.

1.5 Research Questions

This section is the fundamental core of this current study that determines the methodology, and guides all stages of inquiry, analysis, and reporting. Derived from the problem statement, and regarding the above objectives, this study focuses on figuring out the answers to the following questions:

- i. What are the types of leadership styles, employees' commitment, and communication in DID?
- ii. What is the effect of leadership styles on employees' commitments in DID?
- iii. What is the effect of leadership styles on communication in DID?
- iv. What is the effect of communication in employees' commitment in DID?
- v. Does communication play a role in the relationship between leadership styles and employees' commitment in DID?

These questions are answered in order to achieve the study objectives. They also help to determine the study scope and limitations. The next section briefly discusses the scope and limitations.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The conceptual framework is an important aspect of any deductive study. The leadership topic has become increasingly strategic for companies, according to the literature review, because it is significant to understand the profile that enables the leader to produce higher dedication in the followers. The leadership topic has become increasingly strategic for companies, according to the literature study, since it is vital to understand the profile that makes a leader capable of producing higher commitment in their followers. In the business world, it is vital for businesses to seek competitive advantages, and may assume that leaders play a key influence in employee devotion, that can help firms get a competitive edge (Yang, et al, 2011; Mathieu, Zajac & Dennis, 1999).

Previous literature has suggested that communication plays an important mediating role in different settings, such as Borah et al. (2021), Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2019) and discovered that communication mediation processes are common in independent societies globally, even in countries that have incredibly dissimilar institutional configurations and democratic norms than was observed in western democracies. There are authors (Borah et al., 2021; Polynczuk-Alenius, 2021; Shin et al., 2019; Belogolovsky & Bamberger, 2014) who have regularly supported the investigation of communication as a mediating variable in different public settings.

When adequate communication is applied and commitment is performance-based, an effective leadership style can generate better levels of commitment among employees

and drive those individuals to remain in the enterprise (Allen & Meyer, 1990). As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that businesses are interested in studies that can assist leaders in increasing employees' commitment. The decision to concentrate this inquiry on communication as a mediator of leadership to promote employee engagement at DID is prompted by the growing need for effective leadership communication, that contrasts with the labour market's scarcity of skilled leaders.

Previous studies have shown that the more committed the employees of an organization are, the lower the turnover of these employees (Allen & Meyer, 1990). As organizations are increasingly dependent on communication and information technology (Luo et al, 2016), studies that can contribute to the identification of leadership styles that can promote greater commitment of employees, are of strategic importance for organizations, since they are interested in increasing performance and reducing the turnover of these professionals. Therefore, this assumption and findings in existing studies (see Chapter Two) helped to develop the following ten hypotheses to formulate the conceptual framework for this study:

- H1: There is a significant effect between transformational leadership and employees' commitment.
- H2: There is a significant effect between transactional leadership and employees' commitment.

- H3: There is a significant effect between passive leadership and employees' commitment.
- H4: There is a significant effect between transformational leadership and communication.
- H5: There is a significant effect between transactional leadership and communication.
- H6: There is a significant effect between passive leadership and communication.
- H7: There is a significant effect between communication and employees' commitment.
- H8: Communication mediates the effects of transformational leadership on employee' commitment.
- H9: Communication mediates the effects of transactional leadership on employee' commitment.
- H10: Communication mediates the effects of passive leadership and employee' commitment.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

The hypotheses are used to form the study conceptual framework. A conceptual framework is used to illustrate the relationships between the hypotheses presented in the previous section. In this study, ten hypotheses are combined to reflect the possible effects that need to be tested in DID to determine the relationships that may be applicable to other

organizations. The interactions between these hypotheses are illustrated in Figure 1.1 which is the study conceptual framework:

