

Perception of Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment: A Comparison of Ethnic Minority and Non-minority Employees within Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)

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Abstract

Purpose: This study compares the perception of leadership style and its relationship to organizational commitment among ethnic minority (Native American) and non-minority employees within Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).

Design: Multiple linear regression models were used to analyze 262 survey responses based on data gathered through a demographic questionnaire, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 360 Form 5X Short) developed by Avolio and Bass (2004), and the Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment from Meyer and Allen's (1991) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Each of the leadership styles were then included in multiple regressions against each of the organizational commitment subscales.

Findings: The findings reveal a difference in relationship between perceived leadership style of the supervisor and continuance commitment of the subordinate among the ethnic minority and non-minority respondents. The minority respondents indicate a statistically significant negative relationship between leadership and continuance organizational commitment. Whereas, non-minority respondent indicates a non-significant relationship between leadership and continuance commitment.

Originality/value: The study provides the first assessment between perceived leadership styles and organization commitment within the cross-cultural context of TCUs. This may be an incentive for training practices conducive to leadership styles which have a stronger relationship among different levels of employee commitment. More importantly, this paper helps bridge the gap between current researches on these variables in relation to a non-dominant societal perspective.

Keywords: Native American; Ethnic minorities; Organizational commitment; Leadership; Tribal Colleges; Universities

Introduction

Leadership style and organizational commitment have been examined extensively within the field of organizational behavior. Leadership has been considered a significant element in influencing organizational commitment among employees [1-3]. Several researchers [4-7] have studied the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment. Other researchers have examined the importance of leadership within higher education institutions [8,9].

While not immune to the impact of leadership within higher education, there is limited research on leadership within Native American communities. To the author's knowledge, there has been no other research examining leadership and its relationship to organizational commitment within Tribal Colleges and Universities. For this reason, this study examines the relationship between perceived leadership style of supervisors and organizational commitment of their subordinates within Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).

The perceived leadership styles of supervisors across all levels in the selected TCUs were examined using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 360 Form 5X Short) developed by Avolio and Bass (2004). Organizational commitment was measured through the TCM Employee Commitment Survey which is based on the Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment from [10] original Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ).

This research is a descriptive study that describes what is prevalent regarding the problem under study in this case comparing perception of leadership style and its relationship to organization commitment among ethnic minority (Native American) and non-minority

employees within Tribal Colleges and Universities.

In addition, the study determines relationship between each of the subcomponents from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, and each of the subcomponents of the TCM Organizational Commitment Survey. Chapter one also includes the problem statement, purpose of study, theoretical framework, research questions, hypotheses, the significance of the study and definitions.

Background

Not only leadership, but transformational leadership, has been suggested to have an impact on organizational commitment of followers. "Transformational leaders also tend to have more committed and satisfied followers" [11]. There is common agreement that higher education plays a meaningful role in driving economic development [12,13]. However, TCUs will need to continue to invest in their higher educational systems if they want higher education to continue to play a meaningful role towards economic development of these regions.

Research has indicated that Tribal higher education plays a critical

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role in economic development [14]. In addition, [15] states “Tribal Colleges all play important roles in the future development of Native American reservation communities, especially in establishing the foundation for future growth through skills development, technical assistance, and other efforts”. As such, Native American communities across the United States quest to be self-sufficient may not be achieved without a quality education system.

In order to uphold quality higher educational systems within Native American communities, there must be the ability to not only attract, but retain, committed employees. Organizational commitment of the employee has been linked to turnover rates [16-18]. High turnover rates among faculty and staff can decrease the organizational effectiveness of the TCU. For a TCU to have a positive impact on their respected Tribal Community, the TCU needs to run effectively.

There has been a considerable amount of research conducted on the impact of leadership on organizational commitment, and much of this research suggests that transformational leadership is directly related to organizational commitment [19-21]. A study conducted by Othman et al. [9], on a sample of Nigerian public university lecturers, examined the impact of leadership on the commitment of the lecturers. Their study suggests that transformational and transactional leadership styles both had a positive correlation to organizational commitment of Nigerian public university lecturers.

