Impact of Perceived Leadership Styles on Job-Related Outcomes:
A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

Motivating the followers for high performance is the main task of any leader to achieve desired organizational outcomes. In today's highly complex, turbulent environment, public sector organization must take the leadership style adopted by the leaders into consideration in order to improve the job performance of employees and thereby provide better service to the community. This study is an attempt to review the existing literature and to formulate a model for investigating the effect of leadership styles on employee job-related outcomes in the public sector organizations in Sri Lanka. Conceptualization was based on the idea of the Full Range of Leadership (FRL) theory. Transformational leadership consists of three sub-constructs. The Full Range of Leadership theory used both transformational and transactional leadership attributes in different degrees depending on the situation and ability of subordinates. In the present study, the conceptual framework assumes that perceived transformational and transactional leadership impact on job performance through the mechanism of employees' organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviour. The study reviews existing literature to make it clear which leadership style/s has/have been reported as more effective in term of employee job-related outcomes. Based on the literature, the study formulated a conceptual framework which can be used for future research.

Keywords: Employee empowerment, employee performance, organizational citizenship behaviour, organizational commitment, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership

1. Introduction

The effects of leadership on organizational performance have been an interesting topic of many researchers for the past few decades due to the widespread belief that the performance of an organization was influenced by the leadership styles (Pradeep & Prabhu, 2011). The adopted styles of leadership, considered by some researchers (e.g. Bass, 1985; Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017) have a significant effect on employee job-related outcomes in organizations. Although the transformational and transactional leadership types have attracted the attention of the researcher over the past few decades (e.g. Tsigu & Rao, 2015; Bennett, 2009; Ispas, 2012), the public sector has been largely neglected. Public enterprises were seen to be inefficient and lack of performance and were a burden for the state and for the treasury (Corea, 1988). According to Gunaruwan (2016), inefficiency is a common feature in all Sri Lankan state-owned enterprises, across all organizational categories. The inefficiency is partially caused by the employees' performance problems.

Several researchers indicate that there are strong interconnections between leadership and employees'outcomes (Chamika & Gunasekara,2016; Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017; Ng, 2017), while in Sri Lanka, especially in the Northern Province, the work on this subject is unfortunately very limited in scope. This bottleneck has to be cleared and research frameworks need to be formulated to understand the relationship between the leadership style and employee's job-related outcomes. It has been criticized for studying various mediators with no clear theory that directs the assessment of mediation between transformational and transactional leadership behaviours and potential outcomes (Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). The current study responds to this critique by considering a theoretically coherent set of mediating variables for the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership and performance. Hence, this study attempts to formulate a model for investigating the effects of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee outcomes through the mediating effects of organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviour in the leadership-performance relationship.

1.1. Justification

In the past, the public service in Sri Lanka was totally made up of men and women who possessed a high degree of professionalism. They had the ability to assist the country's leadership to set standards in managing human, financial and material resources. Things have become different today. The current public sector in Sri Lanka is guilty of gross mismanagement of the public interest. In other words, the largest employee group in Sri Lanka has shown the least concern for worker productivity (Wijesiri,2016). In spite of this

situation, however, there are still a small number of public servants who work unflaggingly towards the betterment of the people.

Amaradasa (2012), quality and productivity consultant of the Sri Lanka Association for quality mentioned in his article on 'improving public sector quality and productivity' that there are some burning facts related to the Sri Lankan public sector, which affect the quality and productivity. He pointed out that Sri Lanka enjoys the most number of holidays in the world. Particularly, the public sector employees have more holidays compared to the private sector, the strikes and work stoppages are usual occurrences, and tardiness and absenteeism are very high in the public sector in Sri Lanka (Amaradasa, 2012).

Newspapers also reported recently that a study had found 60 percent of the public sector employees wasted at least two hours per day browsing social media (Wijisiri 2016). At a time when the Sri Lankan economy is going through a period of fiscal challenges, this news is distressing. This is the time where the government is looking at new possibilities which will allow us to remodel our economy into a modern one. In this process, the public service has an important role to play to ensure that sustainability is not jeopardized in the government development programme.

