

The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Job Satisfaction in Eastern Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions

Ashenafi Tesfaye Guyo

College of Social Science and Humanities, department Pedagogical Science, Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia
Email: tesfaye.ashenaf@gmail.com

Abstract

Effective leadership style is crucial to motivate and inspire followers for the success of an organization. The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. A correlational quantitative research design was used to examine and determine the extent of predictors, and a total of 322 respondents were selected, using a systematic random sampling technique. The Pearson correlational result shows transformational leadership style has a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Laissez-faire leadership style has a statistically negative relationship with extrinsic and general job satisfaction. Moreover, transactional leadership has no significant relationship with both intrinsic and general job satisfaction but with extrinsic job satisfaction. The beta coefficient indicated that a unit increase in transformational leadership changes about 0.29 units in general job satisfaction, and a unit increase in laissez-faire leadership changes about -0.11 decreases in general job satisfaction. Transformational leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee job satisfaction, but laissez-faire leadership style has a statistically negative effect on general job satisfaction. Therefore, self-reflection of the department heads on their leadership styles is needed and the university administration should provide different leadership training to improve the level of academic staff job satisfaction. The findings also serve as a foundation for other researchers to conduct further studies in the field. Additionally, more research is needed to identify other factors that could enhance job satisfaction among academic staff.

Keywords: *Higher education , Job satisfaction, Leadership style*

Introduction

Despite the numerous ways in which leadership has been conceptualized, several core components can be identified: leadership is a process, it involves influence, it occurs within groups, and it focuses on common goals (Peter, 2013). Based on these components, leadership can be defined as a process in which a person influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. In this process, both leaders and followers are actively involved and support each other.

Although leaders and followers are closely linked, it is the leader who often initiates the relationship, creates the communication linkages, and carries the burden of maintaining the relationship (Bass, 1990). Bass and Avolio (1985) concluded that transactional and transformational leadership styles are complementary and important in organizations. These styles stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Bernard and Bass (2006) on the other hand illustrated transformational leaders help followers to grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs.

The relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction has been studied in many settings. Jalal (2012) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction and found out a significant and positive relationship between intellectual stimulation and job satisfaction. Bogler (2001) also examined the effects of three factors on teachers' job satisfaction: principals' leadership style, principals' decision-making strategy, and teachers' perception of their occupation.

The results revealed that principals' transformational leadership styles affect teachers' satisfaction both directly and indirectly through teachers' occupation perception. Most of the above researches were conducted out of educational institutions and have been conducted in different settings with diverse methodologies and came up with different results. This shows that there is no one best style of leadership that can be used in all settings of organizations to satisfy their employees.

Statement of the problem

Higher education institutions are criticized for their inadequate provisions of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to fulfill teachers' needs. Inadequate provision of facilities, promotion/growth opportunities, financial benefits, and poor management are some of the factors associated with unfavorable feelings of employees (Melu, 2016). Semela (2011) in his study of vulnerability to brain-drain among academic institutions of higher learning in Ethiopia disclosed that there are

unfavorable working conditions, dissatisfaction with administration, and limited opportunities for career development. The Ministry of Education (2006) in its analysis also laments that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are not suitable for creative work, characterized by high attrition of their staff, restricted in their academic freedom, and full of disgruntled staff. These are directly related to staff job satisfaction of the academic staff.

A study conducted at Dire Dawa University, Ethiopia, found a 40% job satisfaction (Dando, Liben & Adugna, 2017) which is considered to be low. Furthermore, Birhanu (2014) reported low staff satisfaction at Haramaya University, Ethiopia. Leadership requires staff that are satisfied with the internal and external environments. This study mainly emphasized the department heads (school heads) who are the lower-level management and immediate supervisors for the academic staff. In addition, different studies indicated that there was low academic job satisfaction in the eastern part of Ethiopian higher institutions. Yet, very limited studies have been conducted to understand the problem.

In the context of Ethiopian higher educational institutions, very limited studies were undertaken in relation to leadership styles and job satisfaction. Therefore, this study intends to fill the gap by empirically examining the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. To this end, understanding the leadership styles of department heads in place and the level of self-reported staff job satisfaction may contribute to facilitating the change process in understanding the role of leadership. Thus, the researcher anticipated to examine the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction using the following basic questions.

- Is there a significant relationship between the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and extrinsic job satisfaction?
- Is there a significant relationship between the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and intrinsic job satisfaction?
- Is there a significant relationship between the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and general job satisfaction?