There has been a considerable amount of research conducted on the Maori leadership styles [22-24]. The School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington have conducted research studies which investigated effective Maori leader qualities that might be overlooked when their communication styles are viewed through a mainstream lens. Their studies solidify the potential differences in leadership values in indigenous cultures.

Othman et al. [9] Study was constructive in the development of leadership and organizational commitment theory since it examines the relationship between these variables from the context of a developing country. Many previous studies have focused on westernized or developed countries, so their study is significant in that it presents insights into the impact of leadership on commitment in a more collectivist culture. “For organizations who work with and employ a diversity of people, having a better understanding of underrepresented groups leadership qualities and preferences will aid in conveying changes that are needed in employee relations and satisfaction” [25]. Therefore, it was imperative that this study identified the perceived leadership styles of supervisors and the relationship to the organizational commitment of employees within Tribal Colleges and Universities.

A study, in which the transformational leadership and Lakota leadership qualities were compared, showed few similarities [25]. Gambrell felt that Lakota leadership in its entirety does not completely correspond with transformational leadership due to transformational leadership’s organizational context. For this reason, Gambrell’s study contradicts this study as proposed. However, the transformational component of individualized consideration was said to have likeness to Lakota leadership qualities of putting others first.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a relationship exists between the perceived leadership styles of supervisors and the organizational commitment level of their subordinates at Tribal Colleges and Universities, while also examining any differences in

response based on minority and non-minority subgroups. In doing so, it was the goal of this study to better understand leadership theory as it pertains to the stakeholders of TCUs.

It has been researched that the components of transformational leadership can build follower commitment [11]. In addition, a study conducted on the effect of school principals’ leadership styles on teachers’ organizational commitment and job satisfaction identified the value of commitment lies in its association with job performance, lack of turnover intentions, and commitment to the goals of the school.

To determine whether a relationship exists between the perceived leadership styles of supervisors and the organizational commitment level of their subordinates at Tribal Colleges and Universities, TCU employees were surveyed with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 360 Form 5X Short) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004) to determine if they perceive their supervisor’s leadership style as transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire.

The TCU employees were also surveyed with the TCM Employee Commitment Survey which is based on the Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment from [10]. Original Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), the organizational commitment level was measured through three subcomponents: normative commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment. The Tribal College employees were also asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire. The results were statistically analyzed to determine the relationship between each of the perceived leadership style components of the supervisor and each of the organizational commitment subcomponents (affective, normative, and continuance) of the follower.

Significance of the Investigation and Contributions to Knowledge

This research topic serves as a benefit to those parties interested in further understanding the organizational dynamics within TCUs. TCUs were originally founded to meet the higher education needs of Native Americans, with most serving isolated populations that initially had no other means of higher education. The first TCU was founded in 1968, and since then, the number of TCUs across the United States has increased to 37 [26]. TCUs operate more than 75 campuses in 16 states and serve students from more than 250 federally recognized Native American tribes.

Significant contributions result from this research study. This study can assist leaders in Indigenous communities to apply leadership theory as it pertains to organizational commitment beyond prior research to date. This study serves organizations such as the American Indian College Fund and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), whose mission is to support the work of the TCUs and their movement for tribal self-determination [26]. This paper also serves other donors that have an interest in leadership as it pertains to the retention and commitment of employees at TCUs. In addition, the results of the study may help these stakeholders alleviate the retention issues among TCU employees.

TCUs have had a great impact on the state economies in which they are located [27], as well as an impact on the economic development of tribal community in which the TCU resides [28]. However, for the TCUs to run most effectively, it is imperative to combat employee turnover. Organizational commitment is recognized as a core predictor of turnover behavior [29], and while the relationship between leadership and organizational commitment has been researched in several settings [9,21,30,31], it has not been researched in a Native American community.

Tribal Colleges and Universities

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are a unique category of higher education institutions. TCUs were originally founded to meet the higher education needs of Native Americans, with most serving isolated populations that initially had no other means of higher education. The first TCU was founded in 1968 when Navajo Community College was founded and was originally referred to as Tribally Controlled Colleges (TCCs) rather than Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) [32]. Since then, the number of TCUs across the United States has increased to 37 [26].

