

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Perceived Relationship Between Leadership Style and Organizational Commitment at Defence University

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine perceived relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment at Defence University. A correlational descriptive survey design was used in the study. The sample respondents consisted of 153 employees selected using stratified random, simple random and availability samplings. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) were used to gather data. Then data were processed using a computer program, SPSS 20, and analysed using inferential statistics such as t-test and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient(r). The results unveiled that transactional and laissez-faire styles were dominantly used while continuance commitment was the dominant component of organizational commitment. The correlation analysis further revealed that there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviours of leaders with all dimensions of organizational commitment. Transactional leadership behaviour was perceived to have a weak but significant and positive relationship with all dimensions of organizational commitment, and no significant correlation was observed between laissez-faire leadership behaviour and organizational commitment. It was concluded that it would be difficult to achieve the overall goals of the university with the existing leadership style being used and employees' commitment in the university. Thus, the study suggested different approaches to improve the existing leadership skills and employees' organizational commitment in the university under study.

Keywords: Leadership style, leadership behaviour, organizational behaviour, organizational commitment.

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INTRODUCTION

Scholars in the field of leadership argue that research and interest in the area has increased since the early parts of the twentieth century. Leadership theories have developed and passed series of schools of thought from the earliest “Great Man” and “Trait” theories to the recent transformational and transactional leadership theories (Bolden et al., 2003). Early leadership theories focused on what qualities distinguished between leaders and followers, while subsequent theories looked at other variables such as situational factors and skill levels. But in any organization leadership is the fundamental factor to inspire, motivate and create commitment to the common goal of the organization.

Researchers have also been keen to understand organizational commitment long years ago and examined its links with different organizational outcomes. Schein (2004) for instance argues that the success of an organization depends on organizational commitment. According to Panayiotis, Pepper and Phillips (2011), organizational commitment is critical because it can influence organizational outcomes as performance, absenteeism, turnover intention, and positive citizenship behaviours, all of which may ultimately affect an organization’s growth and success. If employees are committed, they are liable to increase their performance and devote their time to the organization. Due to the impact on performance and the success of an organization, leadership styles and organizational commitment received a lot of attention in workplace studies.

Leadership is a process by which a leader motivates or influences others to achieve organization goals. Bolden, Gosling, Marturano and Dennison (2003) argued

that the concept of leadership has changed over time. Various evidences suggest that leadership style is positively associated with work attitude and behaviour at both individual and organizational level (Dumdum, Lowe and Avolio, 2002). If there is an effective leadership, there will be high work performance and the organization will become effective.

According to a research conducted on leadership styles and its relationship with organizational commitment in South Africa (Garg and Ramjee, 2013), both transformational and transactional leadership styles positively correlated with organizational commitment. This shows that leadership is a critical factor to develop organizational commitment in organizations. Laissez-faire leadership style had a negative correlation with affective organizational commitment. The finding has revealed that there is a positive relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment. Almutairi (2013) also confirmed that there is a strong and positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. Bučiūnienė and Škudienė (2008) on their part indicated that transformational leadership style had a great influence on organizational commitment by creating higher level of value and morale on leaders and followers to common vision, mission and organizational goal. Bycio, Hackett and Allen (1995) further reported positive correlations between leadership behaviours such as charisma, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and contingent reward on the one hand, and affective, continuance, and normative commitment, on the other.

In achieving organizational goal, human resource is considered to be the most important resource. The well qualified, competent and skilled workforce is needed

to achieve organizational strategic goal. Recruiting, selecting, orienting and then placing employees are not the only critical issues for the achievement of organizational goals. It is also necessary to utilize the existing human resource effectively and efficiently. In order to utilize such resources, leadership style is considered being the most important determinant to increase the utilization of workforce. Brockner, Tyler and Scheneider (1992) suggested that organizations largely depend on leadership style to implement business strategies, to gain competitive advantage, to optimize human capital and to encourage organizational commitment of the organization. The committed workforce is an important success factor for organizations to achieve their desired goals. Allen and Meyer (1990) further suggest that committed employees are willing to accept organizational objectives and values. Committed employees are more motivated and dedicated towards meeting and achieving organizational goals. They are less likely to leave the organization. This explains that if employees accept organizational objectives, they are willing to dedicate the full working time to achieve such objectives. On the other hand, the negative effects associated with a lack of employee commitment include absenteeism and turnover. If the workforce is not committed in the organization then job insecurity, low trust, high stress and uncertainty will increase in the organization, which have ultimately negative effect on the performance of the organizations (Panayiotis et al., 2011).

Thus, the commitment of employees in organizations is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the organizational objectives. Leadership styles also play a vital role for the effectiveness of the organization through motivating employees and communicating strategic plan and policy of the

organization. Therefore, it is logically understood that leadership styles would have significant relationship with organizational commitment.

Review of the Literature

Scholars argue that research interest in leadership increased during the early part of the twentieth century. Leadership theories have developed and passed series of 'schools of thought' from "Great Man" and "Trait" theories to "Transformational" leadership (Bolden et al., 2003). Early leadership theories focused on what qualities distinguished between leaders and followers, while subsequent theories looked at other variables such as situational factors and skill level.

Unlike well-established disciplines like philosophy, economics or sociology, leadership is an elusive concept. Burns (1978) cited in Awan and Mahmood (2009) stated that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth. So, it is not surprising that there are a number of possible definitions for leadership. These definitions vary greatly because they focus on different dimensions of the construct. Some definitions focus on the relationship between desired outcomes and the activities of leaders, others on the relationship between leaders and followers, and still others on the leadership situation itself, and on the dynamic interaction of all three. However, Yukl (2008) defines leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. In other words, leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization. Armstrong

(2009) regarded leadership as a process of getting people to do their best to achieve desired results. Northouse (2007) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

Leadership is a process by which a leader motivates or influences others to achieve organization goals. Bolden, Gosling, Marturano and Dennison (2003) argued that the concept of leadership has changed over time. According to Antonakis, Avolio and Sivasubramaniam (2003) full range leadership theory (FRLT) is one of the new leadership theories proposed by Avolio and Bass in 1991. It describes a full range of influencing styles from non-leadership to powerful transformational leadership behaviour. The model comprising three typologies of leadership behaviours: Transformational, Transactional, and non-transactional laissez-faire leadership.

