

## Four Frame Leadership Orientations and Job Performance among Beijing Working Adults

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**Abstract:** This study examined the differences in leadership orientations between individual job performance and organisational performance in the context of Bolman and Deal's four-frame leadership theory. Information for this survey was gathered through self-administered questionnaire and administered through non-probability convenience sampling method. A total of 120 of completed and usable questionnaires have been gathered up among working adults in Beijing. The findings revealed that different variables have different extent influences for different leadership orientations and organisation performance in terms of job position, gender, marital condition, monthly income group and length of employment. Those senior executives, female, married executives, more than RM 4,001 monthly income group and >5 years length of employment show most significant influence both on individual task performance and organizational business performance. In four frames leadership types, political frame leadership type has most significant influence for job performance, including individual job performance and organizational job performance, compared with symbolic frame leadership type has lightest influences of both of them. The correlation analysis shows leadership orientations influence individual job performance more obvious than organizational job performance. This survey is important to assist the potential leader act easier to adapt Beijing's situation which can improve more not only in individual business performance but also in organisational performance. It as well is vital for leaders and handlers realize how to achieve job performance by being different leadership type at the same time it will help organizations choose suitable managers/leaders in order to improve performance which can help organization development and success.

**Key words:** Leadership, organizational, performance, job, leader

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### INTRODUCTION

As an emerging and potential market, the China market is developed by industrialization and globalization. Up 2012, the total population of China is 1.35404 billion as the 19% of the world's population. At the end of the national employment numbers is 0.7604 billion (urban employees 0.37102 billion, rural employees 0.39602 billion, occupying 57% of the total population. Looking into gender differences, female employees in urban units are 0.054589 billion, nearly 20% of male employees' number (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2013). At the same time, china's economic development mainly relies on small and medium-sized enterprises. Until 2013, there are 3.2 million small and medium-sized enterprises in China; the proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises has been 86% of the total companies where these companies are the mainly potential economic denominator in the

future of China (Sabyr *et al.*, 2015). Under the enormous number of enterprises and employees, particularly state system in China and economic development status, how to manage the relationship between employers and employees, how to improve not only the organization but also individual job performance, how to improve the professional management in the Chinese organizations has been important. In the long run, analysis how the leadership type influence followers' behaviours and the effect on job performance is the most significant thing we should do. The team leaders play a central role in determining company performance.

The research study on leadership is not new. It's a frequent topic of academic study. However, this study had tried to study a special cohort group is currently a fast growing group especially in many developing countries. Based on Chan *et al.* (2010) study on the working motives among adult workers, employment

variable appear to be the constant predictor of financial dependency in old age. In others words, keep working has a direct bearing on their financial dependency in old age. And in terms of working hour, Yin-Fah (2010) in his another study found that adult workers showed no differences with the younger workers where they are able to work with an average seven hours per day, compared to those younger group. When dueling with the recruitment matter, a study was conducted to study the human resource personal's opinion about older workers and most of the HR respondents in the study perceived that specific skills and experience is the strongest bargaining power hold by the adult workers to be recruited or even reemployed. Even though only a small portion of the HR personnel perceived that their elderly workers is not productive, costly and with bad attitude but majority of them have a more positive view of elderly workers than they are often thought to have (Chan *et al.*, 2010). All the above studies had focused on how the society view about adult workers in an ageing society but less attention to the perceived leadership and its effects towards individual and organization performance among the adult workers.

Bolman and Deal (2008) pointed four-frame leadership theory used leadership orientation to identify the leadership. The four-frame theory had proven that the usefulness in understanding the complexity of manners, characteristics and behaviours of organizations and their members (Bensimon, 1989; Thompson, 2000). Thompson used Bolman and Deal (1991)s' theory to analysis leadership in higher education setting. There is little research use leadership orientation do different leadership among adult workers. Job performance as an outcome of active can be divided to individual performance and organizational performance. There is no doubt that theorists approached the study of leadership assuming that leaders contributed significantly to organizational effectiveness. However, more leadership related research will focus on the leadership style influence on employee performance but ignore the influence for the manger themselves. This study will cover individual performance and organizational performance together.

**Research objectives and significance of study:** This research is going to determine the leadership type among working employees in Beijing, determine the individual job performance and organizational job performance among working employees in Beijing, identify the pattern of correlation between the individual job performance and organizational job performance with different types of leadership and identify the predictors towards individual job performance and organizational job performance using

different types of leadership. This research will contribute to Bolman and Deal (1984)'s leadership orientation theory expanding, provides a more concrete and easier way to analysis the leadership. This research improves and optimizes the manager's perspective in Beijing which is a city under the complex factors influence. At last, this research will give out an academic analysis of the differences of job performance by different types of leadership, including differences of the size of company, type of industry, gender, age-group, position, marital status and length of employment analysis.