Improving the efficiency of public services involves continuously improving all work and business processes; educating, training, development, and motivation of all levels of public sector employees and adopting new management approaches in the public sector (Amaradasa, 2012). The public service, regardless of its size and composition, must remain contemporary in its approach to management system and procedures in line with those of other large private sector organizations in Sri Lanka. In several organizations in the public sector, employees do not have enough tasks to undertake, resulting in idling without anything to do. This kind of situation severely affects the productivity of both individuals and organizations. Rathnathilaka et al. (2016) have reported that approximately 3 out of 4 government employees in Sri Lanka access social network sites which means that there is a high level of social media usage among government employees at the office. Warnakula and Manickam (2010) also reported that the majority of the employees spent considerable time in social network sites during working time in Sri Lanka. Therefore, there is a need to look for ways to deal with the problems and to promote productivity in the public sector.

It is apparent that effective leadership by the administrators or managers is one of the most important aspects in improving the performance of employees. Further, performance could be improved through enhancing organizational commitment (Almutairi, 2016), organizational citizenship behaviour (Tai, Chang, Hong & Chen, 2012)and psychological empowerment (Tung, 2016). Therefore, this study also attempts to investigate the mediating

role of these constructs in the effects of leadership style on employee performance.

1.2. Research Problem

It has been commonly accepted that effective organizations require effective leadership. The effectiveness of people largely depends on the quality of leadership as effective leaders facilitate the followers to attain their own desires and goals, resulting in higher performance. Many researchers have examined the effect of leadership styles on employees' job related outcomes (e.g. Rasool, Arfeen, Mothi, & Aslam, 2015; Pradeep & Praphu, 2011; Aboshaiqah, Hamdan-Mansour, Sherrod, Alkhaibary, & Alkhabary, 2014; Ispas, 2012; Tsigu & Rao, 2015; Gimuguni, Nandutu, & Magolo, 2014). Rasool et al. (2015) examined the health sector in Pakistan and reported that both transformational and transactional leadership styles affected employee performance but the effect of transformational leadership style was higher than that of transactional leadership.

Ispas (2012) reported that autocratic leadership to be the most used style by managers in the hotel industry arguing that it was perceived as a style that yields most results. Aboshaiqah et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between leadership and employee performance among hospital nurses and found that the transformational and transactional leadership styles were significantly and positively correlated to employee performance while Laissez-faire leadership is significantly negatively correlated to employee performance. Pradeep and Prabhu (2011), Tsigu and Rao (2015) and Gimuguni et al. (2014) also reported that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee performance.

Although the literature on leadership and employee outcomes scattered across countries and across industries, the evidence for the effect of leadership style on employee outcomes is varied, and neither all industries nor all contexts are covered in the literature. Of those reviewed, the medical field (Rasool et al., 2015; Aboushaqah, et al., 2105), local government authorities (Gimuguni et al., 2014), hotels (Ipas, 2012), and Petroleum (Kehinde & Bajo, 2104) are represented. In addition, these kinds of research have been conducted in a foreign context where the cultural aspects differ noticeably. As reported by Hussain, Khairuzzaman, and Javed (2017), the effects of leadership styles on employee outcomes differ in different contexts. In the existing literature, there is limited evidence for the effect of leadership styles on employee outcomes in the Sri Lankan context (e.g. Chamika & Gunasekara, 2016; Dhammika, Ahmad, & Sam, 2013; Mathotaarachchi, 2013). It is very rare to come across studies in this phenomenon in the Northern Province.It is also noticeable that evidence from the public sector is lagging behind. These facts have motivated us to undertake this study in order to contribute to the literature.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to formulate a model for investigating that impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on the performance of the employees; and the mediating effect of organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour and psychological empowerment in the effect of these leadership style on employees' job related outcomes in the public sector organizations in Sri Lanka.