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is the highest level of leadership with regard to activity level and effect on individual, group and organizational outcomes. Bass and Avolio (1994) described that transformational leadership involves inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenges and support. Bass (1999) argued that transformational leadership refers to the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration. Yukl (2008) argued that

transformational leaders make followers more aware of the importance and value of the work and induce followers to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization. The leaders develop follower skills and confidence to prepare them to assume more responsibility in an empowered organization. The leaders provide support and encouragement when necessary to maintain enthusiasm and effort in the face of obstacles, difficulties, and fatigue. As a result of this influence, followers feel trust and respect toward the leader, and they are motivated to do more than they are originally expected to do.

The ultimate goal of transformational leadership is to 'transform' people and organization to change, enlarge vision, insight, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behaviour congruent with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building (Bass,1997).

Transformational leaders encourage problem solving in followers rather than constantly providing solutions and directions and a greater pool of knowledge. Bass and Avolio (1994) suggest that a consequence of this behaviour is that followers develop the capacity to solve future problems which might be unforeseen by the leader. Transformational leaders are proactive, raise follower awareness for uplifting collective interests, and help followers achieve extraordinary goals. Transformational leaders achieve these maximum results in the organization by employing one or more of behaviours which is presented in the following table.

Summaries of Transformational Leadership Behaviour

Behaviours	Key indicators
Idealized Attributes	Builds trust, confidence and installs pride
Idealized Behaviours	Emphasizes collective sense of mission, and talks about values and beliefs.
Inspirational Motivation	Raises expectations and beliefs concerning the mission or vision. Expresses enthusiasm, optimism, and confidence
Intellectual Stimulation	Challenges old assumptions and stimulates idea generation. Encourages problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity
Individualized Consideration	Determines individual needs and raises them to higher levels. Develops, coaches, and teaches.

Transactional Leadership Style

Transactional leadership is an exchange process based on the fulfilment of contractual obligations and is typically represented as setting objectives and monitoring and controlling outcomes (Antonakis et al., 2003). According to Bass et al. (2003), transactional leadership occurs when the leader sets expectations, standards, or goals to reward or discipline a follower depending on the adequacy of a follower’s performance. Transactional Leadership focuses on everything in terms of explicit and implicit contractual relationships. All job assignments are explicitly spelled out along with conditions of employment, disciplinary codes, and benefit structures. Self-interests are stressed. Employees work as independently as possible from their colleagues.

Transactional leadership is theorized to include contingent reward leadership, management by exception active and management by exception passive (Antoniadis et al., 2003). Transactional leaders display both constructive and

corrective behaviours. Constructive behaviour entails contingent reward, and corrective dimension take in management by exception. Contingent reward involves the clarification of the work required to obtain rewards and the use of incentives and contingent reward to exert influence. It considers follower expectations and offers recognition when goals are achieved. The clarification of goals and objectives and providing recognition once goals are achieved should result in individuals and groups achieving expected levels of performance (Bass, 1985). Active management by exception refers to the leader setting the standards for compliance as well as for what constitutes ineffective performance, and may include punishing followers for non-compliance with those standards. This style of leadership implies close monitoring for deviances, mistakes, and errors and then taking corrective action as quickly as possible when they occur. Therefore, transactional leaders achieve these maximum results in the organization by employing one or more of the behaviour presented in the following table.

Summaries of Transactional Leadership Behaviour

Behaviours	Key indicators
Contingent Reward	Clarifies objectives and exchanges rewards for performance.
Management-by-Exception: Active	Takes corrective actions when mistakes occur leaders systematically monitor mistakes and deviations for standards and take corrective action when mistakes occur.
Management-by-Exception: Passive	Takes corrective actions when mistakes occur – leaders only intervene to make corrections when something goes wrong. They do not search for mistakes.

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire in French literally means to let people do as they choose. Laissez-faire leadership represents the absence of a transaction of sorts with respect to leadership in which the leader avoids making decisions, abdicates responsibility, and does not use their authority. It is considered active to the extent that the leader chooses to avoid taking action. This component is generally considered the most passive and ineffective form of leadership (Antonakis et al., 2003). Yukl (2008) further argued that laissez-faire leader shows passive indifference about the task and subordinates for example ignoring problems and ignoring subordinate needs. It is best described as the absence of effective leadership rather than as an example of transactional leadership. Deluga (1990) also describes the laissez-faire leader as an extreme passive leader who is reluctant to influence subordinates' considerable freedom, to the point of abdicating his/her responsibilities. There is no relationship exchange between the leader and the followers. The key indicators of this leadership style are those leaders who avoid making decisions, abdicate responsibilities, refuse to take sides in a dispute and shows lack of interest in what is going on.

Organizational Commitment

There have been many definitions that appeared over the years of organizational

commitment. Porter and Steers(1982) cited in Kondalkar (2007) define organizational commitment as a strong desire to remain member of a particular organization, willingness to exert high level of effort on behalf of the organization and a definite belief in and acceptance of value and goals of the organization. In other words, employees display an attitude of belonging to the organization. It indicates that committed employees devote their time to the organization and they consider themselves as a part of the organization. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), organizational commitment is defined as a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue employment with the organization. It is the psychological bond of the employees with the organization because of shared beliefs and values. In relation to this, organizational commitment is the relative strength of the employee's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Employees who are strongly committed are those who are least likely to leave the organization. Due to this commitment, employees who has positive contribution to the success of the organization by devoting full time, accepting and implementing the organizational goals and objectives. In other words they are ready to work extra time for the sake of the success of the organization.

Research shows that organizational commitment is critical because it can influence organizational outcomes as performance, absenteeism, quitting or turnover intention, and positive citizenship behaviours, all of which may ultimately affect an organization's growth and success (Panayiotis et al., 2011). If employees are committed, they are liable to dedicate full working time to the organization which directly decrease absenteeism and employee turnover in the organization.

In general, organizational commitment is a psychological bond of the employees with the organization because of shared vision, beliefs and value, employees' willingness to make use of high level of effort, acceptance of value and goals for the sake of long term success of the organization. If there is high level of organizational commitment in the organization, employees understand and share the value and beliefs of the organization, they want to be part of the organization and working in the organization give maximum effort to reach the goals of the organization.

