The Effect of Leader's Emotional Displays on Employee Work Performance

Evi Kurniasari Purwaningrum
Universitas 17 Agustus 1945, Samarinda
evi.kurnia@yahoo.co.id

Abstract: Doleader's emotions play major role on the leadership effectiveness? Doleader's emotions affect subordinates' emotion? Do subordinates perform better work performance when the leader displays positive emotions (happiness)? Or do subordinates perform better work performance when the leader displays negative emotions (anger, sadness)? Literature shows that leaders' emotions plays major role to increase their leadership effectiveness. Leadership effectiveness here refers to the subordinates' work performance as the result of the success of the leader's emotional contagionto affect the subordinates. Leader's emotions affect the subordinates in the form of emotional contagion,. The negative emotions expressed by a leader will affect the subordinates' negative emotions and the leader's positive emotions will affect the subordinates' positive emotions. The positive emotions felt by the subordinates can increase their performance on works which needs creative skill and the negative performance will lead to the increase of work performance which needs analytical skill.

Keywords: Leader, emotional contagion, work performance, leadership effectiveness

Introduction

One leader may express different emotions, for example Risma, Surabaya Mayor, cried in a TV show, Mata Najwa Metro TV on 12 February 2014. She cried when talking about the pressure which demands for her resignation from mayor position related to the issue of the shutdown of Dolly, the biggest red-area in Surabaya and her worries about the poor in Surabaya. At another occasion, Risma expressed her anger over a free ice cream event, held by Walls, which resulted on the damaged plants at Bungkul Park and plants on the median strip along Darmo Street on 11 May 2014. Risma is an example of how a leader expresses different emotions during her duty. Leaders can display their feelings through their facial expression, voice, and other non-verbal language (Visser, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, &Wisse, 2013). Showing emotions is an important signal function in interpersonal communication. It is also important in a leadership context since the purpose of leadership is to influence others. To influence others, we need to communicate using a clear signal. We need to pay attention on the emotions displayed by a leader because those expressions are interpreted as important stimulus for the subordinates (Elfenbein, 2007). In a research conducted by Newcombe & Ashkanasy (2002), they found that a leader's facial expressions have more effect than verbal messages for the subordinates.

Emotions showed by a leader play pivotal role on the leadership effectiveness. Research found that leaders who display their emotions can affect their leadership effectiveness by utilizing the subordinates' emotions as the mediator (Damen, Van Knippenberg, & Van Knippenberg, 2006; Visser, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse. 2013; Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, & Damen, 2009). Leader's mood also affects the leadership effectiveness with group affective tone as the mediator (Volmer, 2012).Leader emotions and subordinates' personality can influence team performance (Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, & Van Knippenberg, 2010). Emotions expressed by leader in a critical situation affect the subordinates through the mechanism in which the leader's emotions affect how the subordinates evaluate their leader (Madera &Smit 2009).

A leader can display both positive and negative emotions. Positive emotions are emotions that stimulate positive feelings such as happiness, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, love, and pride. While negative emotions are emotions that stimulate displeasure feelings such as fear, sadness, anger, and worry. When these emotions are associated with leadership effectiveness, the major question appears is whether the positive emotions expressed by leader are more effective than negative emotions. Some studies revealed that the expression of positive emotions is more effective than when the leader expresses negative emotions. This is probably because the signal showed through positive emotions stimulates better responses than negative emotions(Newcombe & Ashkanasy, 2002; Martin, Ward, Achee, & Wyer, 1993). However, other studies showed that both the expression of positive and negative emotions sometimes can increase the leadership effectiveness but it is still unclear about what conditions which affect the effectiveness of the expression of positive vs. negative emotions (Damen,   Van Knippenberg, & Van Knippenberg, 2006). A leader who shows positive or negative emotions can become effective or ineffective depends on the situation (Damen,   Van Knippenberg, & Van Knippenberg, 2006).

Review of Literature

Leadership Effectiveness

A leader has a major role in an organization. It is the leader who influences the development and the existence of a company. An organization will have no progress if led by manager style. On the contrary, an organization will not be successful if led by leader style (Ancok, 2012). A leadership is defined as the ability to influence a group to reach a vision or to reach some certain goals (Robbin & Judge, 2008).   A leadership is an effort to use a certain influencing skills and never force to motivate an individual to reach the goal (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 2008).

The definition of leadership indicates that leadership is also related to the use of influence and that every relationship can be related to leadership. The definition also implies the importance of reaching the goal. The effective leader should accommodate individual, group, and organization goals. The effectiveness of a leader is specifically measured by the achievement of one or more than one combination of those goals (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly,2008). There are a lot of opinions related to leadership effectiveness. The effectiveness of a leader can be conceptualized into three dimensions: content, level analysis, and target evaluation. Content dimension mainly associated to the job performance, affective and relational criteria, or assessment of the whole effectiveness which includes both job and rational elements. Level analysis is related to whether the effective leadership is conceptualized on the individual, dyadic, group or organization level. Target evaluation shows how the leader or other outcomes in other domains of leadership effectiveness, but not focusing on the leader, become the target of evaluation (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011).

