

**TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES OF
MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a study of leadership in six multinational corporations (MNCs) in Thailand. Specifically, the study examined relationships between leadership (transformational and transactional) and organizational outcomes as reported by 296 subordinates of middle and lower level managers in U.S.-based MNCs in Bangkok. In the Information Age, access to a global IT infrastructure, particularly through telecommunications, is at the heart of business and national competitiveness. Individual managers everywhere face a growing scope of responsibility, with accountability for more goals and people than ever before. Consequently, it is more important now than ever for managers delegate authority and communicate effectively with their employees. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was used to measure transformational and transactional leadership and three organizational outcomes (extra effort on the job, perception of leaders' effectiveness, and subordinates' job satisfaction). Results indicate that transformational and transactional leadership accounted for significant amounts of the variance in subordinates' extra effort, perceptions of leader effectiveness and job satisfaction. Results are similar to those obtained in previous studies in North America.

Today's business environment is increasingly complex and competitive. Companies are constantly growing and changing. Electronic commerce is now positioned at the cutting edge of fundamental change. The confluence of technological advances, linked to loosening of barriers to global trade, creates an era of unprecedented opportunity. Companies must now compete internationally, or at least keep an eye on global competitors, and be prepared to respond to new challenges or opportunities. Leadership is often regarded as the single most important factor in the success and failure of organizations. Nationally leaders are seeking to connect IT sites within their countries to encourage organizations to share information in a way that make each organization more competitive internationally. North American management studies have described leadership in many different ways in the 20th century; for example, as a personality attribute, as inducing compliance, as an exercise of influence and/or power, as a form of persuasion, and as the initiation of structure [7].

At the beginning of the 21st century, with the accelerating rate of globalization in business and technology, it is appropriate to examine the applicability of U. S. management theories in other cultures. This paper presents research on leadership in multinational corporations (MNCs) in Thailand as a step toward greater understanding of how U.S. leadership models might apply in East Asian countries, specifically Thailand.

Burns and Bass discover the initial research on transformational leadership. Transactional leaders relate to followers on the basis of an exchange (or transaction) approach (e.g., by substituting one goal for another, reducing resistance to certain actions, implementing a decision) [5] [14]. Transformational leaders empower followers to go beyond immediate self-interest and consider longer-term outcomes for themselves and others [21].

Although transformational and transactional leadership are distinct behaviorally and psychometrically, studies indicate that effective leaders utilize both synchronistically. Transformational leaders build on the transactional framework to enhance their effectiveness. By adopting a transformational leadership orientation, a leader can prevent transactional behaviors from degenerating into passive management-by-exception or laissez-faire leadership [10]. Research shows that transformational leadership, by itself, is not effective. Tosi indicates that most successful charismatic, transformational leaders effectively transact daily, routine events [26]. Without transactional leadership skills, even the most inspirational, transformational leader would fail to accomplish his/her mission. Historically, many charismatic leaders who lacked (or whose followers lacked) the transactional management skills failed to successfully implement their visions [3]. In fact, research tends to indicate that both transformational and transactional leadership are positively related to desired organizational outcomes.

According to Bass the MLQ (Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire) describes three aspects of leadership in terms of laissez-faire (extremely inactive), transactional and transformational (extremely active) [5]. The five dimensions of transformational leadership include the following.

Idealized Influence (Charisma). The two dimensions of idealized influence refer to the leader's charismatic attributes and behaviors. They consistently appear as the most important transformational leadership dimensions. Idealized behaviors describe a leader's actions. Idealized attributes are perceived by subordinates, and lead to a strong desire to identify with and emulate the leader, and to place confidence in his/her vision and values [5].

Inspirational Motivation. Transformational leaders motivate and inspire their subordinates by providing meaningful, challenging work [2]. Inspirational leaders passionately articulate their vision and communicate shared future organizational goals [10].