**Literature review:** Job performance, studied academically as part of industrial and organizational psychology, also forms a part of human resources management. The labelled routine job performance represents the carrying out of mandatory job-related projects, duties and responsibilities, all of which are organized and rewarded by the organization (Janssen and van Yperen, 2004). It adequately performs essential responsibilities and fulfilling all duties needed by the job (Janssen and van Yperen, 2004). Many of the perspectives that dominated the early thinking concerning organizational performance have their beginnings in traditional economic theory where the human is an economic being rather than a human being, emphasize on economies of scale. In this theoretical context, organizational job performance is projected through the alignment of resources, knowledge and imagination to produce competitive advantage by responding with unique capabilities to environmental alterations. This is an alignment of organizational strengths with external opportunities (Barney, 1991).

The main object of every organization is to improve its performance but it can never be possible without the efficient performance of employees. Therefore, the performance management system came into effect as a management reform to address and redress concerns, organizations had about performance. When it comes to performance from management's point of view, it could be about personal performance or individual performance or the performance of the team or it can also be an organization's performance. Individual performance is commonly looked at in terms of outcomes. Yet, it can also be looked at in terms of behaviour (Armstrong, 2000). Kenney stated that an employee's performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organization. Efficiency and effectiveness are ingredients of performance apart from competitiveness and productivity (Cooke, 2000). Employee performance, achieved through training, refers to immediate improvements in the knowledge, skills and abilities to carry out job related work and hence achieve more employee commitment towards the organizational goals.

Rather than looking into organizational and individual performance, leadership orientation is also the focus by Bolman and Deal (2008)'s four-frame organizational theory was used in this study because of its proven usefulness in understanding the complexity of behaviours of organizations and their members (Thompson, 2000). In brief, this theory has four essential components, namely structural, human resource, political and symbolic. It views leadership through multiple frames and how leaders think and respond to different situations within their organizations. The structural and human resource frames are related to management while the political and symbolic frames are related to leadership. The theory assumes that these four organizational frames represent the diverse prominence and in turn, shape how organizational leadership within the respective frames perceives organizational situations. This theory postulates that a successful leader or manager is those who are able to utilize multi-frame orientations.

In terms of theoretical framework, two theories are used in this study. The first one refers to Bolman and Deal (1991)'s four-frame leadership theory which had been discussed previously. Secondly, family resource management modal which was proposed by Deacon and Firebaugh in year 1981 provides the conceptual basis for this study. This modal consists of input, throughput and output and the application of the Deacon-Firebaugh model to Individual job performance and organisation business performance (output) depends upon respondents' characteristics and leadership orientations.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Research design and sampling methodology:** This is a quantitative study. In terms of objectives, this is explanatory study. Looking into the sampling methodology, the population in this study is China working adults. The sample in this study refers to those working adults in Beijing. In terms of sampling methodology, this study had used multistage sampling, where simple random sampling and the convenience sampling are used in this study. Since, the total working adults (age 39-59) in Beijing, China in the year 2013 was approximately 10.74 million which considered as a large sample group. The results from raosoft sample size calculator suggested that 68 is the minimum sample size of the survey (Margin of error = 10%; confident level = 90%). This study totally collected 120 respondents.

For sampling methodology, this study used two stages of sampling methodology. For the first stage, simple random sampling was used. To start, there are all together 33 administration divisions in China namely,

Anhui, Beijing, Chongqing, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Hainan, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Henan, Hong kong, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Macau, Neimenggu, Ningxia, Qinghai, Shandong, Shanxi, Shanxi, Shanghai, Sichuan, Taiwan, Tianjin, Xizang, Xinjiang, Yunnan, Zhejiang. From the administrative divisions, province of Beijing has been selected. For the second stage of sampling, a convenience sampling method was conducted among 120 working adults in Beijing, China. This sampling method was chosen due to the unavailability of the list working adults in Beijing.

**Instrumentation:** To assess the individual performance, a total of 21 items which was adopted from Bateman and Organ and Graham which was evaluated using five points ordinal scale. The highest score possible was 105 and the lowest was 21. The greater score indicates the higher individual job performance. A total of six items was used to measure organizational job performance. The first four items are scaled from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The fifth item, co-workers' quality of work is based on a scale ranging from 1, poor, to 5, outstanding. The last item in the index, provides for fair and equitable treatment of employees, uses a four-point-scale that ranges from 1, <70% of the time (exceptions occur regularly), to 4, always (without exception). For this instrument, scores ranged from 6-29 points. The greater score indicates the higher organizational job performance.