In some research results, leadership effectiveness is evaluated based on the subordinates' performance. Therefore, a leader isconsidered as effective whenhis subordinates can perform the best work performance in line with the requirements and the directions. The indicator of effective leadership is subordinates' work performance (Damen, Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2006; Nam, & Kun. 2015; Johnson, & Dipboye, 2008),), team performance (Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg & Damen, F. 2009; Volmer, 2012) and extra-role compliance (Damen,   Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2006).

Employee Work Performance

Performance is a quantity or quality of something resulted or service given by someone who does a job (Luthans, 2005).   Employee work performance is a pivotal aspect for an organization since work performance functions as the relevant output for an organization. This is because employee work performance support organization's performance and function as a whole. Work performance depends on the type of job that should be done. For example, financial controller does his best as an analyst and

focusing on details, while art director does his best to be creative and innovative (Visser,   Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse, 2013).

Employee work performance is a major indicator for leadership effectiveness (Kaiser, Hogan& Craig, 2008). Type of work affects how far the content of vision and emotional expression influence the employee work performance (Johnson & Dipboye 2008). Some studies found that leadership style and the way the leader perform his leadership affects the subordinates to correlate to a certain work characteristic. For example in transformational leadership style, it is more effective to increase the subordinates' work performance on the job which needs high dependence (Sosik, 1997; Sosik, Avolio, Kahai, & Jung, 1998 dalam Johnson & Dipboye, 2008). In participative leadership style, it is it is more effective to increase the subordinates' work performance on the slightly structured job. While in directive leadership style, increasing subordinates' work performance will be more effective when focusing their job on the highly structured job. Under the participative leadership, subordinates will be motivated to participate in the work and the influence will be shown clearly on the job with high difficulty such as on the slightly structured job(Kahai, Sosik & Avilio, 1997).

In conclusion, different leadership style is needed and different emotional expression may also be needed to increase the subordinates' work performance on a job with certain characteristics. The purpose of this literature study is to find out more about the effect of leader's emotional expressions on the work performance with different type of job. In this case, there are two types of job, they are creative and analytical. Creative job needs divergent thinking (which results on the freedom to change the way of thinking in doing something). Analytical job needs convergent thinking (that is, thinking through the available information and aim at the final results) (Guilford, 1956 dalam Visser,   Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse, 2013).

The Role of Emotional Contagion

Emotion is defined as a stimulating condition which involves body and facial changes, brain activity, cognitive evaluation, subjective feeling and the tendency to do a certain act which is entirely formed by rules existed in a certain culture. There are two types of emotion, primer emotion and secondary emotion. Primer emotion is the emotion which is held by everyone since they were born. Emotions included in primer emotion are fear, anger, sadness, happiness, shock, disgust, and resentment. Situations which activate primer emotion are commonly similar in any culture in the world. On the other hand, secondary emotion involvesall variation and combination of different emotions which varyfrom one culture to another and it is developed gradually depends on the cognitive maturity (Wade & Travris, 2007).

Emotional displays playsan important role in regulating the social behavior (Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg & Damen, 2009). It is mainly occur on the emotional displays expressed by people in higher-up status (Keltner, Van Kleef, Chen, & Kraus, 2008 dalam Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, & VanKnippenberg 2010). The interesting thing is that the emotional expression that can be seen from facial expression not only reflects our feeling but also can affect others' feeling. Further, facial expression reflects our feeling, for example our smile shows that we are happy, frown shows that we are angry or confused. Facial expression also affects how we feel. When people is asked to smile or show happy expression, their positive feelings increase, but when they are asked to show the expression of anger or disgust, their positive feelings will decrease. Facial expression can also affect others' emotions. Have you experienced when you are happy, then you spend your time by having lunch with a depressed friend, you will then realize that you also become depressed? Have you stopped a conversation with your friend who worries about the exam because that emotion affects you to become worry about that exam too? Those examples show the emotional contagion(Wade & Travris, 2007).

Emotional contagion is understood as the tendency to automatically mimic others': facial expression synchronically,   vocalization, posture, and gesture as a result of interacting emotionally. Emotional contagion is likely to happen from people who have high influence or superiority to his subordinates. This is because of two reasons; the first is that it is common for subordinates to pay attention to their superior, but not vice versa. The second, people with higher status usually have clearer

expression since they are free to do that without any consequences (Hatfield, E., Cacioppo, J., & Rapson, R. L. 1994).

