

## Arrogance Leadership in Higher Educational Organisations

(Kepimpinan Keangkuhan dalam Organisasi Pendidikan Tinggi)

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### Abstract

This study will be looking into whether the levels of job commitment and job satisfaction are highly related by the type of leadership style portrayed by leaders in higher educational organisations. It will be descriptive research to further understand the correlational relationship between arrogance leadership (independent variable) and job commitment and job satisfaction (dependent variables). The research instrument is an online questionnaire through an online platform – Google Form. The data will be analysed using SPSS software. Practically, this study will help the higher educational organisation and its management to identify the level of arrogance leadership, job commitment, and job satisfaction within its organisation. Theoretically, on the other hand, this study will be unique as it will focus on the Malaysian context. Besides, there are a lot of studies on leadership but not many are on arrogance leadership, especially in Malaysia.

Keywords: Arrogance leadership, arrogant leader, higher education organisation

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## INTRODUCTION

With the ever-challenging and competitive workforce, it is widespread and easy way out to put all the blame on one particular person when faced with adversity at the workplace. Leaders will always blame their subordinates for mistakes and lack competency (Borden, 2017). On the other hand, subordinates blame their superiors for being unapproachable and lack of communication as well as guidance (Borden, 2017). This will end up in a vicious cycle of blaming and pushing responsibilities. Often, they ended up in a good employee leaving the company. Is this a matter of not committed and dissatisfied, or does the leadership style of the leader have to impact job commitment and job satisfaction? Through the heavy reliance of technological tools in the workplace today, physical contacts are also reduced as communication is done through emails, messaging apps, and video conferencing. Hence, with the lack of physical contact in communication, people can seem distant and perceived as arrogance (Borden, Levy, & Silverman, 2018). In a nutshell, arrogance leadership is the leadership style exhibited by a leader who is deemed or perceived as arrogant.

Without doubt, it is crucial to be able to identify the level of arrogance leadership from time to time, if not at its infancy stage. It is also believed that individuals working in an organisation that consistently aims to be more superior to other organisations are likely to be arrogant (Hamedoğlu, 2019). As much as arrogance is avoided in a progressive working environment, there are organisations favouring arrogance leadership so that they can gain competitive advantage and manipulate the actions of their competitors; to gain the authority to be the leader of their industry (Borden et al., 2018; Hamedoğlu, 2019). Thus, it can be said that the level of commitment and satisfaction toward a job in an organisation is highly related to the type of leadership style portrayed by superiors?

### RESEARCH BACKGROUND

#### *Arrogance leadership in higher education organisations*

It is easy to be a leader. However, to be recognised as a competent and successful leader, it requires respect from followers. Therefore, to earn respect, a leader should have confidence and humility (Oyer, 2015). Although these two attributes are symbiotic, confidence, when inflated, can be turned into arrogance (Oyer, 2015). Leaders, regardless of industry, need to be cautious about knowing the fine line between confidence and arrogance (Haan, Britt, & Weinstein, 2007). In a survey conducted by JobStreet.com, it was found that fifty-two percent of Malaysians are unhappy with their jobs, quoted that the second-highest contributing factors as unhappy with their boss or immediate superior (Unhappy Employees Outnumber Happy Ones, 2016, September 29). In another survey, namely "Geram Kerja Survey 2019" conducted by AIA, an insurance company, in collaboration with an online portal in Malaysia found that most Malaysians quit their jobs, not because of money factors but rather "company culture sucks" and "my boss is driving me mad" (Surprisingly, the #1 Reason why Malaysians are unhappy at work is not because of salary, 2019, May 27). Besides, it is believed that the levels of positive attitudes, which are indirectly related to a person's motivation, commitment, and satisfaction, as shown by followers and subordinates (team members), are highly dependent and determined by levels of humility exuded by the leader (Toscano, Price, & Scheepers, 2018).

Likewise, in the educational context, educational leaders are expected to shape the future generation, must be vigilant about how they use their power and notably when dealing with colleagues and students (Haan et al., 2007). Arrogance is believed to be closely related to or part of a narcissistic trait. In contrast, a research study showed that socio-economic level and academic achievement are related linearly related to individual's and organisation's narcissism (Hamedoğlu, 2019). Therefore, it can be said that the higher a person's income and academic qualification, the higher the possibility of being a narcissist who possesses the arrogance attributes. Hence, being able to identifying the level of

arrogance in the organisation at an early stage is very crucial. In the education setting, even though educators fear that they are being viewed as arrogant by students, it was found that students did not think of educators as arrogant (Haan et al., 2007).