1.4. Research Gap

The effects of leadership styles could be culture-bound and thus study of the impact of transformational and transactional leadership on employees' job-related outcomes in Sri Lankan context, especially in the Northern Province is the focus of the current research. Hussain, Khairuzzaman, and Javed (2017) had conducted a comparative study of the applicability of transformational leadership and substituted leadership theories in Malaysian and Pakistani work settings. The results revealed that Malaysian leaders were rated high on the dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership. In both samples, transformational leadership dimensions had desirable effects on employees' outcomes but the contingent punishment dimension of transactional leadership had undesirable effects on employees' outcomes. In their study, it was revealed that the effects in the Malaysian sample were larger than those in the Pakistani sample. According to Hussain et al. (2017), the transformational leadership style was effective in both cultures, but the transactional leadership style was culturally contingent. They suggested that leaders in collectivist cultures like Malaysia and Pakistan should be particularly careful while practicing transactional leadership, as it had undesirable effects. Hussain et al. (2017) pointed out that the above-mentioned study was the first to compare the applicability of western theories in collectivist cultures that differed significantly in their power distance orientation. Therefore, investigation of the applicability of western theories in the Sri Lankan context could add knowledge to the existing literature.

The intensive review of the literature reveals that there is no shortage of research on the subject of leadership styles and employees' outcomes. But in the Sri Lankan public sector, there are very limited studies on the impact of leadership style on employee performance and other job-related outcomes. There is evidence of few studies in the subject of leadership in Sri Lanka in a few sectors; remarkably, studies on the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on various outcomes such as knowledge creation in Sri Lankan software industry (Athukorala, Perera, & Meedeniya, 2016), employee performance in banking industry (Chamika& Gunasekara,2016), union and organizational commitment in public sector organizations in Sri Lanka (Dhammika, Ahmad, & Sam, 2013), and employees'

trust and their organizational commitment for non-teaching staff of the Sri Lankan Universities (Mathotaarachchi, 2013). However, still, there is a need for studies in the subject of leadership in the public sector organizations in the Sri Lankan context where the people's cultural aspects like values, attitudes, and behaviours differ noticeably.

Furthermore, previous research has separately applied different types of leadership theories such as autocratic and democratic leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership, and task and people-oriented leadership theories to examine the variable of interest. For example, Hemakumara(2011) investigated the relationship between directive and supportive leadership styles and team cohesiveness in the public sector organizations in Sri Lanka. Thus, there is a gap in the current research literature examining the effects of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee outcomes in the Sri Lankan context.

Prior studies tested single mediators only, such as trust (Zhu et al., 2013), and leader-member-exchange (Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang & Chen, 2005). Particularly, two recent meta-analyses addressed the mechanism of the relationship between transformational leadership and performance-related outcomes (Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017; Ng, 2017). However, those two meta-analyses failed to address organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour and/ or employee empowerment as mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The current study provides a more complete picture of mechanisms underlying the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership and employee performance by simultaneously including three potential mediators.

Chan (2010) points out that many researchers who have done studies on leadership style have not come up with a specific style suitable for specific issue; however, Chan (2010) advises that it is important to note that different styles are needed for different situations, and leaders just need to know when to use a particular approach. Thus, culture and context could be situational aspects and studying the effect of leadership styles on employees' job-related outcomes in the context of Northern Province is useful to add knowledge to the existing literature. In this line of thinking, the proposed model will be useful for future researchers to investigate what type of leadership styles leads to the greatest levels of employee performance in public sector organizations.

1.5. Research Questions

Based on the theoretical view and findings described above, this research has been designed to address the following questions:

1. What is the influence of perceived transformational and transactional leadership on employees' performance as per the reported study findings?
2. Do organizational commitment, employee empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviour mediate the effects of transformational and transactional leadership on employees' performance as per the current literature?
3. Which leadership style has the greatest influence on employees' performance as per the current literature?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Leadership

Leadership is a key factor that determines the productivity and success of public sector organizations. It has been studied extensively in the past century in the management field (Bass & Avolio, 1997). Leadership behaviours can be categorized into two main styles: transformational leadership and transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1997; 2000). Nel et al. (2004) define leadership as the process whereby one individual influences others to willingly and enthusiastically direct their efforts and abilities towards attaining defined group or organizational goals. Cole (2005) defines leadership as a dynamic process whereby one person influences others to contribute voluntarily to the realization and attainment of the goals and objectives; aspiration of values of the group that is representing the essence of leadership is to help a group or an organization to attain sustainable development and growth.