Components of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been conceptualized and measured in various ways. The most popular conceptualization of organizational commitment is Allen and Meyer's theory. They reviewed the literature and found that organizational commitment comprises three components: a) Affective attachment caused by psychological factors, called affective commitment: employees intend to remain with the organization because they want to; b) attachment caused by the perceived cost, called continuance commitment: employees intend to remain with the organization because they need to; c) attachment caused by moral factors such as obligation, called normative commitment: employees intend to remain with the

organization because they feel they ought to (Allen & Meyer,1990).

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment represents the individual's emotional attachment to the organization. According to (Allen & Meyer, 1990), affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to, involvement in, and identification with the organization and its goals. Affective commitment involves three aspects such as the formation of an emotional attachment to an organization, identification with, and the desire to maintain organizational membership. In this context, affective commitment reflects the identification and commitment situation where the employees stay in the organization with their own will. Allen and Meyer (1990) further argued that individuals will develop emotional attachment to an organization when they identify with the goals of the organization and are willing to assist the organization in achieving these goals. They further explain that identification with an organization happens when the employee's own values are in harmony with organizational values and the employee is able to internalize the values and goals of the organization.

Affective commitment is an attitudinal based and in this situation the employees look at themselves as a part of the organization. Individuals with high levels of affective commitment continue employment because they want to. Therefore, it is very important for organizations to have employees feeling affective commitment since strong affective commitment means employees willing to stay in the organization and accepting its objectives and values (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment involves a person's bond to an organization based on what it would cost that person to leave the organization. It originates from the needs of employees to stay in the organization considering the costs of leaving. It refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization as well as the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with non-transferable investments that include things such as retirement, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). These authors further explained continuance commitment as a form of psychological attachment to an employing organization that reflects an employee's presence in an organization as the high costs involved in leaving the current organization.

Allen and Meyer (1990) again indicated that, in addition to the fear of losing investments, individuals develop this commitment because of a perceived lack of alternatives and this would be based on perceptions of employment options outside the organization where employees believe they do not have the skills required to compete for positions in another field or who work in environments where the skills and training they get are very industry specific. As a result, such employees could feel compelled to commit to the organization because of the monetary, social, psychological and other costs associated with leaving the organization. Therefore, in order to retain employees who are continuance committed, the organization needs to give more attention and recognition to elements that improve employees' morale to be affectively committed.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment involves a feeling of moral obligation to continue working for a particular organization. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel they ought to remain with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). These authors argue that the moral obligation of normative commitment arises either through the process of socialization within the society or the organization. It can be explained by other commitments such as marriage, family, religion, etc. Therefore, when it comes to one's commitment to their place of employment, they often feel like they have a moral obligation to the organization (Meyer et al., 2001).

The three aspects of organizational commitment have different basis. It can be assumed that these aspects can exist at the same time. It is important to realize that the three organizational commitment dimensions are not mutually exclusive where by an employee can develop one type of organizational commitment, any combination of them or all of the three aspects of organizational commitment. The three aspects of organizational commitment differ only on the basis of their underlying motives and outcomes (Becker, 1992).

Employee retention, attendance, organizational citizenship, and job performance are organizational commitment outcomes. For example, an employee with affective commitment will stay with an organization and be willing to exert more effort in organizational activities where as an employee with continuance commitment may stay with the organization but the employee may not be willing to exert any more effort to organizational actions.

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), there is no guidance about expected, desired, average or ideal means for

affective, continuance and normative commitment scores. But researchers set a desired pattern having the highest scores for affective commitment, followed by normative commitment and then continuance commitment. In general, when employees have good relationship with their immediate work group, they have higher level of commitment to the overall organizational commitment.

The link between Leadership Style and Organizational Commitment

Earlier researches have dedicated a great deal of attention to the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment. But the findings in this area are not consistent. Several researchers discovered that the dimensions of leadership style (transformational, transactional and laissez-fair) have positive relationship with organizational commitment. For instance, Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009) indicated that ethical leadership behaviour has a positive impact on employees' organizational commitment. Similarly, some investigated employees' perceptions of leadership style among leaders and its impact on organizational commitment and found that leadership style plays an important role in employees' organizational commitment. Garg and Ramjee (2013) concluded that the leadership style of a manager can lead to higher measure of organizational commitment.

Similarly, Bass and Avolio (1993) also claimed that organizations have a kind of culture, which is represented by the leaders who use transactional or transformational leadership styles. According to their findings, transactional culture creates only short-term commitment, whereas transformational culture creates long-term commitment. It is assumed that transformational leadership style has

positive impact on the organizational commitment.

In contrast, researchers discovered no association between leadership style and organizational commitment. For instance, Awan and Mahmood (2009) in their study indicated that laissez-fair leadership style has no effect on organizational commitment.

Statement of the Problem

In achieving organizational goal, human resource is considered to be the most important resource. The well qualified, competent and skilled workforce is needed to achieve organizational strategic goal. Recruiting, selecting, orienting and then placing employees are not the only critical issues for the achievement of organizational goal. It is also necessary to utilize the existing human resource effectively and efficiently. In order to utilize such resources, leadership is considered being the most important determinant to increase the utilization of workforce. Brockner, Tyler and Scheneider (1992) suggested that organizations largely depend on leadership style to implement business strategies, to gain competitive advantage, to optimize human capital and to encourage organizational commitment of the organization. The committed workforce is an important success factor for organizations to achieve their desired goals. Allen and Meyer (1990) further suggested that committed employees are willing to accept organizational objectives and values. Committed employees are more motivated and dedicated towards meeting and achieving organizational goals. They are less likely to leave the organization. This explains that if employees accept organizational objectives, they are willing to dedicate the full working time to achieve such objectives. On the other hand, the negative effects associated with a lack of employee commitment include absenteeism

and turnover. If the workforce is not committed in the organization then job insecurity, low trust, high stress and uncertainty will increase in the organization, which have ultimately negative effect on the performance of the organizations (Panayiotis et al., 2011).