This study assumes that arrogance leadership will affect the level of job commitment among the lecturers in educational organisations. Hence, this study will seek to test whether there is any significant relationship between arrogance leadership and job commitment. Also, this study assumes that arrogance leadership will affect the level of job satisfaction among lecturers in educational organisation. This study also seeks to test whether there is any significant influence between arrogance leadership and job satisfaction. Therefore, the researchers proposed the following conceptual framework for the purpose of this study (Figure 1).

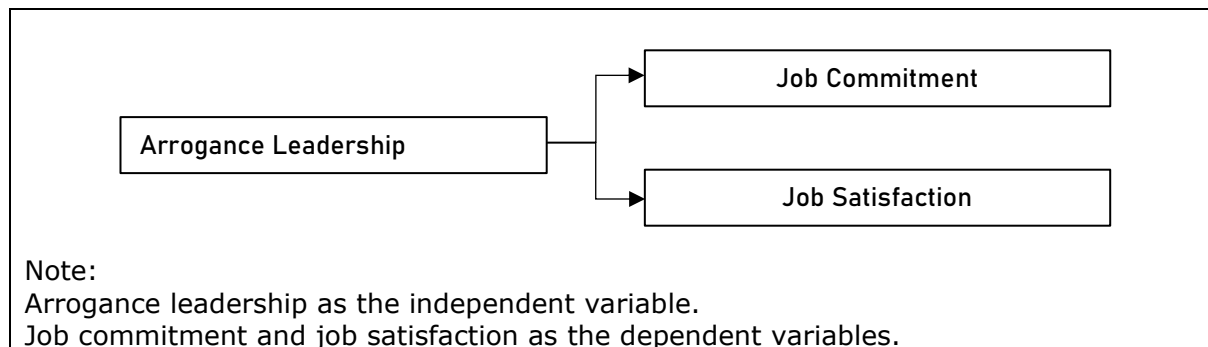


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study is unique in comparison with other studies as it seeks to identify the levels of arrogance leadership, job commitment, and job satisfaction in educational organisations as well as the relationship between arrogance leadership, job commitment, and job satisfaction. Specifically, this study investigates whether there is a significant relationship between the variable arrogance leadership and job commitment. Next, this study will identify whether there is a significant influence of arrogance leadership on job satisfaction among lecturers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Carlson (2013), arrogance is a subset of the narcissist characteristics. A narcissist is someone who thinks highly of himself or herself (Johnson et al., 2010). Arrogance, on the other hand, is demonstrated by disparaging others (Silverman, Johnson, McConnel, & Carr, 2012). It is often regarded as a negative attribute in any organisation, but widely and subconsciously practised by many leaders. Arrogance is considered as undesirable as it leads to ineffective leadership, causing grievances to followers and subordinates by creating an environment of intimidation (Toscano et al., 2018). In some situations, arrogance might come across as bullying, humiliating, and discriminating against subordinates, which can cause negative and toxic work environments. Therefore, arrogance leadership can be simply defined as a person who acts as a leader of a group, possessing the characteristic of arrogance. Due to workplace bureaucracy, employees or followers tend to keep silent when faced with arrogance leadership. Without a doubt, arrogance leadership when practised (without early detection and control) is believed to have an impact on individuals, individuals in the organisation, and the organisation as a whole (Carlson, 2013; Johnson et al., 2013; Silverman et al., 2012). In this study, an arrogant leader is someone displaying or practising arrogance leadership in an organisation, specifically educational organisation.

The relationship of arrogance leadership with job commitment and job satisfaction is a myth or a known fact that is happening in organisations that have been ignored by individuals? To answer this question, Hazriyanto and Ibrahim (2019) noted that through the enhancement of job satisfaction among lecturers, not only can work performance improved but also able to develop and cultivate job commitment. The behaviour or style of leadership portrayed by the leader is deemed to have a direct influence on employees' job satisfaction and, subsequently, their commitment (van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004). To better understand the connection or relationship between these factors, Hazriyanto and Ibrahim (2019) outlined that job satisfaction can be either negative or positive perspectives of an individual linked with the job; the performance is the work outcome, and the management process is the leadership style of the leader. Hence, satisfaction is one factor that contributes to enhancing the achievement of job performance, which will then lead to commitment.

Arrogance can be exhibited by all individuals within the organisation, regardless of their roles, as leaders or subordinates. It is like a vicious cycle occurring from the leader to the subordinates, subordinate to the leader, or even between subordinates who like to claim seniority over peers. Van den Berg and Wilderom (2004) believed that positive leadership behaviour has a significant influence to enhance employees' job satisfaction. Positive leadership behaviours such as the empowerment of employees through leadership roles and autonomy will enhance employee job performance and promote a better working environment within organisations. This can only be achieved without the presence of arrogance in organisations. Therefore, leaders in organisations should have enhanced leadership behaviour to increase employees' trust and motivation, which will then increase satisfaction and commitment (van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004).