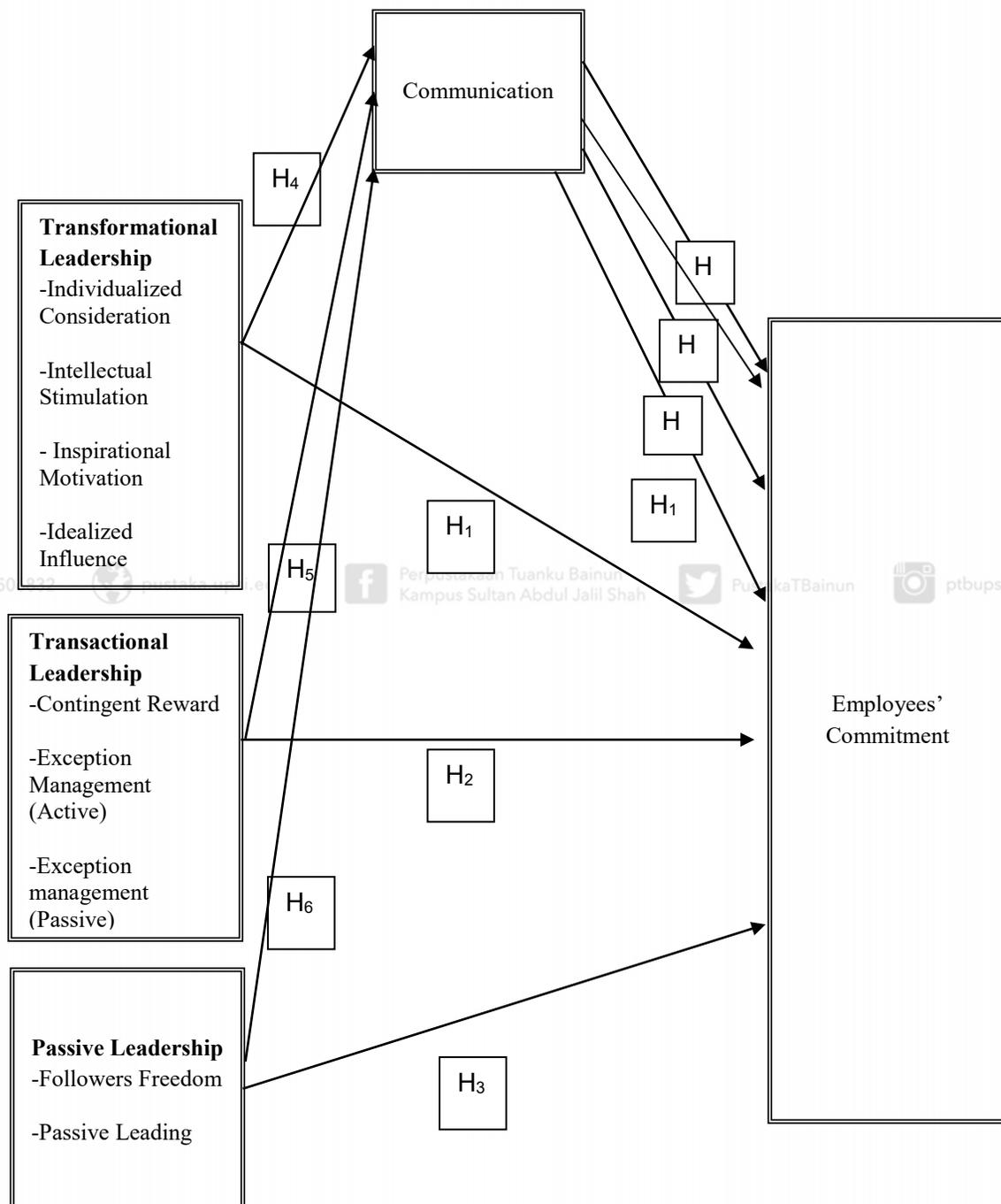


Figure 1.1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship being tested in this study. As outlined in the hypotheses, the framework shows the relationship that may likely exist between different leadership types and employees' commitment and how this may or may not be mediated by communication. Studies examined in literature (next chapter) explain how the relationship may exist in any organization, and this premise is applied to the public sector organization like DID. An extended explanation, justifications and representation of the framework is presented in the next chapter.