Conceptual Framework

Transformational leadership and transactional leadership were conceptualized by Burns (1996), and later improved by Bass and Avolio (1990) as the full-range leadership model. The full-range leadership model identifies nine leadership factors grouped as transformational, transactional, and laissez-fair styles of leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1995). The three leadership styles form a continuum or continuous range, within which each of these leadership behaviors are active, passive, effective, and ineffective (Barbuto and Cummings-Brown, 2007).

The theories of transformational leadership were strongly influenced by James McGregor Burns (cited in Yukl, 2008) who wrote a best-selling book on political leadership. Burns contrasted transforming leadership with transactional leadership. Transforming leadership appeals to the moral values of followers in an attempt to raise their consciousness about ethical issues and to

mobilize their energy and resources to reform institutions. Transactional leadership motivates followers by appealing to their self-interest and exchanging benefits. For a political leader, these activities include providing jobs, subsidies, lucrative government contracts, and support for desired legislation in return for campaign contributions and votes to reelect the leader. For corporate leaders, transactional leadership means providing pay and other benefits in return for work effort.

Transformational leadership focuses on stimulating and inspiring followers to achieve both extraordinary outcomes and develop their own leadership capacity (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They stated that transformational leadership emphasizes the growth and development of an organization's followers and its goals. In addition, Hargis (2011); Bass and Riggio (2006) classified the dimensions of transformational leadership into four categories (4Is) (individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized consideration); transformational leadership causes workers to put in extra effort and ensure higher effectiveness, higher productivity, higher morale, lower absenteeism and greater commitment according to (Barbuto, 2009).

Transactional leadership was comprehensively defined by Bass and Avolio (1990) as the style of leadership where followers receive rewards for acting according to the leader's wishes. If the task is not achieved, it may take punitive measures against the followers (Tracey & Hinkin, 1998). Transactional leadership is a complex construct with four components of contingent reward, active management by exception, passive management by exception, and laissez-faire leadership, and the contribution to the overall construct varies from leader to leader (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Barbuto, 2005).

Bass and Avolio (2004) stated that the laissez-faire leader considers more of a hands-off approach to leadership. They further argue that this style of leader does not make a decision; many empirical studies also showed that this leadership style is less effective than transformational leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2003).

Different authors have different approaches towards defining job satisfaction. Previous studies have identified the most important human resource tools to manage job satisfaction as salary, training, the working environment, supportive supervision, and recognition (Martineau, 2006). Some of the most commonly cited definitions of job satisfaction are analyzed in the text that follows. Armstrong (2006) defined job satisfaction as people's feelings towards their jobs. Job satisfaction is expressed through a favorable work environment. Vroom defines job satisfaction as a performance of individuals toward present work roles, Vroom (1964) cited in Gedefaw (2007).

A person is satisfied in his job when combined psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances cause a person to be confident, Hoppock (1935) cited in Gedefaw (2007).

According to this approach, the internal factor dictates the employee's feelings more than the external ones. Specter (1997) defines job satisfaction as the way people feel about their job and its various aspects. It is the degree or the extent to which people like or dislike their job. That is why job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction can appear in any given work situation. According to Herzberg's theory, satisfaction factors are those related to the nature of the work and the incentives that come from the implementation of that work; for example, the job itself, and the opportunities it provides for achievement, advancement, recognition of achievement, and responsibility (Truell, 1998).

In contrast, dissatisfaction factors (hygiene factors) are associated with the individual's relationship to the circumstances or environment in which he/she does his/her work. These include salary, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, organizational policy and management, management style of the supervisor, and job security. Various studies have been conducted in different organizations regarding the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction. For instance, as stated by Tadele (2014); Alemu & Getnet (2009) transformational leadership positively influences faculty job satisfaction.

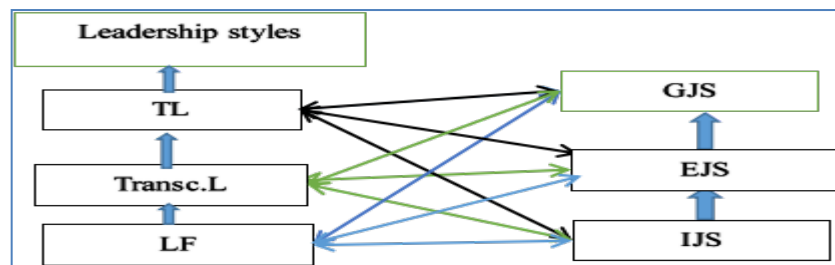


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of leadership styles and job satisfaction; Source: self-constructed

Key: TL=Transformational leadership; Transc.L=Transactional leadership; LF=Laissez-faire; GJS=General Job Satisfaction; EJS= External Job Satisfaction; IJS=Internal Job Satisfaction

Based on such studies, the present study is founded on the full range theory of leadership encompassing transformational (transactional and Laissez-fair (LF)) constructs (Bass and Avolio, 1997). Previous research studies have revealed that the full-range leadership model has been positively tied to job satisfaction (Bass, 1998; Bogler, 2001, & Rossmiller 1992). For the sake of this study, Hertzberg's two-factor (Motivator-Hygiene) theory was used. Hertzberg's two-factor motivator-hygiene theory is essential for this study since a number of commentators have proposed that Hertzberg's two-factor motivator-hygiene theory is useful for examining job satisfaction in educational settings.