Thus, the commitment of employees in organizations is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the organizational objectives. Leadership styles also play a vital role for the effectiveness of the organization through motivating employees and communicating strategic plan and policy of the organization. Therefore, it is logical to understand that leadership styles would have significant relationship with organizational commitment.

From the Ethiopian context, a study by Temesgen (2011) covered different aspects of leadership and its relationship with organizational commitment at private higher education institutions. This study suggested that there is a positive and significant relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment. However, private higher education institutions have different organizational culture, employees' incentive strategies, rule and regulations, employment policy etc. These characteristics are completely different from government higher education institutions and hence there is a need to conduct further research which this study tries to look at. Moreover, the influence of leadership style on organizational commitment has not been adequately addressed in government higher education institutions. Hence, this study would fill in this research gap on the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment of at Defence University. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, three basic questions were formulated:

What is the relationship between transformational leadership style and affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments at Defence University as perceived by respondents?

What is the relationship between transactional leadership style and affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments at Defence University as perceived by respondents?

What is the relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments at Defence University as perceived by respondents?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to determine the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment at Defence University. The specific objectives of this study were:-

To identify employees' perceptions of the relationship between transformational leadership style and the different dimensions of organizational commitment at Defence University

To examine employees' perceptions of the relationship between transactional leadership style and organizational commitment dimensions at Defence University.

To identify employees' perceptions of the relationships between laissez-faire leadership style and organizational commitment dimensions at Defence University.

Delimitation of the Study

According to the organizational structure of Defence University, there were five different colleges: Staff and Command College, Engineering College, Health Science College, Military Academy and TVET College. Because of the different programs offered, all the five colleges were selected and included in this study.

Besides, leadership style was examined for all levels, lower, middle and top levels of the university.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study was failure to include qualitative data using interviews and focus group discussions where respondents were not given the chance to provide their opinions and limited their responses to close ended items in the standardized questionnaires. The forced-choice measure on the two standardized questionnaires did not permit rating someone higher on everything and this may lead to some differences concerning the scores for the items in the questionnaire.

Significances of the Study

The study would be of great significance in several ways. First of all, the finding of the study would help Defence University to come up with an appropriate leadership style and organizational commitment policies that can improve employees' performance. Secondly, the research findings would help the leaders to exercise an effective leadership style and organizational commitment dimensions so as to improve employees' performance at Defence University. The findings also would be important to create awareness about the most determinant factor that can build organizational commitment at Defence University. The study will also contribute to the body of knowledge by providing information on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment from the Ethiopian context. In addition to this, the findings of this will add value to the knowledge in other leadership styles and employees commitment studies and would give directions for other researchers interested to conduct further study.

Operational Definition of Terms

Leadership style: in this study refers to the leadership style often used by leaders at Defence University at different levels as rated by sample respondents using a standardized Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

Organizational commitment: refers to employees' organizational commitment component at Defence University measured using the mean ratings of sample respondents using a standardized Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ).

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

This study was conducted with a purpose of examining perceived relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment at Defence University using sample respondents via questionnaires. A quantitative research approach was considered to be appropriate to gather data and address the research questions of this study. The approach is considered as quantitative since the data collected from sample respondents with the help of questionnaires containing items set in a five point Likert scale were first coded and converted in to numbers for analysis using SPSS 20. This is because it leads to accurate conclusion about the nature of the world and it can also potentially result in accurate statements about the way the world really is and perceived by respondents (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008). A correlational descriptive survey design was used to achieve the purpose of the study since it helps to determine the relationship between perceived leadership style and organizational commitment and collecting data to answer basic questions of the study.

Sampling Techniques

The sample respondents for this study were drawn from the total population of 1168 employees who were working at Defence University during the time of the study. In order to arrive at statistically valid conclusion, a total of 153 sample respondents were selected and included to provide bits of information to the study. The sample size was enough to represent the total population and generalizability of data collected. Combinations of stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select samples to ensure that every component of the total population was included in the sample. In order to determine the number of respondents from each college, first the population was stratified or grouped in to five subgroups called strata (colleges) and then each college was further grouped in to academic and non-academic staff. Second, both staffs were divided in to different departments and a sample size was determined proportionately. This means the number of sample respondents from each department was determined based on their number. After determining the number of respondents from each stratum, sample respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique from the list of staff at each department. All department heads were selected using availability sampling. All respondents were Ethiopians. In the selection of individual male and female respondents no special criteria was considered to include more female respondents since the study was not designed to investigate gender differences in perception. Hence, sample respondents were selected at random from the list at each department to give equal chance to all staff members regardless of their sexes.

Data Gathering Instruments

In order to obtain relevant data for the study primary source of data was

considered. Basically primary data was collected from employees and leaders to address the research questions and hypotheses of the study. Two separate instruments were used to collect relevant data for this research. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) for leadership styles and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) for organizational commitment were used to obtain quantitative information. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was formulated from the Full Range Leadership Development theory consisting of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviours with nine subscales (Bass and Avolio, 1997). Factors representing transformational leadership include idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behaviour), inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. Transactional leadership style was represented by two factors called contingent rewards and management-by-exception. Management-by-exception was further divided into Management-by-exception-active (MBEA) and Management-by-exception-passive (MBEP). The MLQ has been improved and tested since 1985 where many versions of the questionnaire have been developed. The latest version Form 5X was used in this study. Participants were asked to assess and testify as to how frequently the behaviours described by each of the statements were exhibited by their leaders. The MLQ consists of two versions known as the 'later version' and the 'self-later version'. These two versions consisted of exactly the same statements, except that they were written from different perspectives. In this study, leaders completed the self-later MLQ, by rating themselves in terms of the transformational, transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles while subordinates also completed the later version of the

same questionnaire. The items in the questionnaire were rated using a 5 point Likert scale labelled as 0= not at all, 1= once in a while, 2=sometimes, 3= fairly often and 4= frequently, if not always. The reliability and validity of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was tested. Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999) confirmed the reliability of MLQ by using a large pool of data (N=1394). Avolio, Bass and Jung as cited by Humphreys (2001) reported reliabilities for total items and for each of the leadership factor scales range from 0.74 to 0.94 which is greater than the minimum (0.70) suggested by different authorities and used as it is in this study.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) is a model used to measure employee's organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). For this study, it is selected as the instrument to measure employee's commitment. OCQ consists of three dimensions as affective, continuance and normative commitments. It is a self-scoring questionnaire and the responses to each of the 12 items (4 items for each dimension) were rated using a 5-point Likert scale labelled as 0 = strongly disagree, 1 = disagree, 2 = neither agree nor disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree. High score shows high employees' organizational commitment perception while low score implies low perception in the scale. Different studies reported the reliability of the OCQ since 1985 and reported the reliabilities for each part of the items in the questionnaire were 0.82 for affective, 0.73 for continuance and 0.76 for normative. In this study a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients were calculated to estimate the reliability of the MLQ and OCQ instruments and the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for all the MLQ items was $r = 0.83$ and for OCQ it was found to be $r = 0.75$. According to Singh (2007), the r value of