A good leadership style shown by leaders is the driving force for the direction of any organisations. Toscano et al. (2018) believed that the levels of positive attitudes shown by followers and subordinates (team members) are highly dependent and determined by levels of humility exuded by the leader. An environment lacking humility and integrity amongst its team members can cause negative and unhealthy work culture (Oyer, 2015). It was noted that these attributes were rarely studied under leadership research and still lack empirical studies (Liborius, 2017; Toscano et al., 2018). Without a doubt, leaders can influence the flow and direction of the team in any organisation. Therefore, any organisation needs to redirect arrogant behaviour portrayed by its leaders (Silverman et al., 2012). As a high level of commitment shown by an employee can enhance productivity, it was found that there is a positive relationship between development, training, and job satisfaction at the workplace (Hazriyanto & Ibrahim, 2019). In relation, it was also found that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment with leadership style among university lecturers (Hazriyanto & Ibrahim, 2019; Tatlah, Akhtar, & Hashmi, 2019). When studied, satisfaction levels were higher in public educational organisations as compared to private ones, quoting that there is less bureaucracy with only one reporting head who does not intervene in the daily operations of teachers (Saba, 2011). Also, it seems that when given autonomy, teachers or employees tend to have higher satisfaction and commitment levels (Mendoza, 2019; Saba, 2011; Tatlah et al., 2019).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study will be implemented using a descriptive research design to further understand the correlational relationship between arrogance leadership and job commitment and job satisfaction in higher educational institutions. The descriptive research design is believed to be able to provide concrete and accurate descriptions of an identified problem or situation (De Vaus, 2001). But it allows researchers to better understand the problem identified by making assumptions about the way things are and provoke actions (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011). Therefore, it is believed that the inferential research design will be able to confirm the significant relationship of arrogance leadership with job commitment

and job satisfaction in higher educational institutions. To answer the research questions, this study uses a questionnaire to obtain the necessary data through an online platform, Google Form. The questionnaire is divided into four sections: section one, respondents' profile, section two, arrogance leadership; section three, job commitment; and section four, job satisfaction. Table 1 outlines the research instrument items.

Table 1. Research instrument

Item	Total Items	Sources
Section One - Respondents' Profile	5	-
Section Two - Arrogance Leadership	26	Workplace Arrogance Scale (Johnson et al., 2010)
Section Three - Job Commitment	24	Commitment Scale Items (Allen & Meyer, 1990a; Allen & Meyer, 1990b)
Section Four - Job Satisfaction	20	Job Satisfaction Scale (Weiss et al., 1967)
Total	75	

For data collection, this study will use the online survey questionnaire method through the Google Form online platform and via email blasting. Nulty (2008) supported that web-based or technology-supported or online questionnaires are proven to have faster and higher response rates as compared to traditional paper-based questionnaires. In relation, Sheehan (2001) also claimed that using email as the medium to distribute the questionnaire is cost-efficient (eliminates printing cost), time-saving (able to reach wider and more audience), and convenience to respondents (complete at own time and place). Hence, there is no pressure on the respondents (to simply complete the survey) and able to provide good quality responses (Granello & Wheaton, 2004). Before email blasting, research ethical clearance, and permission from the educational organisations involved to obtain lecturers' email addresses were obtaining (Granello & Wheaton, 2004; Minnaar & Heystek, 2013).

As the online survey questionnaire will be blasted via email, before that, ethical clearance and permission from the higher educational organisations involved are obtained (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). A confidentiality statement is also made available on the first page of the survey, to indicate that all data collected is only for the sole purpose of this study and all respondents will not be identifiable. This is to ensure that respondents' interests are made a priority (Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009).

## FINDINGS

### LEVEL OF ARROGANCE LEADERSHIP

The presence of arrogance can be identified when arrogance leadership is demonstrated by someone in an organisation who possesses a sense of superiority, exaggerated self-importance, and acting without the consent of team members causing resistance and rebellion among their members (Haan et al., 2007; Toscano et al., 2018). Therefore, the findings of this study will be able to assist higher educational organisation and its management to acknowledge the presence and level of arrogance leadership, as early as at its infancy stage.

It was also cautioned by Toscano et al. (2018) that the existence of arrogance leadership is undesirable as it leads to ineffective leadership and, in the long run, may cause grievances to subordinates. Being able to identify the existence or occurrence of arrogance leadership as it imposes impacts on individuals, such as employees or followers, is very crucial for higher educational organisations (Johnson et al., 2010; Silverman et al., 2012; Toscano et al., 2018). For this study, it is important to note the findings on the existence

of arrogance leadership as without early detection and control; arrogance leadership is believed to have negative impacts on lecturers as individuals amongst the lecturers in higher educational organisations and the higher educational organisations as a whole (Johnson et al., 2010; Silverman et al., 2012; Toscano et al., 2018).