Intellectual Stimulation. This entails intellectual stimulation of subordinates' ideas and values. The leader encourages subordinates to open their minds and use their imaginations to discover new solutions to old problems. Consequently, subordinates develop and strengthen their capabilities for solving unexpected problems and learn to analyze and resolve problems independently [6].

Individualized Consideration. This occurs when leaders recognize subordinates' distinct differences and treat each one accordingly by mentoring and coaching and ensuring individual development of talents and skills. The leader attempts to recognize and satisfy subordinates' needs and to arouse and elevate those needs in an effort to promote their development [6].

Transactional leadership, leader-subordinate relationship that employ a series of exchanges or implicit contracts, has three dimensions.

Contingent Reward. Transactional leadership primarily involves contingent reinforcement that can be positive or negative [5]. Leaders provide contingent rewards, such as bonuses, increases in pay, or praise, when subordinates perform at acceptable levels. Conversely, they provide negative consequences, such as withholding bonuses or pay increases, when subordinates do not perform at acceptable levels.

Active Management by Exception. Active management-by-exception occurs when the leader has a system for actively monitoring errors and gaps in expected performance and takes corrective action appropriately [10].

Passive Management by Exception. Passive management-by-exception occurs when a leader intervenes only when there is a gap between desired and actual behavior. Accordingly, the leader pays attention to the subordinate only when mistakes are made and corrective actions are necessary. Thus, there are no preventive actions or attempts by the leader to monitor or influence performance [10].

Laissez-faire leadership differs from transformational and transactional leadership. **Laissez-Faire.** Laissez-faire leaders are "hands off," avoid influencing subordinates and evade their supervisory responsibilities. Some believe that that this type of leadership adversely affects work-related outcomes [7] [29].

The following hypotheses apply research demonstrating the positive effects of both transactional and transformational leadership on organizational outcomes (extra effort/motivation, leader effectiveness and job satisfaction) with Thai managers.

1. Transactional and transformational leadership dimensions are positively related to extra effort on the job.
2. Transactional and transformational leadership dimensions are positively related to subordinates' perceptions of leader effectiveness.
3. Transactional and transformational leadership dimensions are positively related to subordinates' job satisfaction.

Methods

Participants

Respondents worked in one of six U.S.-based MNCs in Bangkok, Thailand. Women comprised 56.1 % of the sample. Most (166, 56%) respondents were 20 to 30 years old, while 103 (34.8 %) were 31 to 40 years, and the rest were older. Most respondents were single (67.2%) and 94 (31.8%) were married. Most respondents (94.6 %) had a bachelors degree or higher. Most respondents (86.1%) received their highest degree in Thailand and the rest in the United States, Australia and Europe.

Measures

MLQ. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The MLQ was translated into Thai and then back-translated into English by Translation Center of Faculty of Art at Chulalongkorn University. The MLQ Form consists of 63 items with twelve subscales, five for transformational leadership, three for transactional leadership, one for laissez-faire leadership and three for the outcomes (extra effort/motivation, perception of leadership effectiveness and job satisfaction).

Validity and Reliability of Measures. Howell and Avolio provided evidence of convergent and discriminant validity of the MLQ (Form 10) with partial least square (PLS), and this method was used in this research as well [19]. In PLS, relationships among latent variables are estimated and tested within the context of a measurement model which describes individual item reliability, internal consistency and discriminant validity [17]. Internal consistency reliabilities for all constructs was greater than the 0.7 as required. The average variance extracted from the construct from items is indicates of the amount of variance accounted for by the constructs (from the measures) using a criteria of 0.5 or greater. The results obtained for the current data followed the same pattern of results and are available from the authors upon request.

Results

The hypotheses concern relationships between leadership (transformational and transactional) and three organizational outcomes (extra effort on the job, perceptions of leader effectiveness, and subordinates' job satisfaction). Of 400 questionnaires distributed, there were 296 usable responses. Table 1 reports the intercorrelation matrix and Cronbach's alpha (reliability coefficients) for all study variables. All transformational leadership dimensions are positively correlated with each other and with the transactional leadership dimensions (See Table 1).

