

Leadership Styles Affecting Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in Selected IT Organizations in Chennai

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Abstract

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. It is the ability that affects the performance of individuals in organizations. This study aims to identify the leadership styles practiced in selected IT organizations and its effect on the employee's organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). The leadership styles considered for the study were transactional and transformational leadership styles. The research was carried out by administering a well-structured questionnaire and the responses were collected. It was found that the leaders in the selected IT organizations exhibited a combination of transactional and transformational leadership styles. The various qualities were also discussed in the study to decide the leader's style. The study also brought out that the impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles on OCB will lead to the benefit of the organization by increasing productivity, efficiency, and satisfaction among the employees.

Keywords: leadership styles, organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), transactional leadership style, transformational leadership styles

JEL Classification: D2, D23, M1, M12, O1, O15

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Leaders are facilitators of success. They ensure that their subordinates have everything they need to be productive and successful. They do so by approaching the subordinates with a style which will have a mutual benefit. The style used by leaders to influence and motivate subordinates is called leadership style. When leaders interact with followers, they employ a combination of traits, skills, and behaviors that are called leadership styles. Beliefs, ideas, norms, and values are the factors that influence a leader's style. Different theories and research studies have led to the evolution of a number of different leadership styles. The leadership style of each leader varies. It also differs from industry to industry. The IT industry has had a major role in contributing to the Indian economy. The IT industry in India has contributed immensely towards employment generation, and this has led the industry to be a dominant player in the global outsourcing sector.

People are the main asset of an organization and more so in the IT industry. The skilled workforce is a major contributor to the organization. However, the industry is facing challenges in retaining the human capital. For this purpose, there has to be a development of the leaders in the industry. The industry is able to sustain with few eminent leaders and their leadership styles. However, it is not sufficient to face the challenges which are present in the form of competition with other countries. Also, the recent global financial crisis has deeply affected the Indian IT companies as well as global companies. This also demands for a responsible behavior from employees in the organizations. It can be instilled only when the leaders are efficient and effective. The art of overcoming challenges through leadership is not new to the IT industry. There are effective leaders like N. R. Narayana Murthy of Infosys, Azim Premji of Wipro, and Shiv Nadar of HCL to name a few. Each of them has their own style of leadership. It is their style that has influenced a lot of employees and others outside the organization. However, the requirement is more. Many software companies are in the business of providing service support, and they

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require a large number of leaders for internal as well as external co-ordination with customers. The challenge is much bigger because many of the software professionals do not wish to spend time and effort in acquiring leadership skills.

High attrition and increase in manpower cost is yet another challenge the IT industry faces. Attracting, training, and retaining employees are the critical success-determinants for the industry. The role of leadership styles in reducing attrition and manpower cost is the need of recent times. Another challenge is to nurture creativity. The IT industry, while gaining more projects and moving high, will have to focus on creating new solutions, technologies, and providing meaningful leadership style. Providing a culture by encouraging creativity is very difficult and this also has to be addressed by the way a leader behaves. It requires skill, time, effort, and the need to adopt innovative approaches.

Motivating the employees to keep them going in their job also lies in the hands of the leader. Leaders through their leadership styles need to motivate the employees; and this cannot happen unless the leader himself is motivated. Their style has to inculcate organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in the employees, which will make the job interesting and the employees will have a sense of purpose. Thus, an effective leadership style can lead an organization to success and outperform its competitors.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present study:

- To find out the leadership styles exhibited by leaders in select IT companies in Chennai (transactional or transformational leadership style).
- To study the impact of transactional leadership qualities on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB).
- To study the impact of transformational leadership qualities on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

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Review of Literature

Goleman (2000) and his team completed a three-year study with over 3,000 middle-level managers. Their goal was to uncover specific leadership behaviors and determine their effect on the corporate climate and each leadership style's effect on bottom-line profitability. The research discovered that a leadership style was responsible for 30% of the company's bottom-line profitability. That is far too much to ignore. A company spends much money and effort on new processes, efficiencies, and cost-cutting methods in an effort to add even 1% to bottom-line profitability, and compare that to a simply inspiring leader to be more kinetic. It is a no-brainer. There are several leadership styles like autocratic, democratic, and free-reign that have emerged in the past. And recent trends have also produced leaders with styles such as pacesetter, authoritative, affiliative, coaching, and coercive. However, with all these styles in use, the never changing broad classification of leadership styles are the transactional and transformational leadership styles.

