



Political Leadership and Transactional Leadership

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Abstract

Leadership is the activity to influences others in order to guide them towards a certain goal (Miftah Thoha, 2013; 121). A leader is someone with capabilities and advantages so that they can influences and guides others to work together for a similar goal. Political leadership covers a wide range of topics due to how a country are constituted by structures designed to run it. Transactional leadership occurs because by default leadership is a form of social control between the leader and its subordinates. Transactional leadership or often called transactional politics has become its own problem. A normal kind of leadership when applied on other fields might become biased and pose a certain problem in the political sphere. Transactional politics can be hard to avoid especially in a presidential government system which involves multiple political parties. Transactional leadership is the kind of leadership modeled to attain a certain goal by giving rewards as well as guiding and controlling the subordinates so that they can work effectively and efficiently. It also focuses more on inter individual transaction, between the members and its managers.

Keywords: *Leadership; Politics; Transactional*

Introduction

Both leader and organizational leadership will face a much more complex and unforeseeable challenges in the era of globalization. Such condition will require the leaders' capabilities in managing changes in the organization's strategic environment that affects the organization's existence through efficient leadership. In the globalization era, leaders are required to have the perception and a good understanding in order to tackle the real condition faced by the organization. The increasing needs to motivate subordinates, the ability to manage emotions, a skill to analyze any assumptions regarding organizational cultures, as well as to identify either functional or lack thereof within the organization. It can also be added the willingness and the ability to involve the entire member of the organization and to participate them in any decision that would give benefits their said role in the organization. By the end of it, leaders should also be willing to share their role and to delegate their authority and to give a much more effective and efficient control. Thus, it can be summed that in this era of globalization any leaders and its necessary leadership abilities are to realize the changes in their role to be more critical.

“Work” assumes that a leader in the globalization era must face five fundamental challenges, that are: 1) A leader should be more sensitive towards diverse ethnic, culture, and gender; 2) a leader must have

the same vision as their workplace; 3) a leader must be willing to plan and implements differing and novel way of communication processes; 4) a leader must also willing to bring full commitment to make work of varying degrees of subordinates effectively; and 5) a leader should bridge the relation between the organization and the society.

Leadership is the act to influence other people's behavior so that they can be driven towards a certain goal (Miftah Thoha, 2013; 121). A leader is someone that is capable and had the abilities to influence and guide others to work together towards a common goal. Someone who leads by initiating, ordering, moving, organizing, and controlling others' action towards a common goal is the process of influencing the group by devising a plan for the common goal.

There are at least four types of political leaderships: 1) Statesman, is a political leader with vision, charisma, practical wisdom, and care for the common needs that is beneficial for the people; 2) Demagogue, is someone who makes use of their leadership abilities to secure a public spot by drawing from fear and general assumption then proceeds in using said authority for their personal good; 3) Politician, is public spot holder who's willing to sacrifice previously held principles or any unpopular policies in order to get reelected; 4) Citizen Leader, is someone who influences order even if they're not in any official position (Seta Basri, Thomas M Magstadt, 2010;307).

Leadership covers the process of influencing in devising the goal of the organization. In addition of motivating the subordinates to reach the goal and influencing the betterment of the group and its culture. Kartono (2013) states that leadership is the ability to give constructive influence towards others to do a certain cooperative work towards the previously planned goal.

From the discussion it can be summed that; 1) leadership involves the use of influence, that every relation within the organization may include the leader; 2) leadership also supposes the importance of communication; 3) leadership focuses on the aimed goal. An effective leader should in relates to either every individual or group goals.

Contents

Leadership, in its most basic understanding are defined as the ability of a single person to coerce a much greater number of people to do things that they're not initially willing to do. Hence, political leadership can be understood as an ability given that there exists a formal form of power in action. Political leadership has a wide range of reach, because in any given country are constituted by a various form of structures designed to run the country itself. A political leader may only be capable of working efficiently if they manage to optimize said structures. A political leader should also be able to imagine what program that should be run and how to most efficiently and effectively enforces it. It should be considered a waste that if a political leader cannot optimize the tools provided by the states. For instances by doing works that doesn't involves the already existing division. Especially by selfishly building their own public image, a political leader has lost its political leadership credentials.

Politics are the process of building and distributing power within a society in forms of policy making related to state affairs. The definition of politics is the amalgamation of several different interpretations of the core of politics usually known as political science. Politics can also be considered as the art and the knowledge of gaining power be it by constitutional or unconstitutional means. Andrew Heywood defines politics as a state activity to ensures, devise, and amend any forms of regular policies to better manages itself.

Politics, in terms of states affair and governmental issues are held for several reasons, such as; 1) to make an effort so that the authority held by the society and the government are obtained, used, and managed according to law; 2) to make sure that said authority are also obtained, used, and managed along the generally accepted democratic principles; 3) also to ensure that the authority is to be obtained, used, and managed in order to defend the core principles of NKRI.