1.8 Research Scope and Limitations

 05- The study is based on current leadership theories, corporate communication, and employee commitment research. It focuses on the link between leadership styles, communication effectiveness, and level of employees' commitment in DID. Despite the fact that the function of communication as a mediator is tested, the scope of this study is confined to identifying the most prominent leadership style that increases employee commitment, as well as the role of communication, if any. Therefore, the study focuses on using primary data to identify and evaluate studies on the key terms; employee commitment, leadership, especially leadership styles and communication in DID. The context in which these terms are used in this study is briefly explained in the next section.

1.9 Operational Definitions

It is important to clarify the context in which specific terms are used in this study to avoid confusion. This section defines employee commitment, leadership, leadership style and communication.

Employee Commitment

Aziz et al. (2021) defined employee commitment as employee devotion towards an organization. It is a psychological attachment which results in the loyalty of an employee to an organization.

Leadership

A technique by which an executive can manage, influence, and lead the behavior and performance of others in order to achieve specific goals in a given scenario is known as leadership (Yukl, 2010). Yukl (2010) further explained that a manager's capacity to instill efficacy and excitement in his colleagues is known as leadership. These definitions and explanations of leadership were chosen as they include references to managers and subordinates (workers), both of which are significant in business studies and deep examination of leadership styles, which will be done later in this workout.

Leadership style

This is the approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Northouse, 2015). This definition is adopted in this study because it relates to the

approach taken to direct, motivate and implement goals or plans. It explains leadership based on the ability and responsibility of leaders to achieve results through people.

Passive leadership

In this study the passive leaders are those leaders who should not give the employees freedom to question every aspect of organization like rules and regulation but allow them to be innovative but accountable for their actions so as to limit the wastage and deviations from the organization goals and mission (Nawose & Roussel, 2019).

Communication

Communication is the means of achieving the objectives of an institution or organization by influencing activities of individuals and directing them to the interest of an organization in order to modify and change behavior of individuals (Walter, 2018). The reference to organization, individuals (employees) and behavior change to potentially improve employee commitment justifies the choice of this definition.

Excellent Communication

The term excellent communication is explained according to Yunus, Sari, and Patriana (2016) is a crucial element for adopting Good Public Governance (GPG) as a culture to efficiently communicate. The most important aspect of the communication aspects that followers are aware of is leaders and followers trust their leaders and its vision.

Dubai Immigration Department (DID)

The term Dubai Immigration Department is explained as ‘The Department of Naturalisation and Residency Dubai (DNRD)’ processes entry permits, visit visas, residence visas, etc. for entering and living in the UAE if you come in through Dubai. DNRD is also referred to as the Dubai Immigration Department or Dubai Naturalisation and Residence Department. DNRD was established in October 1971 by royal decree of Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai at the time (dubaifaqs.com).

Dubai Government Entities

Dubai is one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and its government operates a number of entities that are responsible for various functions and services. Here are some examples of Dubai government entities:

1. **Dubai Municipality:** Responsible for urban planning, environmental protection, and public works.
2. **Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA):** Responsible for providing electricity and water services to the emirate of Dubai.
3. **Dubai Police:** Responsible for maintaining law and order in the emirate of Dubai.
4. **The Dubai Immigration Department (DID):** is a government agency responsible for managing the immigration processes for individuals and businesses in Dubai. The DID's primary responsibility is to process visa applications, including visit visas, residence visas, employment visas, student visas, etc.

They also manage the renewal, cancellation, and transfer of visas, and issue Emirates ID cards, which are required for all residents of Dubai.

5. Dubai Health Authority (DHA): Responsible for providing healthcare services to residents of Dubai.
6. Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA): Responsible for regulating and managing the aviation industry in Dubai.
7. Dubai Customs: Responsible for regulating and facilitating trade and customs activities in Dubai.
8. Roads and Transport Authority (RTA): Responsible for planning and providing transportation services in Dubai.
9. Dubai Tourism: Responsible for promoting tourism in Dubai and developing the emirate's tourism industry.
10. Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC): A financial hub that provides a business-friendly environment for local and international financial institutions.
11. Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority (DSOA): Responsible for developing and managing a technology park in Dubai that is designed to attract and support technology companies.

