IMPACT OF LEADER-FOLLOWER DYNAMICS ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

By

Thomson Kai Man, Chow

MBA (eCommence), University of Western Sydney, 2003
BSc (Hons), London Guildhall University, 2000

A DISSERTATION

Presented to

The Faculty of Business and Law

A Dissertation submitted to Newcastle Graduate School of Business

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

August 2012
ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to examine how leadership style, leader-member relationship, team orientation, team cohesiveness and commonality of goals are inter-related in managing a world-class research centre in Australia. The review of the literature yielded theories and constructs that enabled this research to construct a conceptual framework to investigate the interrelationships amongst these variables.

The research design employed primary data collection survey and analysis processes to determining the level of reliability, accuracy, efficiency and transparency of organization culture. The target population of the study was aimed at staff from an Australian Research Centre (ARC) who has worked for at least two years’ at the centre. Based on the findings generated by the study, the researcher recommended the most viable strategies that can be adopted in improving the work performance of research staff. Leadership styles of formal and informal team leaders are different, if a team leader’s tendency is to have more than one style, then how does the leader choose which style to use in different situations? Similarly, it is important to understand the team orientation and how members play different roles in different situations. The research questions sought to answer are: What leadership style differences exist between team leaders? How does leadership style affect leader-member relationship? How do leader-member relationships affect team orientation? How does team orientation affect the team cohesiveness? How does team orientation affect commitment to the goals of the organisation as a whole? The research provided a general understanding of how the leadership style, leader-member relationship, team orientation, team cohesiveness and commonality of goals are inter-related in managing a world-class research centre in Australia.

The research concluded that team cohesiveness and orientation affects the leadership style adopted by group leaders and in order to manage a better leader-member relationship that it is important to reach a consensus of goals.
I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution

Thomson Kai Man, Chow
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support from Professor Simon Ringer, head of Australia Centre for Microscopy & Microanalysis. Professor Ringer has graciously approved a survey to be conducted within the centre and provided valuable advice as to what to focus on.

I am thankful to my supervisor, Professor Soo May Cheng, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject. Professor Guy Cox, Dr Yidan Huang, Dr André Smit, and Dr Yinny who gave various types of professional advice on my dissertation writing and data analysis.

I am also indebted to many of my colleagues who supported me by sharing their valuable opinions in the survey.

Lastly, I offer my regards and blessings to all of those who supported me during the completion of the project, especially my wife Winnie, and two daughters, Chloe & Vincy, who provided loving family support during my studies.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................ ii

Acknowledgements........................................................................................................... iv

Table of Contents ................................................................................................................ v

Chapter 1 Introduction ........................................................................................................ 11
  1.0 Research Aims and Objectives ..................................................................................... 11
  1.1 Background To The Research ...................................................................................... 12
    Research Setting ........................................................................................................... 12
    The Work Teams .......................................................................................................... 13
    Academic Team .......................................................................................................... 14
    Technical Team ......................................................................................................... 15
    Administration Team ................................................................................................. 16
    Recruitment .............................................................................................................. 18
  1.2 Research Problem ..................................................................................................... 18
  1.3 Limitation of the Research ....................................................................................... 19
  1.4 Research Outline ...................................................................................................... 19
  1.5 Summary ................................................................................................................... 20

Chapter 2 Literature Review ............................................................................................ 21
  2.1 Meaning of Management .......................................................................................... 21
  2.2 Different interpretations of leadership styles ............................................................ 22
  2.3 The Management Process ....................................................................................... 23
  2.4 Management / Leader Work .................................................................................... 24
  2.5 A Leader's Nine Critical Management Skills ........................................................... 25
2.6 Managing People

2.7 Path-Goal Theory

2.7.1 Applying the Path-Goal Theory

2.8 Leader-Member Relationship

2.8.1 Applying the LMX Theory

2.9 Team Role Theories

2.10 Group Cohesiveness Theory

2.10.1 Applying the GEQ

2.11 Organisational Commitment

2.12 Development of a Conceptual Framework

2.12.1. Propositions Relating to Leader-Member Relationship

2.12.2. Proposition Relating to LMX and Team Orientation

2.12.3. Propositions Relating to Team Orientation and Intra-group Cohesiveness

2.12.4. Propositions Relating to Intra-group cohesiveness and Organisational Goals

2.13 Summary

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Demographics

3.1.1 Studying the Population

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Phase 1- Qualitative Study
Appendix D: Research Survey Questionnaire ................................................................. 96
Appendix E: Consent Letter & Survey Information to Participants .............................. 113
Appendix F: Download Results .................................................................................... 115
Appendix G: Invitation Letter to Participants ............................................................. 116
Appendix H: Consent Letter from ARC Director ......................................................... 117
Appendix I: Approval Letter from University HREC .................................................. 118

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Teams and their positions within the ARC .................................................... 17
Figure 2: Propositions relating to Leader-Member Relationship ................................. 42
Figure 3: Propositions relating to LMX and Team Orientation ...................................... 43
Figure 4: Propositions Relating to Team Orientation and Intra-group Cohesiveness .... 43
Figure 5: Complete Conceptual Model of the Research Objective ................................ 45
List of Tables:

Table 1: Different characteristics of Leadership administration and management ...............23

Table 4.1 Leadership Styles ........................................................................................................57

Table 4.1.1 Chi-Square test – All Teams ................................................................................59

Table 4.1.2: Chi-Square Test - Academic Team ........................................................................60

Table 4.1.3: Chi-Square Test - Technical Team .........................................................................60

Table 4.1.4: Chi-Square Test - Administration Team .................................................................60

Table 4.2.1: Chi-Square Test – All Teams .................................................................................62

Table 4.2.2: Chi-Square test - Academic Team ..........................................................................62

Table 4.2.3: Chi-Square Test - Technical Team ..........................................................................63

Table 4.2.4: Chi-Square test - Administration Team ..................................................................64

Table 4.3.1 Overall Chi-Square test results for each team – Social Integration ......................66

Table 4.3.2 Chi-Square test for each team - Task Integration ....................................................67

Table 4.3.3 Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in social matter – (All teams) ............................................................................................................69

Table 4.3.4 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in social matters (Academic team) ...........................................................................................................70

Table 4.3.5 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness on social matters (Technical Team) ............................................................................................................71

Table 4.3.6 – Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness on social matters (Administration team) ............................................................................................................72

Table 4.3.7 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in task matters (All teams) ...........................................................................................................73

Table 4.3.8 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in task matters (Academic team) ........................................................................................................74

Table 4.3.9 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in task matters
Table 4.3.10 - Association between team orientation and team cohesiveness in task matters

Table 4.4.1 - Association between intra team cohesiveness and commitment (All teams)

Table 4.4.2 - Association between intra team cohesiveness and commitment (Academic team)

Table 4.4.3 - Association between intra team cohesiveness and commitment (Technical team)

Table 4.4.4 - Association between intra team cohesiveness and commitment (Administration team)