Table 2 summarizes the results of regressing Extra Effort on the leadership dimensions. The multiple regression coefficient is 0.744; R^2 of 55.3 indicates that the leadership dimensions account for 55% of the variance in Extra Effort. One leadership dimension, idealized behavior, is related to Extra Effort.

Table 3 presents the regression results for perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness. The multiple regression coefficient (R) is 0.80; the leadership dimensions accounted for 65 percent of the variance ($R^2=64.6$). Only one leadership dimension, Idealized Attributes (IIA), is related to employee perception of Leader Effectiveness.

Table 1. Intercorrelation Matrix and Reliability Estimates for Study Variables

VARIABLES	IIA	IIB	IM	IS	IC	CR
Idealized Attributes (IIA)	0.75					
Idealized Behavior (IIB)	.769**	0.71				
Inspiration Motivation (IM)	.776**	.796**	0.76			
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	.669**	.742**	.713**	0.77		
Individualized Consideration (IC)	.747**	.744**	.643**	.699**	0.70	
Contingent Reward (CR)	.735**	.705**	.713**	.642**	.648**	0.70
Management-by-Exceptive (Active) (MBEA)	.535**	.562**	.587**	.518**	.525**	.547**
Management-by-Exceptive (Passive) (MBEP)	.329**	.296**	.305**	.302**	.205**	.240**
Laissez-Faire (LF)	.490**	.471**	.512**	.482**	.367**	.437**
Extra Effort (EXTRA)	.661**	.694**	.620**	.619**	.643**	.638**
Effectiveness (EFF)	.758**	.735**	.724**	.702**	.667**	.689**
Satisfaction (SAT)	.740**	.685**	.660**	.652**	.698**	.670**

VARIABLES	MBEA	MBEP	LF	EXT	EFF	SAT
Idealized Attributes (IIA)						
Idealized Behavior (IIB)						
Inspiration Motivation (IM)						
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)						
Individualized Consideration (IC)						
Contingent Reward (CR)						
Management-by-Exceptive (Active) (MBEA)						
Management-by-Exceptive (Passive) (MBEP)	0.57					
Laissez-Faire (LF)	-.068	0.62				
Extra Effort (EXTRA)	.281**	.655**	0.77			
Effectiveness (EFF)	.395**	.194**	.374**	0.63		
Satisfaction (SAT)	.503**	.358**	.509**	.759**	0.82	
	.327**	.433**	.551**	.672**	.802**	0.74

Table 2: Regression Analysis for Extra Effort on the Job

Variables	Unstand. Beta	Coeff. Std. Error	Std. Coeff.	T	Sig.
Constant	-3.664E – 02	0.245		-0.149	0.881
Idealized Attributes (IIA)	9.170E – 02	0.111	0.085	0.824	0.411
Idealized Behavior (IIB)	0.426	0.118	0.387	3.603	0.000*
Inspiration Motivation (IM)	9.674E – 02	0.112	0.090	0.864	0.389
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	0.135	0.098	0.123	1.377	0.170
Individualized Consideration(IC)	0.189	0.102	0.172	1.858	0.065
Contingent Reward (CR)	0.100	0.097	0.084	1.031	0.304
Management-by-Except (Active)(MBEA)	-9.744E – 02	0.083	-0.081	-1.174	0.242
Management-by-Except (Passive)(MBEP)	6.525E – 02	0.080	0.056	0.812	0.418
Laissez-Faire (LF)	7.282E - 02	0.071	0.079	1.032	0.304

Regression coefficient (R) = 0.744
 Adjusted R Squared 0.530
 R Squared = 0.53
 F = 23.136
 Sig. of F. = 0.000

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Perception of Leader Effectiveness