2.2. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders motivate subordinates and promote their ideas and moral values by creating an inspiring vision of the future (Bass & Avolio, 1997). This form of leadership creates more concern about the well-being of their employees. According to Jin (2010), transformational leadership integrates the dimensions of empathy, compassion, sensitivity, relationship building, and innovation. It promotes a climate of trust and confidence among individuals and encourages their development. It has been suggested as the optimum style for managing the people towards change and development (Yukl, 1994).In addition, Bass, Waldman, Avolio, and Bebb (1987) have reported that transformational leaders have followers who display greater levels of transformational behaviours. Bass (1985), Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999), Bass and Avolio (1990), and Hater and Bass (1988) have proposed the five dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence- attributes idealized influence-behaviour, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The inspirational motivation of transformational leadership is the articulation

and representation of a vision by the leader. By viewing the future with a positive attitude, the followers are motivated. Idealized influence (attributes) refers to the attribution of charisma to the leader. Because of the leaders' positive attributes, followers build close emotional ties to the leader. Idealized influence (behaviour) refers to giving emphasis for the collective sense of mission and values and acting upon these values. Intellectual stimulation includes challenging the assumptions of followers' beliefs, their analysis of problems they face, and the solutions they generate. Individualized consideration refers to considering individual needs of followers and developing their strengths (Bass and Avolio, 1990).

2.3. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is based on the exchange between the leader and the follower. It is related to contingent reinforcement of employees based on their performance. It motivates employees based on meaningful economic transactions. Transactional leaders generally use their power and authority to manage the employees and thus the style of leadership is sometimes referred to as authoritative (Bennet, 2009). Leadership researchers have identified contingent reward as the important behaviour to represent transactional leadership as it involves exchange dimension which is fundamental to the transactional leader behaviour (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Transactional leaders expect certain work behaviours from their subordinates and compensate them with monetary or non-monetary rewards. According to many scholars (Bass, 1985; Avolio et al., 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990; and Hater & Bass, 1988), there are three behaviour dimensions that underlie transactional leadership namely contingent reward, management by exception- active and management by exception-passive. The contingent reward is the extent to which leaders set work-related goals for employees, define rewards for performance, and provide rewards when performance goals are met. Management by exception- active is the extent to which leaders closely monitor the performance of followers and keep track of deviations from rules and standards in order to avoid these deviations and, if necessary, take corrective actions. Management by exception-passive is the extent to which leaders fail to intervene in the problems until serious problems occur.

Burns (1978) views that transformational leadership is more effective than transactional leadership. He also views transformational leadership as an ongoing process rather than the discrete exchanges of the transactional approach. Burns (1978) believed that transactional and transformational leadership were mutually exclusive styles and thus a leader can display either transformational leadership or transactional leadership, but not both. But later researchers recognized that transactional and transformational leadership are not mutually exclusive (Aldoory & Toth, 2004; Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 2000; Werder & Holtzhausen, 2009; and Yukl, 1994). According to Vera and Crossan (2004), good leaders know how to

switch between a transformational and transactional leadership style in accordance with the situation. Avolio (1999), Bass (1998, 1999) have mentioned that transactions lay the base for transformations. According to Avolio et al. (1999), effective leaders engage in both transformational and transactional behaviours. From these arguments, it is clear that leaders are capable of being both transformational and transactional. Bass (1998) believes that every leader displays each of the aforementioned styles to some extent and thus he calls this the "Full Range Leadership Model."