There have been many research studies that have been carried out in the area of leadership styles. The impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles have been studied with respect to various factors like motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational culture, employee performance, organizational performance, and many more. Several research studies have been conducted in the field of organizational citizenship behavior. These studies have analyzed the factors influencing OCB, characteristics of OCB, and the demographic variables' influence on OCB. But there are fewer studies about the impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles on OCB in IT organizations. Hence, this study aims to analyze the role of transactional and transformational leadership styles in developing OCB.

➤ **Transactional Leadership Style :** The transactional leadership style was first described by Max Weber in 1947, and again by Bernard M. Bass in 1981. Transactional leadership is a style of leadership that focuses on the

transactions between leaders and their followers (Bass, 1990). It is based on the hypothesis that followers are motivated through a system of rewards and punishments. The transactional leader's view of the leader / follower relationship is one of quid pro quo - or "this for that". It is also known as managerial leadership that focuses on the role of supervision, organization, and group performance. Within transactional leadership, there are four factors, contingent reward, active management by exception, passive management by exception, and laissez-faire.

Contingent rewards provide rewards for efforts and recognizes good performance. Management-by-exception maintains the status quo, intervenes when subordinates do not meet acceptable performance levels, and initiates corrective action to improve performance. Within this, there are active and passive routes. Active management-by-exception means that the leader continually looks at each subordinate's performance and makes changes to the subordinate's work to make corrections throughout the process. Passive management-by-exception leaders wait for issues to come up before fixing the problems. In laissez-faire, the leader provides an environment where the subordinates get many opportunities to take decisions. The leader himself abdicates responsibilities and avoids making decisions and, therefore, the group often lacks direction. Since this leadership style is based on a system on rewards and penalties, the employees will receive less in terms of motivation and inspiration. They will perform not to their satisfaction, but to avoid punishment. The success of such leadership depends on the level of satisfaction the leader and followers have in following this system of performance based appraisals (Bass, 1990).

➡ **Transformational Leadership Style** : J.M. Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership style. According to Burns, the transforming approach creates significant changes in the life of the people and organizations. It redesigns perceptions and values, and changes expectations and aspirations of employees. The intrinsic characteristics of transformational leaders were described by Dixon (1998). His study revealed that a leader's behaviour is influenced by four factors: Self confidence, integrity, honesty, and personal values. Schuster (1994) stated that transformational leadership appeals to higher motivation, while improving the quality of life for the members of an organization. The leaders with transformational leadership style are found at all levels of the organization - teams, departments, and divisions. They have a charismatic appeal.

Transactional leadership styles have four dimensions. They are inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration. Inspirational motivation refers to the constant vision, mission, and the set of values for the employees. The leader stimulates the creativity of the employees and also allows finding new solutions to the problems. This refers to the intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence is the ability of the leader to influence the employees by following principles and morals. Furthermore, the transformational leaders treat every employee as an individual. They guide and direct one according to the employee's knowledge and talent. This is individualized consideration. Many researchers have demonstrated that this leadership style has more impact on employee performance. The employees perform not only to the satisfaction of the leader, but they also develop a sense of satisfaction within them. They feel enthusiastic to work. And finally, the transformational leaders pave way for successful employees and organizations.

➡ **Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)** : Katz and Kahn (1966) were the first to make a note of autonomous work behavior by employees in an organization or workplace. However, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has been studied since the late 1970s, and Dennis Organ is generally considered as the father of OCB. Organ (1988) defined OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization." As the value of a job increases, the employees need to engage themselves in discretionary activities or behaviour so that they get full satisfaction out of the job. OCB tends to facilitate organizational functioning. It has shown to increase productivity, efficiency, and customer satisfaction, and reduces costs and rates of turnover and absenteeism (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009).