Variables	Unstand. Beta	Coeff. Std. Error	Std. Coeff.	T	Sig.
Constant	0.555	0.233		2.381	0.018
Idealized Attributes (IIA)	0.279	0.105	0.247	2.648	0.009*
Idealized Behavior (IIB)	0.182	0.112	0.158	1.624	0.106
Inspiration Motivation (IM)	0.130	0.106	0.115	1.224	0.223
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	0.149	0.093	0.127	1.599	0.112
Individualized Consideration(IC)	0.139	0.097	0.120	1.432	0.154
Contingent Reward (CR)	8.746E - 02	0.095	0.070	0.918	0.360
Management-by-Except (Active)(MBEA)	1.560E - 02	0.080	0.012	0.194	0.846
Management-by-Except (Passive)(MBEP)	-0.101	0.076	-0.082	-1.332	0.185
Laissez-Faire (LF)	-4.857E - 02	0.068	-0.049	-0.715	0.476
Regression coefficient (R) = 0.744		R Squared = 0.65			
Adjusted R Squared = 0.63		F = 33.24		Sig. of F. = 0.000	

Table 4: Regression Analysis for Subordinates' Job Satisfaction

Variables	Unstandardized B	Coeff. Std. Error	Std. Coeff.	T	Sig.
Constant	0.640	0.254		2.519	0.013
Idealized Attributes (IIA)	0.274	0.116	0.213	2.370	0.019*
Idealized Behavior (IIB)	0.272	0.123	0.208	2.213	0.028*
Inspiration Motivation (IM)	8.387E - 02	0.116	0.065	0.724	0.470
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	-2.452E - 02	0.102	-0.019	-0.240	0.810
Individualized Consideration(IC)	0.373	0.106	0.286	3.507	0.001*
Contingent Reward (CR)	0.272	0.100	0.193	2.710	0.007*
Management-by-Except (Active)	-0.263	0.086	-0.184	-3.060	0.003*
Management-by-Except (Passive)	-0.218	0.083	-0.158	-2.623	0.010*
Laissez-Faire (LF)	-4.145E - 02	0.073	-0.038	-0.565	0.573
Regression coefficient (R) = 0.744		R Squared = 0.65			
Adjusted R Squared 0.65		F = 36.88		Sig. of F. = 0.000	

Table 4 presents the regression results for subordinate's Job Satisfaction. The multiple regression coefficient (R) was 0.816 and the coefficient of determination (R^2), 0.67. Three transformational dimensions (Idealized Attributes, Idealized Behavior and Individual Consideration) and three transactional dimensions (Contingent Rewards, Management-by-Exception - Active and Management-by-Exception - Passive) were significant at $p < 0.05$ level. Interestingly, both Management-by-Exception-Active and Management-by-Exception-Passively are negatively related to subordinates' job satisfaction.

Conclusions

The results demonstrate positive relationships between some aspects of transformational leadership and subordinates' job satisfaction, extra effort on the job and perceptions of leader effectiveness. All three transactional leadership dimensions (Contingent Reward, Management-by-Exception-Active and Management-by-Exception -

Passive) are positively related to subordinates' Job Satisfaction. No transactional leadership dimensions are related to Extra Effort on the Job and Job Satisfaction. Perceptions of Leader Effectiveness.

The results are consistent with previous research suggesting positive relationships between transformational leadership and outcomes [5] [12] [23] [25] and transactional leadership and outcomes [4] [7] [10] [11].

All outcome variables were positively related to some transformational dimensions. Idealized Influence explained the most of the variance for Subordinates' Job Satisfaction, Extra Effort on the Job and Perception of Leader Effectiveness. However, the Individual Consideration provided a positive effect on subordinates' job satisfaction. In transactional Leadership style, Contingent Reward showed a positive affect and Management-by-Exception (Active) and Management-by-Exception (Passive) showed the negative affect on Subordinates' Job Satisfaction.

Three multiple regressions were used to analyze the relationships between leadership behavior (transformational and transactional leadership style), and the three outcome criteria (subordinates' job satisfaction, extra effort on the job, and perceptions of leader effectiveness). The analysis showed significant relationships between both transformational and transactional leadership styles and subordinates' job satisfaction, extra effort on the job and perception of leader effectiveness.