Research Design and Methodology

Quantitative correlational survey design was used to examine the relationship between numerical measures and constructs (Howell, 2010). This design is appropriate for researchers to establish

the extent of factors or variables which affect the outcome (Creswell, 2003) and provides an opportunity to predict scores and explain the relationship among variables. In correlational research designs, investigators use the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores. Thus, the relationship between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and job satisfaction (extrinsic, intrinsic, and general job satisfaction) was examined using correlational design.

Source of data

This study was basically empirical in its nature; therefore, primary data was gathered from academic staff to respond to a closed-ended questionnaire. The closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect primary data so that the variables could be ranked to measure the degree of respondent's perception. Moreover, secondary data sources were used to support the quantitative data collected through questionnaire.

Population, Sample size, and Sampling technique

There are about eleven colleges and one institute at Haramaya University (HU), six colleges and one institute at Dire Dawa University (DDU), and nine colleges and one institute at Oda Bultum University (OBU). Furthermore, there were 73 departments in HU, 42 departments in DDU, and 30 departments in OBU. Accordingly, to select the sample departments from all colleges and institutes 37 departments from HU, 21 departments from DDU, and 15 departments from ODU were included in the study using a stratified random sampling technique.

Accordingly, the researcher selected a sample of 338 individuals from the three universities (HU=164 from 1064; DDU=115 from 747; OBU=59 from 380). These indicated sample sizes were determined using Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1964, cited in Muleta & Worku, 2009).

Data collection instruments

The modified Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire -MLQ was a self-administered questionnaire with 36 items designed to measure nine sub-scales of leadership. Transformational leadership has 20 items; transactional leadership has 12 items, and laissez-faire leadership has 4 items to measure the academic staff's perception of their department head leadership style (Bass & Avolio, 1997). The leadership perception was rated on a 5-point rating scale labeled as 1 = not at all, 2 = once in a while, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often, and 5 = frequently (if not always).

Moreover, the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire was used to measure the work satisfaction

of the academic staff. The instrument was created in 1967 as part of the Minnesota studies in vocational rehabilitation and has become a widely used instrument to evaluate job satisfaction. The MSQ short form consists of 20 questions and is scored on three scales: intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and general satisfaction. The MSQ has been widely used in studies in counseling follow-up studies and in generating information about correlates of job satisfaction. The 1977 version was adjusted for this by changing the response options to very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, and very satisfied. Thus, the 1977 version is recommended for prediction studies and comparisons within organizations (Weiss et al., 1967 cited in Ashenafi, 2020).

Reliability of the instruments

The instruments are standardized, as the value of Cronbach's alpha was computed and used by different scholars. This implies that respondents were able to understand and complete the questionnaire effectively. Accordingly, their reliability results were 0.96 for transformational, 0.88 for transactional, and 0.81 for laissez-faire. Moreover, Buitendach and Rothmann's (2009) factor analysis results in reliability coefficients for the extrinsic, intrinsic, and general scales respectively; this includes 0.82, 0.79, and 0.86 which implies that respondents were able to understand to fill the questionnaire. As suggested by Burg-Brown (cited in Ashenafi, 2020), if the coefficient is between 0.70 – 1.0, it is generally found to be internally consistent.

Even though the instruments had been tested by various researchers, they were tested again with 45 participants at Jigjiga University to ensure their applicability to the context of the study. Accordingly, the pilot test result indicated the leadership style of internal reliability result as calculated by Cronbach alpha; shows 0.96, 0.89, 0.79 for transformational, transactional, and lassies-fair leadership respectively. The value of Cronbach alpha for job satisfaction was found to be 0.87 and 0.94 for extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction respectively. This shows the internal reliability of the items is applicable as suggested by previous researchers Buitendach and Rothmann (2009).

Procedures of data collection

During the data collection procedures, the researcher created a good rapport with the respondents, explained the purpose, and administered the questionnaire. The duration of questionnaire distribution, collection, and compilation takes about a period of one month and two weeks. The respondents were given at most 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The first stage focused on the collection of lists of academic staffers; the second stage focused on the distribution of the questionnaire and the third stage was the retrieving stage.