2.4. Employee Performance

Researchers focus on the dimensions of employee performance with the aim of managing employee performance in organizations. According to Befort and Hattrup (2003), employee performance is a multi-dimensional construct. The role-based model of performance proposed by Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez, (1998) is a widely accepted method of operationalization of employee performance. A role is defined as the set of performance responsibilities associated with a person's employment (Murphy & Jackson, 1999; cited in Dammika, 2013).Even though there are a number of models available for assessing employee performance, the task and contextual performance model of Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) and the role-based model of the performance of Welbourne et al. (1998) are recorded as the highly accepted models of performance. The role-based model includes five roles namely job, career, innovator, team and organization role. Dammika (2003) tested the above two models to identify the best model for measuring the performance of the employees in the public sector in Sri Lanka. He found that the five-factor model is more suitable for assessing employees' performance in the public sector. Similar findings have been reported in other studies too (Wallace, Edward, Arnorld, & Frazier, 2009).

2.5. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles and Employee Performance

The review of the literature reveals that leadership style can explain a significant number of performance outcomes at individuals as well as organizational level. Transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee performance are significantly and positively related (Ejere & Abasilim, 2013; Tsigu & Rao, 2015; Pradeep & Prabhu, 2011; Kehinde & Banjo, 2014 and, Gimuguni et al., 2014). The impact of transactional leadership was not much stronger as compared to transformational leadership on job performance (Rasool et al., 2015). According to Pradeep and Prabhu (2011), leadership is positively linked with employee performance for both transformational leadership behaviours and transactional contingent reward behaviours. In the current study, based on the review of literature the hypotheses H1 and H2 are formulated as follows.

H2: Transactional leadership has a significant positive influence on the perceived performance of employees.

2.6. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974). It comprises three components: affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Affective commitment is defined as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization; continuance component is defined as commitment that is based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization; normative component is defined as the employee's feelings of obligation and sense of loyalty to remain with the organization and serve to the best of his potential (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organizations are always looking for committed human resources in order to achieve their objectives.

2.7. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles and Employee Commitment

Researchers (Chaudhry, Javed & Sabir, 2012; Greenberg & Baron, 2009; and, Bass &Avolio, 1994) argued that transformational and transactional leadership stylesare directly related to organizational commitment. Lo et al. (2009) examined leadership styles and employees' organizational commitment in the Malaysian manufacturing industry and found that several dimensions of transactional and transformational leadership have a positive relationship with organizational commitment. They also pointed out that the impacts are stronger for transactional leadership style than for the transformational leadership style. Researchers have consistently highlighted that transformational leadership positively influences employee outcomes. For example, transformational leadership was found to result in increased organizational citizenship behaviour (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir 2002; as cited in Mannheim & Halamish, 2008) and lead to higher organizational commitment (Buciuniene & Skudiene, 2008; Avolio et al. 2004). Bycio, Hackett & Allen (1995; cited in Ponnu & Tennakoon, 2009) examined how transformational leadership and transactional leadership affect levels of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment of employees and reported that transformational leadership was a strong predictor of the three components of commitment than transactional leadership. Based on the review of literature, the hypotheses H3 and H4 are formulated as follows:

H3: Transformational leadership has a significant positive influence on the perceived organizational commitment of employees.

H4: Transactional leadership has a significant positive influence on the perceived organizational commitment of employees.

2.8. Psychological Empowerment

Grunig (1992) defined empowerment as a symmetrical concept of power, which means collaborating to increase the power and benefit of everyone in the organization. Grunig (1992) explained empowerment as the use of power to create opportunities and conditions, through which leaders can gain power, can make decisions, can use their abilities and skills, and can accomplish organizational work in ways that are meaningful to them. The symmetrical concept of power can be achieved if the power is shared to employees. Leaders train their workers, arrange meetings with their subordinates and get feedback from them and, as a result, employee productivity is improved. The four components of employees' psychological empowerment include meaning, competence, self- determination, and impact (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Psychological empowerment is examined in the present study as a potential mediator for the effect of leadership styles on employees' performance.