Many elements comprising of OCB have been discussed in this section. Organ, Podsakoff, and MacKenzie (2006) summarized these classifications to define OCB's structural elements in terms of seven dimensions, and

they are: “helping” (i.e., acting to help a specific individual, such as a colleague, boss, or client), “compliance” (contribution to the work team, department, or organization), “sportsmanship” (choosing not to protest unfairness or show dissatisfaction to the organization or manager), “civic virtue” (readiness to participate responsibly and constructively in the political and governing processes of the organization), “organizational loyalty” (showing pride in one's organization to people who are not members of that organization), “self-development” (taking autonomous steps to expand skills and knowledge pertaining to one's own work), and “individual initiative” (almost all behaviors that go beyond what is necessary to resolve or avoid problems).

Though OCB is a spontaneous initiative taken by the staff, the leader must be able to promote OCB in the workplace through employee motivation as well as by giving them the opportunity to display OCB; that is, creating a workplace environment that not only allows for, but is conducive and supportive of OCB (Organ et al., 2006). OCB may not be directly rewarded. But it has its reflection in performance appraisals, promotions, and recognitions. OCB can also help achieve a competitive advantage.

➤ **Leadership Styles and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)** : The importance of leadership style as a predictor of OCB has been well established in Western settings (Bass, 1985; Howell & Avolio, 1993 ; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Morrison, & Fetter, 1990; Lowe, 1996;). OCB can be established with a positive relationship between the leader and the employees. Subordinates with high levels of OCB are more likely to be committed to the organization (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983 ; William & Anderson, 1991). A leader must be aware of his leadership qualities and style and must exhibit a style that will promote OCB. An inappropriate leadership style can develop negative behaviour in the employees. Thus, the employees' negative outcome must be considered while applying leadership styles. If there is a mismatch, it might provide unending sadistic influences that many leaders would not like to have in their organization. Transactional leadership style may be perceived to have less impact on the OCB of employees. It is not so. Transactional leaders ensure that routine work is done according to the standards, and reward the employees for their performance if it meets the standards. This behaviour develops a need to achieve in an employee and will promote OCB.

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Research Methodology

➤ **Sampling Design** : The above mentioned objectives were analyzed using a sample size of 300 employees from selected IT organizations in Chennai. Respondents from each company comprised of executives, software engineers, and senior software engineers. The respondents were selected randomly.

➤ **Research Instrument** : Primary data was collected for analysis. The research used a well-structured questionnaire for this purpose. A pilot study was conducted with 100 employees who comprised of executives, software engineers, and senior software engineers from IT organizations in Chennai, and modifications were done based on the feedback received from the respondents. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents in person by us and also, mail responses were collected. The questionnaire was tested for its reliability with Cronbach's alpha. All the scales had a coefficient of Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7.

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Analysis and Results

➤ **Sample Characteristics** : Out of the 300 questionnaires distributed, only 110 were found to be usable and 190 were rejected as they were incomplete. The response rate was 37%. By gender, 45.5% of the respondents were men and 54.5% of the respondents were women. The highest number of respondents fell into the age group of 26-35 years. The highest number of respondents possessed a qualification of B.E /B.Tech. Most of the respondents belonged to CMM level 5 organizations and were full time employees. The time period of the study was from June to October 2013. The leadership styles of the leaders were assessed by asking the respondents to judge the

qualities of their leaders based on how they fit in the statements of the questionnaire. The transactional leadership qualities taken for the study are that of a leader having the following qualities :

- Clarifying expectations,
- Provides necessary resources,
- Sets mutually agreed upon goals,
- Provides help in exchange for efforts taken,
- Gives reward when performance goals are achieved,
- Keeps track of mistakes,
- Takes corrective action if the required standards are not met,
- Ensures that routine work is done reliably,
- Does not interfere until something is serious,
- Avoids finding new solutions to problems,
- Does not encourage creativity,
- Shows authority.