Method of data analysis

To analyze and draw meaning from the data, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20 was used. Accordingly, the data screening and the assumption of the data have been checked. The raw data has been checked before and after it was entered into the data file. During the data collection process, it was checked whether the participant marked their questionnaire appropriately and if there were double answers to have clear and consistent information before it was entered into a data file.

Pearson-correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between leadership styles (transformational leadership, transactional, and laissez-faire) with job satisfaction (intrinsic, extrinsic, and general job satisfaction). Furthermore, stepwise multiple regression was used in order to determine which variables explain the greatest and significant proportions of the variance in the variable of interest. It was also used to determine the extent of predictors on the outcome variable using the beta coefficient.

Result and Discussions

From the total distributed questionnaire, 322 (95.2 %) of them were entered and analyzed using SPSS software. The return rate of the questionnaire aligns with the requirement to conduct statistical analysis and to conclude from the results (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). Among the respondents, 285 (88.5%) were males and the rest 37 (11.5%) of them were females. The respondents' professional experience in their current institutions shows that 151 respondents (46.9%) have 1 to 3 years of experience, 118 respondents (36.6%) have 4 to 7 years of experience, and the remaining 53 respondents (16.5%) have over 7 years of professional experience.

The relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction using Pearson correlation

The correlation analysis result was performed to examine the association between leadership style and job satisfaction.

Table 1: *Relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction (n = 322, p <0.05)*

Factors	EJS	IJS	GJS
TL	0.35**	0.19**	0.35**
Transc. L	0.14**	-0.00	0.09
LF	-0.26**	-0.04	-0.19**

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

The responses to the survey were analyzed to determine if there was a relationship between the leadership style of the department heads and the academic staff's job satisfaction. To determine the relationship among the three leadership styles (TL, Transc.L, and LF) a Pearson r was conducted. As the results of a two-tailed Pearson correlation indicated in Table One, the p-value was less than the alpha i.e. 0.00 ($p < 0.01$) for transformational leadership style. This shows that there was a statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership style and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Transformational leadership style has a positive and significant relationship with the three dimensions of job satisfaction. However, transactional leadership has a positive and significant relationship with only one dimension of job satisfaction—that is external job satisfaction. Besides, a laissez-faire leadership style has a negative and significant relationship with external and general job satisfaction.

The relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction using multiple regression

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was done to confirm the extent of the relationship between leadership styles (LS) transformational (TL), transactional (Transc.L) and laissez-faire (LF) leadership styles and extrinsic (EJS), intrinsic (IJS), and general job satisfaction (GJS) as of presented in the table below.

Table 2: *The model summary of leadership styles on extrinsic job satisfaction*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.359 ^a	.129	.126	.76	.129	47.37	1	320	.000
2	.407 ^b	.166	.161	.74	.037	14.13	1	319	.000
3	.431 ^c	.185	.178	.73	.019	7.61	1	318	.006

a. Predictors: (Constant), TL

b. Predictors: (Constant), TL, LF

c. Predictors: (Constant), TL, LF, Transc. L

The finding indicates that all three behaviors of leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) predict extrinsic job satisfaction. Transformational leadership result ($F(1, 320) = 47.3, p < .001$) shows that it significantly predicts extrinsic job satisfaction and it explained about 12.9% of the variance in EJS. Similarly, the result of laissez-faire ($F(1, 319) = 14.13, p < .001$) indicates a significant relationship with extrinsic job satisfaction and it explained about 3.7% of the variance in EJS. The result also depicted as transactional leadership style significantly contributed to EJS ($F(1, 318) = 7.6, p < .001$) and explained about 1.9% of the

variance in the EJS. This shows that among the three leadership styles, relatively transformational leadership highly and significantly explained the EJS. (see table 2).

Table 3: *The coefficients of leadership styles on EJS*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.739	.188		9.252	.000
	TL	.421	.061	.359	6.883	.000
2	(Constant)	2.582	.290		8.896	.000
	TL	.375	.061	.320	6.133	.000
	LF	-.232	.062	-.196	-3.759	.000
3	(Constant)	2.131	.330		6.451	.000
	TL	.377	.061	.321	6.223	.000
	LF	-.224	.061	-.190	-3.669	.000
	Transc. L	.152	.055	.140	2.759	.006

a. Dependent Variable: EJS

Table 3 shows that transformational leadership significantly predicts extrinsic job satisfaction ($p < .001$). The β coefficient for TL (0.37) indicates a one-unit increase in TL, the EJS will be increased by 0.37 units. The beta coefficient ($p < .001$) shows a one-unit increase in LF, the EJS decreased by -0.22 units. Similarly, the Transc.L result is also significant ($p < .001$) and revealed that a one-unit increment in transactional leadership increases by 0.15 in EJS when TL and LF are controlled. (See Table 2.1).