0.70 or more is usually treated as a rule of thumb to denote an accepted level of reliability. Hence, in this study, both MLQ and OCQ instruments were reliable measures of leadership behaviour and organizational commitment at Defence University.

Variables of the Study

For this study, Full Range Leadership behaviours of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire were independent variables while the three measures of organizational commitment: affective, continuance and normative commitments were dependent variables of the study.

Data Analysis

The survey data collected using the two standardized questionnaires of MLQ and OCQ was first coded, summarized and then entered in to SPSS version 20 for analysis. In the process of data analysis and interpretation frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation of employees' response to leadership styles and organizational commitment scales were calculated and used to determine perceived employees' ratings of leadership styles and their perceived organizational commitment. On top of this, inferential statistics t-test was used to compare the MLQ of leaders and subordinates ratings to identify if there was significant difference between the two samples on all the subscale of perceived leadership styles. A two-tailed Pearson Correlation (Correlation coefficient (r)) was used to investigate the relationship between different leadership styles and organizational commitment dimensions.. The level of significance in this study was determined at 0.05 to reject or fail to reject the null hypotheses. This means if the p -value is less than the alpha level of 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). On the other hand, if the p -value was greater than the alpha level of 0.05

($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected and conclude that there was no significant relationship between the two variables under treatment i.e. perceived leadership styles and organizational commitment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total 153 questionnaires (40 for leaders and 113 for subordinates) were distributed where a total of 126 questionnaires with a response rate of 82.4 % were returned and used in data analysis. Out of these respondents ($n=119$, 94.4% and $n=7$, 5.6% were male and female respondents respectively. The majority of the

respondents (30.2%, $n=38$) were between the age ranges of 31 and 35; $n=29$ (23 %) were found to be in the age ranges of 36 and 40 years, and 26.2% or $n=33$ were above 41 years. Besides, the majority of respondents, ($n=62$, 49.2%) had master's degrees; 43.7 % or $n=55$ bachelor degrees, and there meaning ($n=2$) had third degrees or PhDs. The majority ($n=91$, 72.2 %) of the respondents have work experiences of 1 to 5 years in their current positions; 21.4% ($n=27$), 6.3 % ($n=8$) of the respondents served between 6 and 10 years in the current positions while 43.7% ($n=55$) indicated that they had served for more than 11 years in the Ministry of Defence.

Perceived Leadership Style and Organizational Commitment at Defence University

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on Leadership Styles and Organizational Commitment Dimensions

Dimension	Code	Valid (N)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Idealized influence(Attributed)	IA	126	2.35	0.76
Idealized influence (Behaviour)	IB	126	2.38	0.86
Inspirational motivation	IM	126	2.32	0.89
Intellectual stimulation	IS	126	2.35	0.79
Individual Consideration	IC	126	2.21	0.81
Contingent Reward	CR	126	2.46	0.81
Management-by-exception (Active)	MBEA	126	2.03	0.72
Management-by-exception (Passive)	MBEP	126	1.67	0.82
Laissez-Faire	LF	126	1.50	0.78
Affective commitment	AF	94	1.97	0.73
Continuance commitment	CC	94	2.44	0.66
Normative commitment	NC	94	2.18	0.70

Table 1 above shows the mean and standard deviation for the five transformational leadership subscales, three transactional leadership subscales, one laissez-faire subscale and the three organizational commitment scales or components. As the number of sample respondents given in the above table indicates, a total of 126 respondents (40 leaders and 113 sample respondents) included in the study were

asked to rate the items in the questionnaire set to collect data on leadership styles in the college. However, leaders were excluded from responding to the second questionnaire on organizational commitment which was meant only for their subordinates. Accordingly, out of the total 113 subordinates or sample respondents only 94 of them were correctly responded to this part and their responses

were presented in the table above. As one can infer from data in the table, the mean and standard deviation for each of the transformational leadership subscales were between 2.21 to 2.38 and 0.76 to 0.89 respectively. Whereas for each of the transactional leadership subscale the mean and standard deviation range from 1.67 to 2.46 and 0.72 to 0.82 consequently. The mean and standard deviation for laissez-faire leadership style was 1.50 and 0.78 respectively. In all of these cases the values of the standard deviations were very low. This indicates that all the mean ratings of sample respondents were closer together or clustered around the mean with very limited variability among sample respondents of the study.

The ideal level for the most effective leadership style suggested by Bass and Avolio (1997) were the mean score of greater or equal to 3 for idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behaviour), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual considerations. As it could be inferred from the data in table 1 above, the mean scores for transformational leadership subscales were between 2.21 to 2.38 and less than Bass and Avolio's suggestion. This shows that leaders at Defence University were less likely to be transformational leaders. The ultimate goal of transformational leadership is instilling pride, inspiring a shared vision, talking optimistically, encouraging creativity, and placing much importance in coaching or training which means these were not achieved. Besides, respondents perceived their leaders as demonstrating less of the transformational leadership behaviour and fail to act as role model for their followers, building commitment and loyalty, increasing motivation and encouraging creative ideas.