In his book “tribally controlled colleges: making good medicine”, [32] explains the inception of Navajo Community College, saying, While the movement toward Indian self-determination was taking place across the United States during the 1960s, events were moving quickest on the Navajo reservation. The Navajo also had special units in the Pacific conflicts during World War II known as “code talkers.” This service gave them an honored place in the non-Indian world on which to further build pride, leadership, and tribal government. These conditions led several young Navajo leaders in 1963 to ask, “Why don’t we control our own educational system?”

The 1960s was an era of extreme expansion in higher education, with community colleges playing a major role, increasing approximately 42% from 1968 to 1978. It was within this historical timeframe that Tribal Colleges also made their appearance.

The 37 TCUs operate over 75 campuses in 16 states [26]. TCUs vary in enrollment size, focus, physical location and student population demographics (primarily Native American). However, Tribal identity is the core of every TCU, and they each share the mission of tribal self-determination and service to their respective communities.

While there are over 250 different Native American tribes across the United States, Mexico, and Canada that are served by the TCUs, these Colleges and Universities still struggle to retain diverse and underrepresented faculty and staff [33]. The American Indian College Fund is working to alleviate retention and leadership inadequacies at TCUs through a grant program. Their grant focuses on the retention of underrepresented, diverse faculty and leadership development.

Research Methodology

This research examined the relationship between perceived leadership behaviors of supervisors and organizational commitment of employees at Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) was conclusive research, as it involved a systematic process through which a specific market (TCU employees) were sampled and responses measured. In addition, the study was correlational research between the variables. In this case describing the perceived leadership styles of supervisors and their effect on the commitment levels of faculty at TCUs.

Normative Organizational Commitment Data Analysis

The study first examined the perceived leadership style of supervisors and their relationship to normative organizational commitment of subordinates within TCUs as defined by the TCM instrument [10]. Hypothesis one also includes three sub-hypotheses, H1a through H1c, in order to examine each leadership style as defined by the MLQ instrument [1] and its relationship to normative organizational commitment.

Simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to investigate the perceived supervisors’ leadership styles as predictors of the normative organizational commitment of employees within TCUs. The combination of variables to predict normative organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership was statistically significant, $F(3, 258)=8.20, p<0.001$. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 1. Note that only transformational leadership significantly predicts normative organizational commitment when all three leadership variables are included in the model. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.077. This indicates that 7.7% of the variance in normative organizational commitment of TCU employees was explained by the model.

Researchers have previously found significant correlation between transformational leadership and organizational commitment [34]. While Forte’s study found significant correlations between the subcomponents of transformational leadership to normative organizational commitment, Koppenhoefer’s study examined transformational leadership as one component as does this study.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.295 ^a	0.087	0.077	0.65225		
^a Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.494	3	3.498	8.222	0.000 ^b
	Residual	109.760	258	0.425		
	Total	120.254	261			
^a Dependent Variable: Normative Commitment Scale Mean						
^b Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.641	0.304		8.688	0.000
	Transformational	0.145	0.062	0.187	2.347	0.020
	Transactional	0.177	0.093	0.125	1.903	0.058
	LaissezFaire	-0.065	0.060	-0.084	-1.092	0.276
^a Dependent Variable: Normative Commitment Scale Mean						

Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Normative Organizational Commitment (N=262).

Affective Organizational Commitment Data Analysis

The study also examined the perceived leadership styles of supervisors as defined by the MLQ instrument [1]. And their relationship to affective organizational commitment of subordinates within TCUs as defined by the TCM instrument [10]. The sample size was sufficiently large ($n>30$) allowing parametric testing through Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis. Hypothesis two includes three sub-hypotheses, H2a through H2c, in order to examine each leadership style and their relationship to affective organizational commitment.

Simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to investigate the perceived supervisors' leadership styles as predictors of the affective organizational commitment of employees within TCUs. The combination of variables to predict normative organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership was statistically significant, $F(3, 258)=11.83, p<0.001$. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 2. Note that only transformational leadership significantly predicts affective organizational commitment when all three leadership variables are

included in the model. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.111. This indicates that 11.1% of the variance in affective organizational commitment of TCU employees was explained by the model.