Idealized Influence explained the greatest amount of the variance for subordinates' job satisfaction, extra effort on the job and perception of leader effectiveness. However, Intellectual Stimulation was negatively related to respondents' job satisfaction. There were both positive and negative relationships between transactional leadership and subordinates' job satisfaction, extra effort on the job and perceptions of leader

Discussion of Findings

Transformational leadership describes how leaders take action to increase associates' awareness of what is right and important and to raise them to go beyond their own self-interests for the good of the group, the organization, or society. Such leaders provide a sense of purpose that goes beyond a simple exchange of rewards for effort provided. Transformational leaders displays behaviors associated with the personality characteristic of charisma, abilities to be intellectually stimulating, providing individualized consideration with attention on empowering others and the ability to relate to employees in a dynamic and supportive way. Transactional leadership is a process of gaining compliance from associates through contracts with the leader. The contractual relations may be explicit or implicit. The leader clarifies expectations and may exchange promises of reward or disciplinary threats for the desired effort and performance levels.

In this study, the mean scores for transformational leadership were 2.2427 on Idealized Attributes, 2.3494 on Idealized Behaviors, 2.4224 on Inspirational Motivation, 2.2965 on Intellectual Stimulation and 2.2500 on Individualized Consideration. Thus, top management demonstrated transformational leadership. Mean scores for transactional leadership varied from 1.4800 on Laissez-Faire and 2.2578 on Contingent Reward. In other words, top management demonstrated transactional leadership styles once in a while (1.0) to fairly often (3.0). This result indicated that top management in Thailand displayed transformational leadership more frequently than transactional style.

The outcomes variables relate the success of the group to leadership behaviors. Those outcomes were Extra Effort, Effectiveness, and Satisfaction. Effectiveness was defined as the work group productivity [20]. Extra Effort was the amount of exertion an individual puts forth to complete assigned tasks [5]. Job Satisfaction was the level of agreement a subordinate has with an immediate superior's leadership style [20]. The mean scores of the outcome variables in this study were 2.5848 on effectiveness, 2.3727 on Extra Effort and 2.5085 on Satisfaction. Then, the top management level demonstrated

These studies supported this effect in lower organizational levels where leadership styles were related to

on sometimes (2.0) to fairly often (3.0) effectively on the outcome variables. The data confirmed that the outcome variables – Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction – of subordinates related to leader behavior. As Conger and Kanungo noted, how subordinates perceived a leader is more important than what the leader actually does. In other words, because of the special relationship between the leader and the followers, how followers view their leader is what really counts [15].

The multiple regression analyses for the middle-lower level based on their top management level were statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level for all perceived transformational and transactional leadership style. Idealized Influence (Charisma) is counted for the largest amount of explained based on the top management's perceived leadership styles. Although recent literature has introduced 'new' themes concerning the need to empower subordinates, to active higher-order needs in the service of the organization and to develop a sense of ownership for the things that occur in the organization [30], they echo Charisma, a popular leadership theme during the 1960's when writers such [1], [24] and [22] emphasized power sharing, mutual trust and participatory decision making. Burns and Bass reintroduced their humanistic concerns for quality of work life and supportive relationships in the transformational leadership dimension of Idealized Influence (Charisma)[5] [14].