On the other hand, Bass and Avolio (1997) suggested a mean score of 2 for contingent reward, 1 to 2 for management-by-exception (active) and between 1 and 0 for management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire. The mean scores in this study were 2.46 for contingent reward, 2.03 for Management-by-exception (Active), 1.67 for Management-by-exception (Passive), and 1.5 for Laissez-faire. The overall scores in this study were found to be above the recommended ranges. This implies that leaders were perceived to demonstrate the transactional and laissez-faire behaviours at Defence University. On top of this, sample respondents of the study perceived their leaders as specifying the standards for compliance or ineffective performance to monitor deviances, mistakes and errors then taking corrective action quickly after problems were created (Management by exception) passive. Based on the high scores or mean rating for laissez-faire leadership style, employees perceived that their leaders were using their authority to make decision and accept responsibilities ignoring problems and subordinates' needs.

As indicated in table 1 above, the range of mean and standard deviation for each of the organizational commitment scales were calculated between 1.97 to 2.44 and 0.66 to 0.73 respectively. There is no guidance or ideal means for organizational commitment scales. However, Meyer and Allen (1997) suggested a desired pattern for organizational commitment where the highest score was for affective commitment, followed by normative commitment and then continuance commitment. Accordingly, the highest mean rating was that of continuance commitment (2.44), which implies that employees have strong continuance commitment at Defence University. This means employees in the university have

high bond to it because of the cost and the risk associated with leaving the organization. This implies that employees at Defence University perceived that the organization gives more attention to monetary value for improving employee's morale. The mean score for normative commitment was 2.17 which indicate that employees have high level of feeling of moral obligation to continue working for the university. The mean score for affective commitment was 1.97 which implies that employees have relatively low emotional attachment to, involvement in and identification with the organization and its goal. This indicates that employees were not willing to stay in the University and accepting its objectives and values. The organization did not give attention to

change the attitude of employees with positive feeling towards the organization and to internalize the vision, mission and values of the organization. In general, respondents did not consider themselves as belonging to the university in general. Over all, in all of the above cases the low values of the standard deviations indicates that all the mean ratings of sample respondents were closer together around the mean with very limited variability in their mean ratings among sample respondents of the study for the items in the questionnaires.

In this study a t-test result presented in table 2 below was used to compare the mean ratings between leaders and subordinates.

Table 2: Comparison for MLQ (Leaders and Subordinates) Responses

Variables	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	Leaders	32	2.73	0.49	0.08
	Subordinates	94	2.22	0.79	0.08
Idealized Influence (Behaviour)	Leaders	32	3.06	0.57	0.10
	Subordinates	94	2.15	0.82	0.08
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.96	0.65	0.11
	Subordinates	94	2.09	0.86	0.08
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.87	0.68	0.12
	Subordinates	94	2.17	0.74	0.07
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.86	0.68	0.12
	Subordinates	94	1.98	0.73	0.07
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.90	0.50	0.09
	Subordinates	94	2.12	0.68	0.07
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.93	0.68	0.12
	Subordinates	94	2.30	0.79	0.08
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.22	0.67	0.11
	Subordinates	94	1.96	0.72	0.07
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	1.49	0.97	0.17
	Subordinates	94	1.73	0.75	0.07
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	2.21	0.45	0.08
	Subordinates	94	2.00	0.52	0.05
Inspirational Motivation	Leaders	32	1.53	0.90	0.15
	Subordinates	94	1.49	0.74	0.07

According to data in table 2, for all leadership style subscales (except idealized behaviour) the mean scores for leaders were higher than those for subordinates. The mean score for leader's responses on transformational leadership was 2.90 with a standard deviation of 0.09 whereas the mean score for subordinates was 2.12 with a standard deviation of 0.68. This shows that transformational leadership mean score for leaders was higher than for the subordinates. A critical examination of the standard deviations indicated very low for leaders but a little bit higher for their subordinates which mean leaders' mean ratings were more closer together than that of their subordinates' mean ratings. Yet, in both cases the standard deviations were not high indicating very low variability or differences between the mean ratings of the two groups from the population mean. According to Bass and Avolio (1997), transformational leadership subscale mean scores are less than 3 but the mean score of Idealized influence (behaviour) for leaders (3.06) was slightly greater than that of Bass and Avolio's (1997) suggestion. Individualized consideration mean score for subordinates was marginally lower than that of their leaders. This indicates that there was a difference between leadership behaviour that were practiced by leaders and behaviour that were being perceived by subordinates.

The overall subscales of transactional leadership mean score for leaders were slightly higher than that of their subordinates. In group, transactional leadership mean scores for leaders was 2.22 and for subordinates it was 2.00. This shows that there was a slight difference between leadership behaviour that leaders were being practicing and subordinates

perceptions. Similarly, the laissez-faire mean score for leader was 1.53 with standard deviation of 0.90 and subordinates mean score was 1.49 with a standard deviation of 0.74. This shows that the mean and standard deviation values of the leaders' ratings for laissez-faire leadership scale were higher than that of their subordinates mean ratings. Yet, the differences in the standard deviations between the two groups of respondents was not as such high which means the variability in their mean ratings were low and closer to each other.

Generally, it can be seen from table 2 above that there were differences in both leaders and subordinates mean scores, standard deviation and standard error means. The difference in both leaders and subordinates mean scores may be due to the difference in sample size of the leaders (n=32) and subordinates (n=94). The result of standard deviation shows that subordinates have marginally higher standard deviation than subordinates. If one considers the standard error mean, the result indicates that the leaders response have higher standard error mean than that of subordinates. According to (Kothari, 2008) standard error mean gives an idea about the reliability and perception of a sample. The smaller the standard error mean, the greater the uniformity of sample distribution.

The variation in mean scores, standard deviation and standard error mean between leaders and subordinates were due to differences between leadership behaviour which were being practiced by leaders and leadership behaviour which were actually being implemented as perceived by their subordinates.