Lastly, this study used some of the items from Bolman and Deal (1991) scale to look at the leadership orientations among the working adults in Beijing. A total of 32 statements were read to the respondents to find out their opinion. Each frame represents equally by 8 items and participants are required to indicate how often each item was true of the leader they were rated using a 5 point ordinal scale (1 = never to 5 = always). The score for each frame was calculated for each of the participants. The greater score indicates the more tendencies towards particular leadership types.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Descriptive analysis was prepared for each variable as well as the differences with their social-demo graphic variables like position, gender, marital condition, monthly income group and duration of use. Central tendencies measurement of mean and median is also presented. A cross tabulation is also exhibited to demonstrate the relationship between respondents' profile and leadership orientation and business execution. From analysis, found for four different leadership orientations, the determining

factors are unlike. For structural leadership, attitude and gender have no correlation; monthly income group; marital status and distance of employment have correlation. Gender has no correlation for human resource frame leadership orientation, location, monthly income; marital status and distance of employment have correlation. The job position has no significant correlation for political frame leadership orientation but gender, monthly income, marital status and length of employment have correlation. Position, gender, monthly income and length of employment have no significant correlation with political frame leadership orientation; monthly income is the sole ground of political orientation. Nonetheless, regarding to job functioning, they showed different extent influences in individual task performance and organizational business performance. Except gender, location, monthly income, marital status and length of employment were correlated with individual task performance. Those with higher income and longer working experience tend to have higher scores in organizational business performance.

Pearson moment correlation test and regression test was used as hypothesis testing in this study. Results of correlation analysis show that structural frame ( $r \leq 0.778$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), human resource frame ( $r = 0.782$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), political frame ( $r = 0.796$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) and symbolic frame ( $r = 0.761$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) not only were tightly related to individual job performance but also structural frame ( $r = 0.626$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), human resource frame ( $r = 0.596$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ), political frame ( $r = 0.659$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) and symbolic frame ( $r = 0.595$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) were significantly related to organizational job performance. The relationships are positive and moderate.

Multiple regression analysis was applied to decide which of the selected independence variables (structural frame, human resource frame, political frame and symbolic frame) would influence the individual job performance and organizational job performance. Collinearity diagnostic has been performed to identify the problems that might occur in the correlation matrix and result shows that the tolerance of each selected variable, ranging from 0.181-0.243 and Values for Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for a selected variable ranging from 4.11-5.5. The results show as below:

$$\text{Individual job performance} = 22.19 + 0.461 \text{ structural frame} + 0.440 \text{ human resource frame} + 0.572 \text{ political frame}$$

This indicated that a single standard deviation increase in structural frame brings 0.461 standard deviation increase independent variable (individual

business performance). Further, the influence of attitude of political frame ( $\beta = 0.572$ ) was more influential than other forecasters:

$$\text{Organizational job performance} \\ \text{frame} = 4.844 + 0.322 \text{ political}$$

This indicated that a single standard deviation increase in the political frame brings 0.322 standard deviation increase independent variable (organizational job performance). Further, the influence of attitude of political frame ( $\beta = 0.432$ ) was more influential than other predictors. Political frame has significant influence both on individual task performance and organizational business performance.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that an individual job performance is influenced by s/he position, wages, marital status and length of employment but the organizational job performance will only explained by the respondent's wages and length of employment. Besides, political leadership orientation is significant influence both on individual task performance and organizational business performance.

The outputs of this study have several implications that would be beneficial to the organizations, working adults, even some foreign capital in Beijing, China. The result shows the political leadership orientation has significant advantage in both individual job performance and organizational job performance. Thus, the organization will have a guideline when they choose professional manager which means to increase organizational performance and change organization situation. Furthermore, there are lots working adults willing update their status and get higher management position, this result also provide a direction which they can work on that can benefit their individual task performance. Last but not least as the globalization developing, more foreign capital joined, this solution will aid them when they choose CEO or other manager to operating their business in order to obviate the hazard due to choose the wrong somebody.

As this research only conducts only in Beijing, China, further research could be made out on similar research on another placement in China due to there are 33 administrative divisions totally, culture conflict and economy situation difference clearly. It would be great if there is a comparison comes out based on those

researches, time and other factors are taken into account. Other than that, this research use snowball sampling and online survey, 120 respondents were replied. Further research can use another path like a face to face interview, hence along so that respondent will be more understanding of the subject studied and more exact and accurate results could be prevailed.

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