Related to the functions of social emotions in EASI model (Emotions as Social Information) from Van Kleff (2008) (in Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg & Damen, 2009), it is shown that there are two ways in explaining how emotions expressed by a leader can affect the subordinates' work performance:

1) *The affective reactions pathway*, emotions which is expressed by someone can stimulate affective reaction of others which later affect their behavior. In leader and subordinates context, the emotion expressed by the leader can affect the work performance through activating the subordinates' affective reaction which influences their work performance.

2) *The job-relevant information pathway,* emotions which is expressed by a leader can affect work performance by providing relevant information which is related to the job, so the subordinates can use it as a guidance to do their work. In the leader and subordinates interaction, when positive emotions expressed by the leader iscompared to the negative emotions, it can be seen as the indication of positive or negative situations. Emotions expressed by the leader are considered as the response of their success or failure which will influence the conclusion of their work quality. For example, when a leader expresses anger, this expression is taken as the signal that the subordinates' work progress is not in line with the target. On the contrary, when the leader expressed happiness emotion, it is considered as the signal that the subordinates work is well done.

Discussion

The purpose of this literature study is to understand the effect of leader's emotional expression to the leadership effectiveness, with the subordinates' emotion as the mediator. Leadership effectiveness in this study is work performance which is performed by the subordinates as the result of the success of the leader's emotional contagion to affect their subordinates. From some research journals reviewed, there are some conclusions reached.

First, emotions which is expressed by the leader, whether it is positive, negative or neutral, affects the subordinates' emotions. Some studies support this statement through the result of some experimental studies: leader's emotions or feelings are transferred to the team members which make the team members feel the leader's emotion and they are affected by it (Volmer, 2012), leader who expresses happy emotion significantly affects the happiness of the subordinates, compared to when the leader expresses sadness or neutral emotion (Visser, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse, 2013), a leader who expresses happiness emotion activates the team members positive affective reaction better than a leader who expresses anger(Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg & Damen, 2009). Leader's negative emotion tends to decrease the subordinates' positive reaction, while the subordinates do not show more negative emotions when they receive positive emotions from their leader (Nam, & Kun. 2015).

Second, emotions expressed by a leader, whether it is positive, negative or neutral can affect the subordinates' work performance, but this depends on the job type, subordinates' motivation, subordinates' personality or the characteristics of the situation. In explainig how the emotional influence expressed by a leader depends on the job type, studies have shown that positive emotion such as happiness expressed by a leader will increase the subordinates' work performance on creative jobs compared to the sadness emotion. The sadness emotion expressed by a leader will result in better work performance on subordinates' analytical jobs compared to positive emotion (Visser, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse, 2013).This study supports the previous study which has revealed: the positive relationship between positive emotion and creativity, and thatthere is no relationship between creativity and negative emotion(Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005). Astudy which applied field researchalso find that employee work performance which needs their creativity will increase if the leader does not expresses negative emotion (Nam & Kun, 2015). Another study found that the leadership effectiveness depends on the job type (Volmer, 2012). It stated that leader's mood affects actual team work with group affective tone as the

mediator. In that study, the effect of leader's mood is investigated using different job. In addition, leader's positive mood has positive effect on the team and improves team's confidence on their ability and skill. Leader's positive mood also shows higher effect than negative mood.

The effect of leader's emotion on the leadership effectiveness also depends on the subordinates' motivation. Research shows that expression of anger expressed by a leader will be more effective when the subordinates have high epistemic motivation. In addition, leader who has positive emotion will be more effective if the subordinates have low epistemic motivation. This finding has an implication on Fiedler's contingency approach (1996) about leadership effectiveness whichststes that leadership effectiveness will depend on its orientation, whether it orientates on the relationship or job, which is decided based on the situational characteristics (Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg & Damen, 2009). The effect of leader's emotion also depends on the subordinates' personality. Study conducted by Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, & Van Knippenberg (2010) shows that the effect of emotion expressed by a leader to the subordinates' performance depends on the subordinates' agreeableness. Subordinates with low agreeableness will be more motivated to perform better work performance when the leader expresses the emotion of anger than when the leader expresses neutral or happiness emotion.

Third, leader who shows happiness emotion has higher influence on the leadership effectiveness than when the leader shows sadness or neutral emotion. In this case, it happens when it is not associated with the measurement of objectivity or subjectivity of the leadership (Visser, Van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & Wisse, 2013).

Conclusion

Leaders should understand that emotions which they express or display can affect their subordinates' work performance. Therefore, leaders should know when they should use positive emotion approach or negative emotion approach. Additionally, leaders must also have the ability to control their emotions in a certain situation. The understanding of emotional displays which is expressed by leaders can also be included as a material in leadership training to increase leadership effectiveness. Leaders can be trained how to show suitable expression in a certain condition to make their leadership more effective.

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