Table 3: An independent t-test for equality of mean scores between leaders and subordinates

Variables	t-test for equality of means	t	d.f	Sig. (2-tailed)
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	Equal variances assumed	3.405	124	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed	4.270	87.933	0.000
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	Equal variances assumed	5.751	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	6.802	76.096	0.000
Inspirational Motivation	Equal variances assumed	5.210	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	5.953	70.168	0.000
Intellectual Stimulation Individual	Equal variances assumed	4.689	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	4.871	57.493	0.000
Consideration Transformational	Equal variances assumed	5.913	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	6.110	56.902	0.000
Leadership Contingent Reward	Equal variances assumed	5.877	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	6.768	71.445	0.000
Management-by-Exception (Active)	Equal variances assumed	4.007	124	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed	4.287	60.894	0.000
Management-by-Exception (Passive)	Equal variances assumed	1.825	124	0.070
	Equal variances not assumed	1.890	57.121	0.064
Transactional Leadership	Equal variances assumed	-1.477	124	0.142
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.307	44.472	0.198
Laissez-Faire Leadership	Equal variances assumed	2.060	124	0.042
	Equal variances not assumed	2.208	61.131	0.031
	Equal variances assumed	0.211	124	0.834
	Equal variances not assumed	0.192	46.224	0.849

An independent t-test analysis for equality of mean scores for this study were calculated to measure whether there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of leaders and their subordinates. A 95% ($p < 0.05$) confidence interval was used. The t-test analysis result was presented in the table 3 above.

An independent t-test result in table 3 above indicates that there were statistically significant differences between the two samples (leaders and subordinates) in all dimensions of leadership except management-by-exception (active), management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire since the p-values were below the 0.05 significant levels. This indicates that there was major difference on the leadership behaviour which was practiced

by leaders as perceived by leaders themselves and their subordinates' perception. The p-values of management-by-exception (active), management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire leadership dimensions were above the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there were no significant differences in the means of the two groups of respondents.

The link between Leadership Styles and Organizational Commitment

In order to determine the relationships between leadership style and organizational commitment, a two-tailed Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment. According to Somwkh and Lewin (2005), if correlation

coefficient (r) is below 0.33 it is considered to be a weak relationship; if correlation coefficient (r) is between 0.34 and 0.66 it indicates a medium strength relationship; and if correlation coefficient (r) is between 0.67 and 0.99 it indicates a strong

relationship. In this study significance levels of 0.05 or 0.01 were taken as a standard for a two-tailed test of correlation. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was presented in table 4 below.

Table 4: Relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment

		TF	TA	LF	AC	CC	NC
TF	Pearson Correlation	1.000					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
TA	N	126					
	Pearson Correlation	.610(**)	1.000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
LF	N	126	126				
	Pearson Correlation	-.092	.348(**)	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.305	.000				
AC	N	126	126	126			
	Pearson Correlation	.344(**)	.322(**)	.085	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.416			
CC	N	94	94	94	94		
	Pearson Correlation	.296(**)	.313(**)	.184	.613(**)	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.002	.076	.000		
NC	N	94	94	94	94	94	
	Pearson Correlation	.469(**)	.563(**)	.106	.336(**)	.425(**)	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.307	.001	.000	
	N	94	94	94	94	94	94

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

The relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment was investigated using correlation analysis which is presented in table 4 above. Based on these correlation analyses, each research hypothesis was discussed. The results for each were given below.

transformational leadership and affective commitment (r=0.34, P<0.001). This implies that there was a medium and positive relationship between transformational leadership style and affective commitment as perceived by respondents.

From data in table 4 above it is evident that there was a relatively medium but significant positive relationship between

From data in table 4 above it is clear that there was a relatively weak but significant positive relationship between

transformational leadership and continuance commitment ($r=0.296$, $P<0.004$). The data indicates that there was a positive but weak relationship between transformational leadership style and continuance commitment at the 0.05 level of confidence.

From data in table 4 above it is clear that there is a relatively medium and significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and normative commitment ($r=0.469$, $P<0.000$). Based on the result, it was concluded that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and normative commitment of employees as perceived by respondents.

From data in table 4 above it is clear that there is a relatively weak but significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and affective commitment ($r=0.322$, $P<0.002$) which implies that there was a positive relationship between transactional leadership style and affective commitment as perceived by respondents.

Data in table 4 above further indicated is a relatively weak but significant positive relationship between transactional leadership style and continuance commitment ($r=0.313$, $P<0.002$). The result indicates that there was a positive but weak relationship between transactional leadership style and continuance commitment of employees as perceived by respondents.

The relationship between transactional leadership style and normative commitment presented in table 4 above indicated a relatively medium but significant and positive relationship between the two ($r=0.563$, $P<0.000$). It indicates that there was a positive and medium relationship between transactional leadership and

normative commitment of employees as perceived by respondents.

From data in table 4 above it is clear to observe that there was a relatively weak and no significant relationship between laissez-faire leadership and affective commitment ($r=0.085$, $P<0.416$). As a result, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and employees normative commitment as perceived by respondents.

From data in table 4 above it is clearly indicated that there was a relatively weak but no significant relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and continuance commitment ($r=0.184$, $P<0.076$) of employees. Based on the result, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between perceived laissez-faire leadership style and employees' continuance commitment at Defence University.

From data presented in table 4 above, it is understood that there was relatively weak but no significant relationship between perceived laissez-faire leadership style and normative commitment ($r=0.106$, $P<0.307$) of employees. Hence, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between perceived laissez-faire leadership style and normative commitment at Defence University.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the descriptive statistics indicated that leaders were found to display the ideal levels of transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles than the expected transformational leadership behaviour at Defence University. Transformational leadership style includes instilling pride, inspiring a shared vision, talking

optimistically, encouraging creativity, placing much importance in coaching or training subordinates, building commitment and loyalty and increasing motivation (Bass, 1997). Subordinates also perceived their leaders were not demonstrating transformational leadership style at the university.

On the other hand, the results indicated that leaders were demonstrating greater level of transactional and laissez-faire behaviour of leadership at Defence University. According to employees' perception, these leaders were demanding employees to do above standards, expectations and recognizing accomplishments. Leaders are also highly specifying the standards for compliance to monitor mistakes and errors than taking corrective actions. They also wait for problems before taking actions or ignoring problems and subordinates. They have also ignored problems and subordinates' needs.

With regard to organizational commitment, the result reflected that employees have strong continuance commitment towards their organization. It means that employees had high bond to the university because of the cost and risks associated to leaving the organization. According to normative commitment result, employees had high level of feeling of moral obligation to continue working for an organization. The lowest mean score was affective commitment. It implies that employees have low emotional attachment to, involvement in and identification with the organization and its goals. They were not considered themselves as belonging to the university.