2.9. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Style and Psychological Empowerment

According to Spreitzer (1995), information and rewards are the two work context factors that determine employees' feeling of empowerment. Particularly, information about the organization's mission and performance are vital for empowering employees. If employees are informed about where the organization is headed, they will be able to have the sense of being involved. If performance information is not communicated to employees, they will not be able to know how well they are performing. This is fundamental to reinforce a sense of competence (Spreitzer, 1995). Transformational leaders empower employees by communicating organizational future goals, generating employee enthusiasm for goal achievement, and expressing high-performance expectation from employees. The second factor for empowerment is an incentive system to reward employee performance (Spreitzer, 1995). Performance-based rewards which are associated with transactional leadership may recognize and reinforce employee competencies. However, an overreliance on rewards and punishments will result in a perception of a lack of delegation among employees (Bass & Avolio, 1994).Based on the literature, the hypotheses H5 and H6 are formulated as follows.

H5: Transformational leadership has a significant positive influence on employee empowerment

H6: Transactional leadership has a significant positive influence on employee empowerment

2.10. Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

OCB indicates employees' discretionary behaviours that go beyond their assigned duties and are not influenced by an organization's formal reward system (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Shore & Wayne, 1993). Organ (1988) defines five main categories of OCB: altruism (helping others), conscientiousness (discipline),sportsmanship (positive attitude),courtesy(goodness) and civic virtue (as organization member awareness).

2.11. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Style and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2006) found that of transformational and transactional leadership dimensions have strong effects on teachers' OCB. Transformational leaders consider the individual needs of their subordinates and encourage them to prioritize the collective over the individual interests as a way to achieve the organizational targets and the wellbeing of the group. They start to identify with the organizational targets and share a collective identity that promotes the behaviours focused on the common good, which characterizes the organizational citizenship behaviours, overcoming challenges for the benefit of the common good, being engaged in functions that are not directly associated with the prescribed tasks. In that sense, a considerable amount of empirical studies, undertaken in different occupational contexts have confirmed that the transformational leadership styles are positive predictors of OCB (Lian & Tui, 2012; Nguni et al., 2006; and Suliman & Obaidly, 2013).

In transactional leadership, the core characteristic is the relation of exchange established between leaders and subordinates. In that sense, the transactional leader clarifies their goals to be achieved and makes it clear that the achievement of these targets will imply rewards. At the same time, non-compliance with the targets will lead to punishments. Some empirical evidence demonstrates that transactional leadership predicts Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Suliman & Obaidly, 2013). Based on these considerations, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H7: Transformational Leadership style has a significant positive influence on Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

H8: Transactional Leadership style has a significant positive influence on Organizational Citizenship Behaviours.

2.12. Employees' Organizational Commitment and Performance

Researchers found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and employees' job performance (Memari, Mahdieh & Marnani, 2003; Chen, Silverthrone & Hung, 2006). Normative commitment has a positive and significant correlation with employees' job performance (Memari, et al., 2003). Clarke (2006) found that commitment may play a significant role specifically with performance outcomes. According to him, both affective and normative forms of commitment have a significant impact on performance and, continuance commitment is negatively related to network performance. Rashid, Sambasvani, and Joari (2003) studied 202 managers in Malaysian companies and suggested that corporate culture and organizational commitment are interrelated and both have far-reaching impacts on the performance. The literature review reveals that a definite relationship exists between organizational commitment and employees' job performance. Therefore Hypothesis 9 is formulated as follows:

H9: Organizational Commitment has a significant positive influence on Employees' Performance

2.13. Psychological Empowerment and Employees' Performance

Iqbal, Ahmad, and Javaid (2013) found that there is a positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance. The same results have been produced by recent researchers too (Yasothai, Jauhar, Ghani, & Bashawir, 2015; Ahmad & Atteia, 2016). Based on the empirical evidence, hypothesis 10 is formulated as follows:

H10: Employee Empowerment has a significant positive influence on Employee Performance.

2.1.4. Organizational Citizenship Behaviours and Employees' Performance

Podsakoff et al. (2000) found that OCB can also predict follower performance. An employee with high OCB would be willing to take on additional work responsibility and face work problems independently. Such employees have many chances to improve their work competency and their sustainable development. Helping behaviour improves employee performance as colleagues are more easily integrated into a complete group. Therefore, it improves group work performance, as well as individual work performance. OCB offers opportunities for employees to develop themselves, to face work problems independently, and to have sustainable performance. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H11: Organizational Citizenship Behaviours positively influence Employee Performance.