Continuance Organizational Commitment Data Analysis

Next, the study examined the perceived leadership styles of supervisors as defined by the MLQ instrument and their relationship to continuance organizational commitment of subordinates within TCUs as defined by the TCM instrument [10]. The sample size was sufficiently large ($n>30$) allowing parametric testing through Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis.

Simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to investigate the perceived supervisors' leadership styles as predictors of the continuance organizational commitment of employees within TCUs. The combination of variables to predict continuance organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership was statistically significant, $F(3, 258)=4.20, p<0.05$. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 3.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.348 ^a	0.121	0.111	0.69622

^aPredictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational

ANOVA ^a						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	17.202	3	5.734	11.829	0.000 ^b
	Residual	125.058	258	0.485		
	Total	142.259	261			

^aDependent Variable: Affective Commitment Scale Mean

^bPredictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.549	0.324		7.858
	Transformational	0.235	0.066	0.280	3.575
	Transactional	0.134	0.100	0.086	1.344
	LaissezFaire	-0.049	0.064	-0.058	-0.773

^aDependent Variable: Affective Commitment Scale Mean

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Affective Organizational Commitment (N=262).

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.216 ^a	0.047	0.036	0.65828

^aPredictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational

ANOVA ^a						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	5.463	3	1.821	4.2	0.006 ^b
	Residual	111.8	258	0.433		
	Total	117.263	261			

^aDependent Variable: Continuance Commitment Scale Mean

^bPredictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	3.219	0.307		10.493
	Transformational	-0.166	0.062	-0.0217	-2.665
	Transactional	0.132	0.094	0.094	1.399
	LaissezFaire	0.007	0.060	0.009	0.112

^aDependent Variable: Continuance Commitment Scale Mean

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Continuance Organizational Commitment (N=262).

The adjusted R^2 value was 0.036. This indicates that 3.6% of the variance in continuance organizational commitment of TCU employees was explained by the model. Note that only transformational leadership significantly predicts continuance organizational commitment when all three leadership variables are included in the model, and the relationship of transformational leadership to continuance commitment is negative.

Additional Analyses

To examine potential differences between specific demographic groups, the authors separated Native American and Non-Native American groups for further analysis. Previous findings have also identified the potential differences in leadership values in indigenous cultures [22-24]. Regression analyses indicating notable differences are discussed in further detail.

The results of the analyses for the Native American versus non-Native American respondents indicated a notable difference in the variance of continuance organizational commitment as explained

by the model. The combination of variables to predict continuance organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership in Native American respondents was statistically significant, $F(3, 125) = 4.232$, $p < 0.05$. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 4.

Note that only transformational significantly predicts continuance organizational commitment when all three leadership variables are included in the model. In addition, the relationship between transformational leadership and continuance organizational commitment is a negative relationship. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.070. This indicates that 7.0% of the variance in continuance organizational commitment of Native American employees was explained by the model.

In comparison, the combination of variables to predict continuance organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership in non-Native American respondents was not statistically significant, $F(3, 127) = 1.29$, $p > 0.05$. The adjusted R^2 value was 0.007. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 5.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.304 ^a	0.092	0.070	0.68030		
^a Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.876	3	1.959	4.232	0.007 ^b
	Residual	57.851	125	0.463		
	Total	63.727	128			
^a Dépendent Variable : Continuance Commitment Scale Mean						
^b Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.011	0.410		7.341	0.000
	Transformational	-0.198	0.092	-0.243	-2.154	0.033
	Transactional	0.224	0.135	0.163	1.652	0.101
	LaissezFaire	0.066	0.085	0.084	0.777	0.439
^a Dependent Variable: Continuance Commitment Scale Mean						

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Continuance Organizational Commitment of Native American Respondents (N=129).