Some political factors that play role in political participation are; a) level of knowledge; b) level of education; c) occupation; d) governmental involvements; e) intellectual classes' influences; and f) contention between the political elites.

According to Ramlan Surbakti there are six different approaches in order to comprehend the definition of politics; 1) the first one being authority approach; 2) the second one being institutional approach; 3) then moral approach; 4) conflict-based approach; 5) functional approach; 6) and the sixth one being political analysis approach.

Any political leader may only work optimally by optimizing the works of the structures involved. Thus, it is not advised for any political leader to work in solitary. Because even the smallest population of a country will not be able to be covered by a single person. That is why a political leader should have the imagination on what programs should be enforced as well as how to effectively and efficiently consolidates the structural authority to ensure the programs are enforced properly. In this context any political leaders should have the proper understanding of how a political system should work. Only by doing that and to properly make use of the structures in said system the colossal work of the states in providing the needs of the people can be properly maintained.

Yet what often happens, especially in the digital era, much of the political leader doing this façade of a work by taping one activity and sharing it in order to make it viral. This limited amount of work videos only covers a small amount of their work activities but by some clever editing it is made to be perceived as they have done some momentous work for all of their people. Any political leader who didn't optimize the use of tools given by the state has committed a great waste. By doing works that didn't involves the existing structures, especially one done for the sake of personal image, a leader has lost its political leadership credentials.

The implication of such behavior is that it would only cover a small portion of the masses while neglecting the rest of it. In principle, every state organizational structures along with its elements are designed as tools for the political leaders to realize their vision in relation to the state's needs and goals. A political leadership requires the ability to sustain their constituent, even to initiate significant political support, as well as motivating its subordinates and its constituents. By doing that a leader should also maintain optimism to recuperate from any challenges.

Political Leadership Characteristics

1. The Statesman

The Statesman character covers: a) pursuing general welfare, a good leader are motivated by the general good and needs; b) practical policies, a leader should be able to see the relations between the policies they took and its consequences; c) political proficiency, without sufficient proficiency it will be impossible to undertake any hard tasks; d) an extraordinary opportunity, a statesman was born from a critical condition during a period of when a country was in dire turmoil; e) good fortune, blessed by the almighty to carry the burden of their country and its people.

2. The Demagogue

The characters are as such: a) exploiting the general public's assumption, taking the sides of the masses according to the growing assumptions, followed by promises of reacting to said assumption if they were given the position; b) repeatedly distorting the truth, crafting a narrative to empower their position relative to the perceived truth; c) throws a lot of promises in order to obtain political power; d) showing no restraints in using immoral methods as well as the lack of moral judgments in the methods used to gain the authorized power; e) possessing a great amount of charms to gain interest of the public, which was the method of gaining the said public's trusts; f) pretends to care in order to gain the position their aiming for only to possibly betray that expectations one day.

3. Common Politician

The common politicians are someone whose characteristics are: a) lacking in any specific goals or abilities, though any abilities they possess might seem natural or even superficial it fails to attract any attention from the public; b) works on a short-term basis, focusing more on how to retain their position within the circle; c) even when they mean any good, they still struggle to keep their stance on any moral or ethical issues; d) they also struggle with any political risk maneuver, hence they keep position themselves on a safe margin; e) although in general they are relatively keep themselves from any kind of graft, they can be easily coerced to do so due to unwillingness to face any risks; f) they're generally neither better or worse than any other people.

4. Citizen Leaders

A Citizen Leaders often had: a) a unique dedication towards the people, for a period of time they might lead a segment of the masses in defending their belief and position in relation to their political position. They often find themselves at odds with the formal authority and serve their time for it or their belief; b) they also have a natural attraction that draw others to give their loyalty to them; c) above average prowess that also draw others to be their follower. Their fight also had a sufficient vitality for the long struggle.

It can be said that the four types are the ideal stereotypes according to Weberian model. Not a single political leadership can be fully categorized as either model. It is more often that there are a mix between two or even more of said models. As an observer we should be able to tell whoever the leaders in power are.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional politics refers to the transactional leadership theory, a theory that's been used in many situations beforehand. According to Wirawan (2003) transactional leadership occurred because in its basic understanding leadership was a form of social control between the leader and its subordinates. The leader and the subordinates, according to Wirawan, are in itself a separate party with their own needs and interests. The relation between the two results in a conflict that needs to be solved by trading something that is needed by the leader with something that is needed by the subordinates. The trade that occurs within the transactional leadership doesn't always have to be in form of material goods.

In order to run a transactional leadership, trusts and perceptions becomes an important factor in ensuring the harmonious relation between the leader and its subordinates (Hollander). In a political sphere, transactional leadership or often coined as transactional politics becomes a problem on its own. The relatively normal leadership model when applied into other fields may come across as biased and pose a problem in the political sphere. Transactional politic may be hard to avoid especially in a presidential system with multiple political parties involved. The new order leadership results in a transactional leadership where the leader tried to run its leadership as a form of transaction especially in order to ensure their power as well as their supporter's.