2.15. The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment in the Influence of Leadership Styles on Employees' Performance

Ying and Ahmad (2009) suggested that leadership style influences organizational commitment and in turn, organizational commitment affects employees' job performance and mediates the relationship between leadership style and job performance. In a study conducted by Chi, Tsai, and Chang (2007), the results have signified that organizational commitment fully mediates the relationship between leadership style and job performance. Almutairi (2016) has surveyed nurses from four hospitals located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and found that affective commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership style and nurses' job performance. In addition, it has been reported that employee's organizational commitment strongly mediates the impact of transactional leadership style on performance (Hafeez, Rizvi, Hasnain & Mariam, 2012).

Based on the literature review, this study is designed to test the following hypotheses:

H12: Organizational Commitment mediates the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.

H13: Organizational Commitment mediates the influence of transactional leadership on employee performance.

2.16. The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment in the Influence of Leadership Styles on Employees' Performance

Behling and McFillen (1996) suggested that employees' feeling of empowerment is crucial to the ability of transformational leadership to have a positive influence on the responses of employees. In a similar manner, Epitropaki and Martin (2005) suggested that by empowering employees, transformational leaders can create a perception among employees that they are being taken seriously, listened to, and valued as members of the organization. According to Wei, Yuan & Di, (2010), subordinates' psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and performance. Tung (2016) reported that employees' psychological empowerment has a significant mediating effect for transformational and transactional leadership and employee productivity. Following the line of thinking, the present study hypothesizes the mediating role of psychological empowerment in the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on employees' performance. The Hypotheses H14 and H15 are formulated as follow:

H14: Psychological empowerment mediates the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.

H15: Psychological empowerment mediates the influence of transactional leadership on employee performance.

2.17. The Mediating Role of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours in the Influence of Leadership Styles on Employees' Performance

Scholars have found in many studies that OCB is treated as a mediated variable, with outcome variables such as employee performance, organization performance, and individual creativity. In addition, OCB comprises extra-role behaviours that are important for the efficient functioning of an organization. Boerner, Eisenbeiss, and Griesser (2007) found that transformational leaders boost follower performance by stimulating OCB. In contrast, they did not expect these mediating effects to hold for the relationship between transactional leadership and follower performance respectively. Their hypotheses were confirmed in an empirical study of 91 leaders from 91 German companies. Tai, Chang, Hong, and Chen (2012) also proved that transformational leadership and transactional leadership have a significant impact on performance through OCB. Therefore, hypotheses H16 and H17 are formulated as follows:

H16: Organizational citizenship behaviours mediate the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance.

H17: Organizational citizenship behaviours mediate the influence of transactional leadership on employee performance.

3. Conceptualization and Operationalization

For developing this concept paper, journal sources and unpublished Ph.D. dissertations within the area of this study were reviewed and the relationships between variables were established.

The concepts and variables taken for the study are operationalized in Table 1. The study also proposes the instruments to measure the variables as given in the Table. The full range leadership model by Avolio and Bass (2000) consists of three main styles: transformational, transactional and laissez-faire. However, in the present study, the transformational and transactional leadership styles are conceptualized and operationalized.
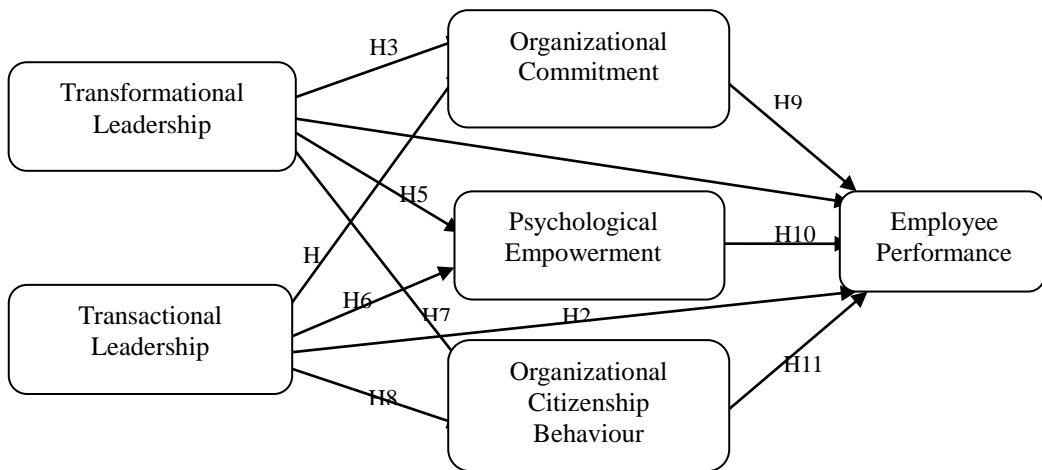
Note: H12-H17 which imply the mediating effect are not shown in the model