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.172 ^a	0.030	0.007	0.62565		
^a Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.518	3	0.506	1.292	0.280 ^b
	Residual	49.712	127	0.391		
	Total	51.230	130			
^a Dependent Variable: Continuance Commitment Scale Mean						
^b Predictors: (Constant), Laissez Faire, Transactional, Transformational						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.641	0.465		7.828	0.000
	Transformational	-0.162	0.084	-0.230	-1.935	0.055
	Transactional	0.034	0.132	0.023	0.255	0.799
	LaissezFaire	-0.112	0.087	-0.149	-1.293	0.198
^a Dependent Variable: Continuance Commitment Scale Mean						

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Continuance Organizational Commitment of non-Native American Respondents (N=131).

Summary

The results of the study indicated a statistically significant relationship between leadership and each component of commitment. However, the results indicated only transformational leadership as a statistically significant predictor of each component of organizational commitment. The direction of the relationship of transformational leadership to continuance commitment was negative.

The Native American and non-Native American respondents showed the greatest different in continuance commitment. The Native American respondents indicated a statistically significant negative relationship between leadership and continuance organizational commitment. Whereas, the non-Native American respondents indicated non-significant relationship between leadership and continuance commitment. The model for the Native American respondents explained 7.0% of the variance in continuance organizational commitment.

Conclusion

As previously discussed, Native American reservations often have limited employment opportunities, which has led to high unemployment rates and low per capita income. With Tribal College and Universities taking a leading role in the effort to combat unemployment in the Native American populations, they can help to shape the economic future of their respective indigenous communities.

The results of the study indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between each of the perceived leadership style of supervisors and normative and affective commitment of the TCU employees. However, in each case, only transformational leadership significantly predicts normative and affective organizational commitment when all three leadership variables (transformational, transactional, and Laissez-faire) are included in the model. The relationship of transformational leadership to normative and affective organizational commitment is positive.

In the case of continuance commitment, the results indicate a statistically significant negative correlation between the perceived leadership style of the supervisor and continuance commitment of the TCU employees. However, only transformational leadership significantly predicts continuance organizational commitment when all three leadership variables (transformational, transactional, and Laissez-faire) are included in the model. The relationship of transformational leadership to continuance organizational commitment is negative.

Forte [34] found public school teacher continuance commitment's negative correlation with the transformational leadership components. Continuance commitment is generally commitment based on the lack of alternatives [35]. In this study, as like Forte's study, Tribal College and University employees' continuance commitment's negative correlation with leadership measures suggests that employees do not perceive a lack of alternatives or feel they must stay in their positions.

Native American and Non-Native American employees differed in their continuance organizational commitment in relationship to their perception of their supervisors' leadership style. The relationship between transformational leadership and continuance organizational commitment in Native American respondents indicated a statistically significant negative relationship. In comparison, the combination of variables to predict continuance organizational commitment from transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership in non-Native American respondents was not statistically significant.

Given this information, it is appropriate to suggest one leadership style over the other. It will be beneficial for TCU leaders to focus leadership initiatives and training on transformational leadership components over transactional as these components were those indicating a positive relationship to affective and normative commitment and a negative relationship to continuance commitment.

Future Research

The difference in results of the TCU Native American and non-Native American respondents regarding continuance commitment indicates that a transformational leadership style can have a positive impact on organizational commitment of Native American respondents. While the relationship between transformational leadership and continuance organizational commitment in Native American respondents indicated a statistically significant negative relationship, one must examine the meaning of this relationship from a deeper context.

Those respondents with strong continuance commitment scores stay with an organization merely because they *must*. Respondents in which the continuance commitment scores are elevated suggest that the employee may feel "trapped" at the TCU. In addition, while this can result in a relatively low rate of turnover, research suggests that these employees may do little beyond what is required of them [10].

In consideration, the negative relationship between transformational leadership and continuance organizational commitment in Native American respondents may be an indicator that these employees have less of a "trapped" feeling in their TCU and are willing to go beyond what is required for their respective position. However, future research is warranted to further determine the meaning behind this relationship.

Significance of the Study

There is a significant similarity between the current study and previous studies [36,37] indicating a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational commitment. The results of the study indicate that the variance in TCU employee commitment levels can be explained by the perceived transformational leadership of their supervisors. This finding is significant because it highlights the importance of the presence of transformational leadership in the TCU setting.