The tense atmosphere in the national political sphere should've be the canary in the mine for democracy in Indonesia. Every leader, whether in the government position or any other sectors, often put too much emphasis on transactional leadership that entices political dealing and lobbying based on limited groups or individual's interests. According to Sudirman transactional leader use their position as a bargaining power and move their surroundings to maximize their power by offering rewards and punishment in a superficial manner. Seeing that power as an absolute capital, transactional leader would often grasp their power strongly by deliberately making their surroundings weaker (Sudirman).

Transactional leadership is a style of a leadership where the leader used a system of reward and punishment to ensure obedience on its subordinates. Each follower would follow and do their jobs

according to their leader's order. As a benefit for following order, they would receive a reward, but when it comes short of expectations the leader would give a proper punishment.

The transactional leadership theory states that leaders would guide and motivate members of the organizations by defining a clear role and objectives. An organization would need transactional leadership who could give a direction, explains the expected behavior, as well as giving a system of reward and punishment that would affect the member's performances. Pawar and Eastman (1997) states that each transactional leadership is a form of relationship which trades a certain position or task if a member could successfully perform a certain task well. Bass (1985) also states that: 1) transactional leadership is a set of steps in a transactional process that covers how the transactional leader recognizing what the members expects from their jobs and tries to figure out what the members would get if they performed their respective properly; 2) the leader would promise a reward for every accomplished task; 3) a leader would recognize the members' interests if they performed a satisfying performance.

Bass and Avolio (1994) further states that from a research conducted, the results shows that a transformational leadership is much more effective compared to a transactional leadership.

According to Wibowo (2014 p. 300) transactional leadership is a model of leadership that helps the organization attain their goal in immediate efficiency by making a correlation between work satisfaction with a reward appraisal and ensuring that every member would have the necessary resources to complete their respective tasks. Transactional leadership focuses more on the leader who gives reward on their subordinates and controlling said subordinates' tasks by pointing them in a clear goal and job description (Garnasih and Pramadewi, 2013). Said model is also a form of leadership where the leader tends to give directions to its subordinates and giving incentives along with punishments according to their performances, focusing on how to shape the behavior of its subordinates (Maulizar and Yunus, 2012). This style of leadership also known as managerial leadership which focuses on supervising, organizing, and group work. This is also the style where the leader encourages obedience on their subordinates through two different factors which are rewards and punishments.

Every leader who focuses on supervising the member's work by finding faults and any form of deviation can be useful in times of crisis and emergency. Going by these thoughts it can be summed that transactional leadership is a form of leadership which aim to attain a certain goal by promising rewards, as well as guiding and controlling each subordinate to ensure the work goes effectively and efficiently. Transactional leadership focuses on inter individual transaction, between the normal members and their managers. Two distinct characteristics that forms the basis of transactional leadership are as follows: 1) a leader would use a form of reward to motivate its subordinates; 2) a leader would only do a corrective act when a member fails to perform as expected.

Transactional Leadership Characteristics

The characteristics of the aforementioned leadership are as such:

1. Rewards and punishments are a form of motivation for its subordinates in order to obediently perform their tasks. This becomes the sole reason for the subordinates to perform well and avoid any mistakes.
2. Any standard for scoring a well performed tasks is solidly defined. Focusing less on creativity and innovation, preferring more on the defined standard given by the leader.
3. Organization mission, system, rules, instructions, and chain of commands becomes the guiding force in organizing the group. The power of the leader comes from the authority and the formal responsibilities within the group.
4. Transactional leader would be less likely to challenge the status quo. They would stick to the given rules and system and resistant towards change

5. The leader will supervise the subordinates' work by making sure they're working according to the goal and standard given.
6. The leader would tend to think inside the box in solving a problem. They would be much more suited in performing routine tasks than facing a challenge which requires creative thinking.

Transactional leadership might have certain benefits, but it also comes with its own drawbacks. Such benefits for example: 1) Some clear directives. The leader can correlate the goal of the organization with a clear set of rules and procedures for each respective subordinates; 2) time benefit. This style of leadership made it possible to attain a short-term goal in a short time; 3) Consistency, the leader will stick to the already existing procedures. Meanwhile the drawbacks are as follows: 1) A stiff work environment, with work motivation comes solely from the reward and punishment system applied. Members wouldn't have any emotional attachment or commitment towards their leader; 2) passive, the leader will only intervene when a work performance was short of expectation; 3) low occurrences of innovation and creative thoughts, as the leader would often dismiss any creative inputs if it doesn't go along the expected plan or goal; 4) low emotional attachment, any form of loyalty comes not from any commitment towards the goals.

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