In accordance with the t-test result, leaders and subordinates have different perceptions on leadership styles exercised in Defence University. It means that there is a major

difference between leadership behaviour which are being practiced as perceived by the leaders and leadership behaviour which are being used as perceived by subordinates.

From the results of the correlation analysis, it was found out that the relationship between transformational leadership styles and all organizational commitment components were not strong. There was, however, a significant moderate, positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviour and organizational commitments (affective, continuance and normative commitments). This implies that employees in the university believed that transformational leadership behaviour could bring organizational commitment at Defence University. Transformational leadership behaviours include building high level of trust and confidence, developing strong sense of loyalty to employees, inspiring shared vision and encouraging creativity (Bass and Avolio, 1990). These behaviours were positively related to organizational commitment.

For affective commitment, it was found that leadership behaviours which are presented above were positively related to what extent employees are willing to stay in the organization and to accept organizational objectives and values (Allen and Meyer, 1990). According to correlation analysis, it is found that transformational leadership had a weak relationship with continuous commitment ($r=0.296$) than affective commitment ($r=0.344$). The findings suggested that transformational leadership behaviours were positively related to how employees feel about their obligation to commit to the organization because of the monetary, social and psychological and other costs associated with leaving the organization.

With regard to normative commitment, transformational leadership had a medium relationship with normative commitment ($r=0.469$) than affective commitment and continuance commitment. The findings suggested that transformational leadership behaviours were positively related to how employees feel about their moral obligation to continue working for organization. Transformational leadership behaviours were relatively strong to normative commitment compared to affective and continuance commitments. This is important to the Defence University as normative commitment results in meaningful contribution than affective and continuance commitments to the organization. This implies that in Defence University employees have high level of normative commitment and they feel about how they ought to remain with the Defence University. However, the feeling of obligation stops employees with normative commitment from leaving Defence University.

Generally, this research has shown that transformational leadership style had positive significant relationship between organizational commitment dimensions in psychological, economic and moral terms. This result is consistent with previous studies by Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009), Garg and Ramjee (2013), Temesgen (2011) who indicated that leadership behaviour has a positive impact on affective, continuance and normative commitments.

The results from correlation analysis further indicated that there was weak but significant and positive relationship between transactional leadership behaviour and affective commitment ($r=0.322$), continuance commitment ($r=0.313$) and normative commitment ($r=0.563$). Transactional leadership behaviour tails clarification of goals, exchange of rewards

for meeting agreed-on objectives, monitoring deviance and taking corrective action quickly, and ignoring problems or waiting for problems to become serious before taking actions. These transactional leadership behaviours may be related to how employees feel about their willing to stay, obligation to commit and moral obligation to stay in the organization.

For laissez-faire leadership style, the correlation analysis result indicated that there was a weak but no significant positive relationship between laissez-faire leadership behaviour and organizational commitments. Laissez-faire leadership behaviour involves avoiding getting involved when problem arise, avoiding making decision, ignoring problem and subordinates needs. The results suggest that laissez-faire may not be related to how employees feel about willingness and needs to stay in the organization. This result is also consistent with research findings of Awan and Mahmood (2009) that showed laissez-fair leadership style had no effect on organizational commitment. However, the result was not consistent with the findings of previous studies by Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009), Garg and Ramjee (2013) and Temesgen (2011) that indicated that laissez-faire leadership behaviour had a negative relationship with affective, continuance and normative commitments.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

As the mean scores on leadership styles used at Defence University indicated, leaders at different levels demonstrated more of transactional and laissez-faire styles than the expected transformational leadership. Although the best leadership style depends on specific circumstances or situations, during the time of change and

transformation, which is a common characteristic to all organizations during the 21st century including Defence University in Ethiopia, leaders are expected to be visionary, articulating their vision, communicate it to employees, and manage the change process which is a common feature of transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership behaviour which involve building high level of trust and confidence, developing strong sense of loyalty, inspiring shared vision, encouraging creativity and providing training and coaching are somewhat positively related to the feeling of employees about their willingness to stay, their obligation to commit to and their moral obligation to continue working with Defence University is required. Hence, it is possible to conclude that transformational leadership behaviours play major role on the development of organizational commitment at Defence University than the transactional and laissez-faire styles being used. With the existing leadership styles currently used at the university it would be difficult to bring the envisioned changes and improve employees' motivation toward the implementation of organizational goals. This further calls on mechanisms to re-examine the existing leadership style being used by the university leaders for smooth work environment.

On top of this, employees' commitment toward the achievement of its goals seems a challenge to the university where they had no emotional attachment to, involvement in and identification with the university. Study participants perceived that the University did not pay attention to their needs and interests. As a result, they fail to accept the vision, mission, goals and values of the organization although they had high attachment to it only for the cost that leaving the university may incur on individual employee. Hence, there is a need

to change the existing employees' commitment or attitude toward the university so as to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the university. In general, leaders in the university are expected to exercise more of the transformational leadership style than transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles so as to develop and improve organizational commitment of employees at Defence University.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made.

Since it is found in the study that current leaders in the university were not transformational the government ought to prepare, design and implement an appropriate leadership development program to improve the necessary knowledge, skill and competence of the existing leaders in the university. The government needs to set different leadership development initiatives or training programs via different modes of delivery including regular leadership training programmes at MA levels in public universities and using distance learning modes to improve the leaders' present ability and prepare them for highest level of transformational leadership behaviours.

There is a serious challenge of improving the existing commitment of employees to achieve the university's missions, visions and goals. The human resource is the most important factor in this regard. Leaders play a major role in improving employees' commitment to the university. Hence, the university leadership in collaboration with the government should build high level of trust and confidence between the leadership and employees through active participation of employees on different decisions,

planning activities, etc. that promote transparency, develop strong sense of loyalty to employees, and inspire shared vision, encourage employees' creativity, clarify goals and exchange rewards for meeting agreed-on objectives so that employees develop a sense of belonging to the university.

In future research endeavours, it would be interesting to assess the causal relationship between leadership behaviour and organizational commitment dimensions. Future studies can also benefit by examining the links between leadership styles and other variables such as job satisfaction with personal characteristics (age, years of service and gender) as determinants of organizational commitment.

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