Like idealized influence, inspirationally motivated leaders also focus on moral values, encouraging followers to consider moral values as these values pertain to the group [11]. A challenging and meaningful shared vision or mission engages followers in shared goals [38]. The shared vision can instill hope, confidence, and optimism that the followers are able to create a brighter future [39].

This signifies the importance of future research pertaining to the impact of cultural leadership values in relationship to organizational commitment. The authors cannot make the implication that because a respondent is Native American, she would be more likely to follow cultural values. However, the difference in response outcomes of Native American and non-Native American respondents in reference to continuance commitment is an indication that future research is warranted in this area.

Contributions to Knowledge

Literature suggests that transformational leaders are "able to influence followers' organizational commitment by promoting higher levels of intrinsic value associated with goal accomplishment,

emphasizing the linkages between follower effort and goal achievement, and by creating a higher level of personal commitment on the part of the leader and followers to a common vision, mission, and organizational goals” [40]. In addition, a study conducted by [21] suggests that transformational leadership explains a greater proportion of variance in organizational commitment when the group was more collectivistic versus individualistic. However, later literature suggests that their study may be flawed since their sample drew from predominantly collectivistic cultures [30].

It has been recognized that transformational leadership has been linked, both empirically and conceptually to organizational commitment [19,40-42]. There have been a number of these studies that examine the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment from a cross-cultural perspective [43,44] including a study that examined the influence of leadership styles on organizational commitment on faculty at a public university in Nigeria [20].

However, this is the first study to empirically examine the influence of perceived leadership styles of supervisors on the organizational commitment of their subordinates at Tribal Colleges/Universities (TCUs). One study [44] even suggested that further studies should examine this relationship in different countries to determine the potential difference in results that might occur. While research has suggested that transformational leadership in a more collectivist culture may explain more of the variance in organizational commitment [21] it is not evident whether the atmosphere within TCUs would react in a predominantly collectivist or individualist nature.

As previously stated, this information is particularly useful for programs such as the American Indian College Fund who has donated millions of dollars to increase intellectual capital at TCUs, including the retention of qualified employees. The results of the study do not specifically indicate whether TCU employees are collectivist or individualist in nature, but the results will help identify which leadership styles have the greatest impact on the different levels of commitment within TCUs.

There are several contributions to knowledge and key implications that stem from this research. The study is an incentive for training practices that are conducive to the leadership styles that may have a positive impact on employee commitment. In addition, the research serves stakeholders who may have an interest in supervisory leadership style as it pertains to the commitment of employees TCUs.

In addition, the study helps bridge the gap between what is known about leadership styles in relation to a non-dominant societal perspective. While the results of the study combine a mixture of minority and non-minority employees, most of the respondents (58%) identified as either Native American or of mixed race.

Recommendations

The results of this investigation lead to the recommendation that Tribal College and University supervisors, administrators, and academic researchers should focus on transformational leadership styles in conjunction with the continuous sharing of the vision and mission of the respective TCU in order to help foster organizational commitment in their employees.

Measuring the effectiveness of supervisors' leadership continues to be a top priority for any organization. More importantly, it has been identified that TCUs may not be able to follow the mainstream literature pertaining to leadership style and organizational commitment. Rather,

they should continue to examine the components of supervisors' leadership style as it pertains to organizational commitment in their respective TCU.

Direction for Future Research

Future research should expand on the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment within Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) to include the specific examination of cultural values as they pertain to leadership styles and organizational commitment. This is an important extension given the results of the current study. Future research should further examine the lack of correlation between non-Native Americans and continuance organizational commitment within TCUs. Other areas of research could include an examination of the retention of students based on the perceived leadership style of their instructors.

Study Limitations

It is assumed that the respondents are representative of the Tribal Colleges and Universities population in which the hypotheses are inferring. Since the study was not conducted at all TCUs, rather a sample of seven of TCUs, this is a limitation. It is an assumption that the TCU sample of faculty and staff are be representative of the TCU population of faculty and staff.

The results of this study have created a foundation for future researchers to explore the relationship between perceived leadership styles, cultural values, and organizational commitment as it impacts the future success of Tribal Colleges and Universities.

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