Transformational leadership (Idealized Influence/Charisma, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration) is highly correlated with all the outcome variables. The results reveal an interesting relationship among the transformational factors. Previous research suggests that transformational leadership factors, charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, are closely related each other. As with charismatic leaders, the behavior of inspirational leader may be perceived as inspirational by one person and by an entire group. The inspirational leader has insight into what will be challenging to a follower and for what reasons. Inspirational leaders are perceived by others to display such behaviors as setting challenging objectives. Intellectually stimulating leaders see themselves as part of an interactive creative process [13]. Not bound by current solutions, they create images of other possibilities. Orientations are shifted, awareness is increased of the tensions between visions and realities, and experiments are encouraged. Although intellectual stimulation is inspiring and is often associated with charismatic leadership it involves important differences. Intellectual stimulation contributes to the independence and autonomy of subordinates and prevents "habituated followership," characterized by the blind unquestioning trust and obedience that are seen in charismatic leader-follower relations [18]. The findings suggest middle-lower level were significantly affected by the top management level's leadership styles in their own leadership behaviors. The results are similar to findings in previous research on role modeling and the cascading effect of transformational leadership leadership personnel at lower levels, possible resulting in the shift of power to lower levels in the organization [6]. The probable submergence of surface differences in national styles and performance

their superior's leadership styles. Burns noted "A one-man leadership is a contradiction in terms" [14, p.452] and suggested that leaders and their followers form synergistic relationships that move organizations, work groups and individuals to new and higher levels of effectiveness.

It was surprising to observe that Contingent Reward and Management-by-Exception (Active) were significantly correlated with all of subordinates' outcome variables, although to a lesser degree overall than transformational factors. Contingent Reward accounted for the majority of the explained variance for subordinates' Job Satisfaction and was the second variable entered into the regression model for Effectiveness and Extra Effort. Management-by-Exception (Active) accounted for the majority of the explained variance for Effectiveness and was the second variable entered into the regression model for Extra Effort and subordinates' Job Satisfaction. These results may be attributed to the nature of the functional areas the subordinates manage.

The data suggest that subordinates expect their managers to exhibit both transformational and transactional leadership styles of their maintenance and growth in the multinational organizations. Transformational and transactional leadership, while conceptually distinct, can be practiced by the same individual in different amounts and degrees. These results imply that need of subordinates to strike a balance between transformational and transactional leadership in order to develop the leadership potential of subordinates, to inspire and motivate workers and to increase overall organizational productivity [12]. Such a role can be played out through combining transformational practices, such as articulating an inspirational vision, encouraging intellectual solutions and one-on-one chats, with transactional practices, such as the give-and-take of goal-setting and balancing individual needs with organizational prerogatives.

This study provided evidence supporting the notion that transactional and transformational leadership did relate significantly with three key organizational outcome variables – Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Job Satisfaction. Ideally, Bass's transformational/ transactional model could be used to predict measures of extra effort on the job, perception of leader effectiveness and subordinates' job satisfaction [5].

Implications of the Findings

With the increased turbulence in today's business environments, a manager must become a strategic thinker in the new age of management where judgement drives decision and actions more than do procedures and precedents. In the 21st century, the human family and global business as well is increasingly intercultural and interdependent. The globalization of industry means increasing attention to international managers. Information technology provides many challenges. The information that was formerly gather by staff can now be obtained with ease by other managers when they access a common database. On the other hand, information that was the prerogative of upper level managers can also be made available to must still recognize needed increases in attention to underlying differences in institutes, cultures, and governments. At the same time, with the rise in power and

influence and the further economic development of countries whose cultures are alien to the West, attitudes, values, interest and beliefs that are different from those in the West and that affect leader-follower relations will emerge. The cultures are likely to emphasize tradition and collectivism more heavily than do Western traditions.

This leadership approach, overall, holds up as having considerable universal potential [8]. It appears that transformational leadership will universally help leaders work more effectively with people to reach their needs and achieve exceptional performance. In order to obtain high performance, focusing on transformational leadership would entail enacting the external environment as high uncertainty and encouraging at least initially, an open organizational culture and an organic structure. An even greater fit with transformational leadership would require high-risked endeavors such as external diversification and prospector strategies. On the other hand, transactional leadership would work with low environmental uncertainty, closed cultures and mechanistic structures with low-risk corporate and business level strategies. Therefore, applying these behaviors, leaders may require adjustments and fine-tuning as we move across cultures, particularly into non-Western cultures.

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