Therefore, the definitions of terms adopted for this study limits the scope and terms of use to organizational context, individuals (employees) and means of achieving objectives of an organization which is to improve employee commitment. While the explanations of terms help to establish the study scope, it is also important to explain the limitations and how it is managed in this study.

1.10 Limitations

The activity of this study is limited to the UAE country context, but literature on leadership; employee commitment and communication of other countries as explained in the previous section are critically examined. Leadership, communication and commitment theories and models are also reviewed. This literature review on global organizational practices and theories are important in establishing theoretical underpinning and in developing the conceptual framework for testing the three main variables in DID where there is limited empirical data.

Lack of available or reliable empirical data on the three variables being examined is acknowledged, thus the importance of a thorough and objective literature review will be conducted in the next chapter. While this section is to acknowledge that limitations exist in this study, it also explains how these limitations are managed to limit any negative impact on overall findings and conclusions. It is however likely that these limitations may also point to the need for further research in the areas of study based on findings presented in the conclusion chapter.

1.11 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to the improvement of leadership styles in DID in Dubai city. This may be accomplished by establishing a link between leadership styles, staff commitment, and leadership communication. As a result, leaders may be able to

discern which styles to use in order for employees to be more devoted and so have a higher level of commitment with the firm.

As a consequence, they will be provided by a genuine image of what they need to drive their team group forward, with an emphasis on how to overcome the leadership issues they have by providing them with insights into how to strengthen their leadership methods. As a result, this study is important in determining the link between leadership styles, employee commitment, and communication in order to raise awareness among organizational leaders about the determinant aspects that might impact employee commitment. Leaders who are aware of potential issues will be able to put appropriate solutions in place. The present study is likely to formulate a significant contribution to the body of already existing knowledge and research.

By achieving the purpose stated in the objectives section, this study contributes to the discussion on leadership styles and identifies key issues which require further investigation. For instance, the study can be extended to investigating the origin of certain leadership problems for further studies that will create a huge impact in government departments, public sector and wider society. While this study is not conducted to examine societal problems, the trends of events in the world show the relationship between public sector leadership, leadership styles and policy pushed by leaders and stability in the society.

In this regard, the results of this study will not only be useful for leaders but also valuable for researchers who intend to conduct a research on the same issue and understand

the concept of leadership styles and communication efficiencies and their impacts on employees' commitment. Above all, this study and findings are posed to make significant contributions to the body of knowledge through publication in academic journals as conducted before (see appendix D).

1.12 Organization of the Study

The entire study is segregated with several chapters. Each and every chapter has the different role for executing the study properly. Those chapters and their explanations are presented briefly as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Explains the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives of research, the significance of the study, the scope and limitations of study followed by the summary of chapter and conclusion.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Presents an extensive literature review on leadership style, employees' commitment and communication in United Arab Emirates (UAE) context. It begins with the overview of defining leadership style with their development to provide a basic understanding, subsequently followed by sections that critically review employee commitment and

communication. Then this chapter reviews the empirical and theoretical literature to create the bridge for the research framework.

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology

Explains the methodology and conceptualization of the study. This chapter gives an overview of the methodologies to explore the research problems. Variables' operationalization, conceptual framework, research process (the ways of data acquisition, research patterns, sample examination, and data analysis) and evaluation techniques, all are included.

Chapter 4 – Data interpretation and results

 05-4506832  Presents all data and findings from the hypotheses tested in DID. The chapter also contains statistical interpretation of the data analysis conducted using the methods explained in methodology Chapter.

Chapter 5 – Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The last chapter summarizes the conclusions of the data examination and makes recommendations for various government departments based on the study results, as well as suggesting areas for future research. Moreover, these steps will incorporate the processes of all future results of this study.

1.13 Summary

The last section in Chapter 1 outlines each of the sections that will include the summary. It allows readers to understand the scope of information that will be found in every section and encourages discovering particular information without looking through the exposition page by page. Chapter 1 has described the introduction, background and current situation of the study, problem statements, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope of research, and organization of the study. The review of relevant literature and research papers on leadership style and employee commitment among Dubai government officials in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) setting will be reviewed further in Chapter 2.