The descriptive analysis of the transactional leadership qualities and the responses were tabulated and are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Transactional Leadership Qualities

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Clarifies expectations	110	3.79	1.059
Provides necessary resources	110	3.83	.966
Sets mutual goals	110	3.97	.862
Helps in exchange for efforts	110	3.95	.907
Gives rewards	110	3.84	1.018
Punishes if standards are not met	110	2.87	1.212
Tracks mistakes	110	3.67	.987
Takes corrective actions	110	4.01	.818
Ensures work gets done	110	3.98	.888
Does not interfere	110	3.31	1.217
Avoids finding new solutions	110	2.84	1.238
Does not encourage creativity	110	2.42	1.244
Shows authority	110	3.20	1.148
Valid N (listwise)	110		

The Table 1 shows that the respondents agreed that their leader exhibited majority of the transactional leadership qualities. The qualities that the respondents disagreed with were 'Punishes if standard not met' (Mean = 2.87), 'Avoids finding new solutions' (Mean = 2.84) and 'Does not encourage creativity' (Mean = 2.42).

The Table 2 depicts the descriptive analysis of transformational leadership qualities. It lists the transformational leadership qualities of the leader. The transactional qualities of the leader considered for the present study are :

- Shows passion towards work,
- Inspires constantly with a shared vision of the future,

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Transformational Leadership Qualities

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Shows passion towards work	110	3.96	.967
Inspires	110	3.79	.996
Provides new opportunities	110	3.84	1.071
Exhibits power and confidence	110	3.81	.873
Stands upfront	110	3.75	.792
Is optimistic	110	3.78	.93241
Insists on morals	110	3.90	.957
Guides and directs	110	4.06	.860
Keeps communication open	110	3.94	.998
Emphasizes team work	110	3.89	.922
Attends to my needs	110	3.75	.979
Asks opinions	110	3.79	1.059
Gives interesting assignments	110	3.73	1.022
Evaluates performance without bias	110	3.80	.984
Encourages new ways of solving problems	110	3.82	.930
Valid N (listwise)	110		

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis Model for Analyzing the Impact of Transactional Leadership Qualities on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.380 ^a	.144	.112	.98159

^a. Predictors: (Constant), laissez-faire, Active MBE, Passive MBE, Reward

- Provides new opportunities to learn,
- Exhibits power and confidence,
- Stands up-front and central during the action,
- Is optimistic,
- Insists on morals and values,
- Guides and directs when needed,
- Keeps communication open,
- Emphasizes team work,
- Attends to my needs,
- Asks opinions,
- Gives interesting assignments,
- Evaluates my performance without bias,
- Looks at new ways of solving issues.

The Table 2 shows that the respondents agreed that their leaders showed all the transformational leadership qualities. The transformational quality 'guides and directs' (Mean = 4.06) was a major quality identified in most of the leaders. In order to determine the impact of transactional leadership qualities on organizational citizenship behaviour, a multiple regression analysis was performed. The transactional leadership qualities were generalized to four qualities namely laissez faire, active management by exception, passive management by exception, and contingent rewards.

Table 4. Coefficients of Multiple Regression Analysis to find the Impact of Transactional Leadership Qualities on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.583	.323		4.897	.000	.942	2.224
	REWARD	.130	.102	.149	1.271	.206	-.073	.332
	Passive MBE	-.198	.147	-.156	-1.347	.181	-.488	.093
	Active MBE	.513	.135	.427	3.808	.000	.246	.779
	Laissez-faire	-.113	.100	-.131	-1.124	.263	-.312	.086

Dependent Variable: Org citizenship

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis Model for Analyzing the Impact of Transformational Leadership Qualities on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.369 ^a	.136	.103	.986

^a Predictors: (Constant), New ways of solvings problems, Guides and directs, Insists on morals, Inspires

Table 6. Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Analysis to find the Impact of Transformational Leadership Qualities on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.047	.486		4.214	.000
	Inspiration	.238	.156	.225	1.526	.130
	Insists on morals	.149	.148	.137	1.011	.315
	Guidance	-.040	.151	-.033	-.262	.793
	Creativity	.083	.147	.074	.561	.576

Dependent Variable: Comfort

The results depicted in the Table 3 and Table 4 show that the predictor variables, that is, laissez faire , active management by exception, passive management by exception, and contingent rewards could explain at least 1.12% of the variance in employees' organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Adjusted *R* Square = .112). This implies that an improvement in the predictor variables leads to 1.12% general improvement in the OCB. The results further indicated that 'active management by exception' (Beta = .427, Sig. < .05), was a better predictor of OCB as compared to other variables. It means that a change in 'active management by exception' leads to .427 positive change in OCB.