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

Table 1: Operationalization

Concept	Variable	Subscales/Dimensions	Construct to Measure the Variables
Leadership Styles	Transformational Leadership	• Idealized Influence • Inspirational Motivation • Intellectual Stimulation • Individualized Consideration	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X - Rater form Bass and Avolio (2000)
	Transactional Leadership	• Contingent Reward • Management by Exception (active) • Management by Exception (passive)	
	Employees Performance	• Job • Career • Innovator • Team • Organization	The Role-Based Performance Scale Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998)

		Performance	
Employees' Outcomes	Organizational Commitment	• Continuance Commitment • Affective Commitment • Normative Commitment	Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) Meyer and Allen(1997)
	Psychological Empowerment	• Meaning • Competence • Self-determination • Impact	Empowerment Scale Spreitzer (1995)
	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	• Altruism • Conscientiousness • Sportsmanship • Courtesy • Civic Virtue	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Scale Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990)

4. Conclusion and Implications

The concept of leadership has been a subject of much debate and consideration. Understanding how the different styles of leadership affect the behaviour of followers would be vital as the followers could be part of the success of organizations. Leaders need to adopt a leadership style that best suit the situation and their subordinates. The importance of leadership styles in determining the employees' performance is well documented and is of increasing significance in the public sector. Research findings have consistently highlighted the positive influence of transformational and transactional leadership on job-related outcomes of employees. There is evidence in the literature to support that leaders are perceived as effective when they use transformational and transactional leadership styles together. Further, the review of the literature revealed that, compared to transactional leadership, transformational leadership has more impact on job outcomes. Despite increased research into the leadership-performance relationship, many problems and gaps remain in existing studies. There is a lack of integration concerning the relationship between leadership and performance, a narrow set of variables has been used in previous studies, and the context and levels have been ignored. The conceptual model proposed in this study assumes that transformational and transactional leadership styles influence job performance through the

mechanism of perceived organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviour. Further research is needed to confirm the effect of leadership on performance of employees in the Sri Lankan context.

4.1. Directions for Future Research

The present study proposes a model for exploring the phenomenon and gives a platform for future researchers. Having the proposed model as the base, future studies could be directed towards investigating the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance and the role of potential mediators in the leadership-performance relationship in the public sector. The study found some inconsistency in the reported research findings regarding the effect of transformational and transactional leadership on employee performance. This is probably because of differences in context, sector, job category, and so on.

Particularly, it is very rare to come across the studies investigating the phenomena in the public sector organizations operating in Sri Lanka and thus, there is a need for identifying which leadership styles work best. Especially, the majority of the employees working in the public sector organizations in the Northern Province are Tamil speaking people whose culture differs noticeably. As reported by Hussain et al. (2017), the same leadership style can have different effects on employee outcomes in different cultures. Thus, there is a need for studying which style could result in positive outcomes in employees in this culture. In addition, the Northern region is under post-war development era and thus need effective public service to recover from the effects of prolonged war and the effective public service largely depends on the leadership of administrators or managers. Thus, public sector organizations need to be studied as they serve the community and strive for the development of the region and for the country at large. Future studies may also focus on other types of leadership styles such as directive, participative, and laissez-faire leadership in exploring the effect of those styles on performance. Further, exploring the effects of leadership styles on other organizational performance as well as team performance should be added to the existing body of knowledge.

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