Table 4: the model summary of leadership styles on IJS

Mode	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.196 ^a	.038	.035	.775999	.038	12.749	1	320	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), TL

Table 4 depicts that, among the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire), only transformational leadership significantly predicts intrinsic job satisfaction ($F(1, 320) = 12.7, p < .001$). The r^2 result indicates about 3.8% of the intrinsic job satisfaction is explained by transformational leadership style (see Table 3).

Table 5: The coefficients of transformational leadership on IJS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.214	.191		11.570	.000
	TL	.222	.062	.196	3.571	.000

a. Dependent Variable: IJS

Table 5 shows transformational leadership significantly predicts intrinsic job satisfaction ($p < .001$). The β coefficient for TL (0.22) indicates a one-unit increase in TL, the EJS will be increased by 0.22 units (See 3.1). The regression analysis result was supported by different literature.

Discussions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between job satisfaction (intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction) and leadership styles (transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) in the eastern part of Ethiopian higher educational institutions. The result shows that both transformational and laissez-faire subscales of the MLQ were correlated with job satisfaction factors. Transformational was positively correlated; however, laissez-faire was negatively correlated with the outcome variable. This implies that academic staff with immediate supervisors who exhibit transformational leadership are likely to experience better job satisfaction relative to those academics with laissez-faire leaders.

This finding supports previous researchers (Marnis, 2012) who reported a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The finding by Minda (2008) also reported a positive and significant relationship between the different facets of job satisfaction and transformational leadership. Furthermore, the regression analysis showed that transformational leadership was a better predictor of job satisfaction than the other two leadership styles.

Likewise, Levine (2000) asserts transformational leadership is a highly suitable leadership style to enhance the job satisfaction of teachers in educational settings. This claim endorses the findings from studies conducted by Tucker, Bass, and Daniel (1992) and Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1999) regarding the appropriateness and successfulness of transformational leadership in higher education institutions. Grosso (2008) also supports this notion by arguing that if the leaders utilize a transformational leadership style, it might encourage an atmosphere of harmony and efficiency to achieve the collective aim or vision and might offer faculty members the authority to develop and contribute to different plans.

In support of this, Muleta and Worku (2009) reported that job satisfaction is positively influenced by transformational leadership style. These results are also consistent with previous studies showing the significant positive influence of transformational leadership factors on employee job satisfaction and the significant negative influence of laissez-faire leadership on subordinates' job satisfaction (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Some literature also supports the result of transactional leadership. Grosso (2008) endorses transactional leadership did not have a significant relationship with faculty job satisfaction. Transactional leadership is described as a reward-driven behavior, where the follower behaves in such a manner as to elicit rewards or support from the leader (Field & Herold, 1997).

Nevertheless, some other literature indicates a positive relationship of transactional leadership and factors of job satisfaction. For instance, Mulugeta (2017) and Marnis, (2012) reported as transactional leadership styles are positively related to employee job satisfaction, and a result reported that a unit improvement in transactional leadership would lead to about 0.317 increases in employee job satisfaction. This variation could be explained by the limited power of department chairs and school heads in their leadership behavior in the Ethiopian higher education context.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The finding implies that department heads can enhance the level of academic staff job satisfaction by creating a more conducive and more satisfying environment in the workplace. Among the leadership styles, the laissez-faire leadership style negatively affects the academic staff's job satisfaction. This implies that as the department chairs frequently use the laissez-faire leadership behavior, the academic staff would have unpleasant feelings for their work that lead to a negative work attitude. This finding is consistent with Levine (2000) and Gwendolin (2017). They assert transformational leadership has a positive effect on teachers' intrinsic, extrinsic, and overall job satisfaction. Fatemeh (2011) also indicated the presence of a negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership and employee job satisfaction factors.

The result of the study has also a constructive ramification for higher level administration of the university to envisage clear communication with their lower-level management units (department chairs/school heads) and identify their leadership skill to improve the level of their academic staff job satisfaction. It was also recommended that transformational leadership should be upheld and used by all department chairs of Eastern Ethiopian higher education institutions in their day-to-day administrative duties. This was evident in the findings of this study which considered transformational leadership style as being positive and significantly related to academic staff general job satisfaction in the universities.

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