The impact of transformational leadership qualities on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) was also determined by using multiple regression analysis. The transformational leadership qualities were generalized to inspiration, insists on morals, guidance, and creativity. The Table 5 represents the multiple regression model. The Table 5 shows that the predictor variables, that is, inspiration, insists on morals, guidance, and creativity could explain at least 1.03% of the variance in employees' organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Adjusted *R* Square = .103). This implies that an improvement in the predictor variables leads to 1.03% general improvement in the OCB. The results in the Table 6 further indicate that inspiration (Beta = .225) was a better predictor of OCB as compared to other variables. It means that a change in inspiration leads to .225 positive change in OCB.

Conclusion

In general, all organizations expect their employees to exhibit a willing and voluntary service towards the organization so that their performance will increase, which will lead to the development of the organization. This behaviour can be developed through various factors like providing a good work environment, having healthy interpersonal relationships among employees, and training and development to name a few. But the essential factor that will impact the subordinates' behaviour is the leadership style followed by the leaders in the organization. The work performance, voluntarism, commitment of the subordinates, and aspects related to the job - all depend on the leaders' behaviour.

With the above-mentioned points in mind, the study has examined the leadership styles exhibited by leaders in select IT organizations in Chennai. It was found that the leaders showed a combination of transactional and transformational leadership styles. The study has brought out that the leaders in the IT industry exhibit various transactional qualities like clarifying expectations, providing necessary resources, setting mutual goals, providing help in exchange for efforts taken, giving rewards for work accomplishment, punishing if work is not meeting the standards, keeping track of mistakes, taking corrective actions, ensuring routine work is done, not interfering until something goes wrong, avoiding new solutions, not encouraging creativity, and showing authority. The respondents agreed that all the above mentioned transactional leadership qualities were possessed by their leaders.

The study also listed the transformational leadership qualities. The qualities of a transformational leader are : Showing passion towards work, inspiring, providing new opportunities to learn, exhibiting power and confidence, standing up-front, being optimistic, insisting upon morals and values, guiding and directing, keeping communication open, emphasizing team work, attending to needs, asking opinions, giving interesting assignments, evaluating performance without bias, and looking at new ways of solving problems. The research also tabulated the results of the impact of transactional and transformational leadership qualities on OCB. It is found that an increase in active management by exception and inspiration will lead to an increase in the organizational citizenship behaviour. Thus, the above-mentioned qualities of transactional and transformational leadership styles are to be effectively practiced in organizations. This will improve the quality of work, thereby calling the employees for responsible and active work performance. Right leadership qualities will definitely improve the OCB of the employees, and thereby, it would be possible to run the organization successfully.

Managerial Implications

The findings of the present study are valuable for the IT companies as the study has revealed the different qualities of leaders as perceived by the subordinates, and also the impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). It is found that active management by exception and inspiration are better predictors of OCB. Though it is observed from the study that these qualities are observed in the leaders, however, there is a scope for improvement. The improvement can be brought about by the organizations by providing ways for the leaders to enhance these qualities, which in turn will induce OCB among the subordinates. The organizations can address the areas where the leaders lag behind and can train them to become effective and successful leaders.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The time period and respondents considered for the present study were limited due to time constraints. The research was intended for select IT organizations, and the results cannot be generalized for the entire industry. The responses cannot be considered to be accurate as the respondents may have provided biased information. This research has scrutinized the impact of transactional and transformational leadership styles on OCB.

Future studies can analyze other leadership styles like autocratic, democratic, visionary, pacesetter, and so

forth. The OCB variables taken for this study are the employees' voluntary helping nature, their initiative in their work, their willingness to put in extra hours for work, and sharing good things about the organization. There are other variables of OCB like attendance, maintaining cleanliness at the work desk/ work area, offering voluntary suggestions for problems, the employees' behavior without affecting others, and so forth. All these variables of OCB can also be studied with reference to different leadership styles. Future studies can be conducted related to the level of OCB existing in the organizations and also, the challenges faced by the leaders in developing OCB in their organizations can be examined.

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