#### LEVEL OF JOB COMMITMENT

Job commitment as a dependent variable consists of three sub-scales – a normative commitment that is based on perceived obligation toward the organisation; an affective commitment which is based on the emotional ties developed by employees through the positive working environment or workplace; and a continuance commitment, that is based on the perceived cost (both economically and socially) of leaving or quitting from the organisation (Jaros, 2007).

##### *Normative Commitment*

Normative commitment is measured based on the perceived obligations toward the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Jaros 2007). According to Jaros (2007), as employees grow older in terms of their age and the longer their years of service, the perceived obligation should be higher in higher educational organisations. Hence, the finding of this study is seeking to prove the consistency of the responses with the definition of normative commitment, whereby normative commitment is looking at the perceived obligations of employees toward the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Meyer et al., 1989).

##### *Affective Commitment*

Affective commitment is measured based on the emotional ties developed by employees through the positive working environment or workplace (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Jaros, 2007). Therefore, it means that even though employees do not wish to remain committed to the current organisation they might not be easily attached to another or new organisations (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Meyer et al., 1989). Hence, the findings of this study seeks to prove the level of commitment by employees based on their emotional ties.

##### *Continuance Commitment*

Continuance commitment is measured based on the perceived cost (both economically and socially) of leaving or quitting from the organisation (Jaros, 2007). This simply means that they are willing to stay regardless of the consequences due to perceived cost or risk they need to bear to leave the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Meyer et al., 1989). However, choosing to remain and stay committed does not mean that the respondents strive to perform better or ever be satisfied with the organisation (Mendoza, 2019). A person can be loyal but not committed (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Mendoza, 2019). Hence, the findings of this study seek to find out the consistency of this statement.

#### CORRELATION BETWEEN ARROGANCE LEADERSHIP AND JOB COMMITMENT

Arrogance leadership can push followers, both positively and negatively, and can cause employees to be reluctant and resistant to work at full capacity (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Dykes & Winn, 2019). Hazriyanto and Ibrahim (2019) also posited that a high level of job commitment can enhance productivity and has a positive relationship with development, training, and job satisfaction at the workplace. Hence, it is very important for the finding of this study to find out how the overall job commitment level responds to the level of arrogance leadership. In short, this study investigates whether there is a significant relationship between the variable arrogance leadership and job commitment.

## INFLUENCE OF ARROGANCE LEADERSHIP ON JOB SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is the state of feeling accomplished and appreciated, which is why job satisfaction is considered to be able to affect various organisational outputs such as performance, recognition as well as job commitment (Ozdem & Sezer, 2019; Uysal, 2019). In the educational context, it was noted that the level of satisfaction is higher among teachers who have been in the profession for a longer time, as when satisfaction level is low, they will start looking for new job opportunities, which can negatively affect job commitment (Saba, 2011; Uysal, 2019). This is very crucial for higher educational organisations to be able to maintain high job satisfaction to increase the higher level of job commitment. According to Torlak and Kuzey (2019), leaders who are arrogant and unapproachable can cause dissatisfaction amongst followers. In a study conducted by Saba (2011), further proved that the relationships with superiors and colleagues are determining factors of satisfaction for the teachers, it was found that 83% of the teachers involved in the study were satisfied because their superiors and colleagues were cooperative and provided sufficient support. Hence, the finding of this study seeks to identify if there is a significant influence of arrogance leadership on job satisfaction among lecturers.

## **CONCLUSION**

Leadership effectiveness can be measured through followers' commitment and satisfaction in the job and workplace (Deal, 1985). In the educational context, it is believed that leadership effectiveness will increase job satisfaction, which will then lead to educational organisation effectiveness (Parker, 2015). Thus, with increased job satisfaction, the level of job commitment among employees increases as well? However, other studies have proved otherwise that organisational commitment predicts job satisfaction instead (Mendoza, 2019). In theory, Uysal (2019) also posited that job satisfaction is regarded as the main element of job commitment, regardless of whether choosing not to leave the organisation or change the situation. Therefore, should leaders influence employees' commitment toward their job or focus on ensuring that employees are satisfied? Therefore, this study seeks to find out whether arrogance leadership influences job commitment and job satisfaction. Practically, this study will help higher educational organisation and its management to identify the level of arrogance leadership, job commitment, and job satisfaction within its organisation. Theoretically, on the other hand, this study will be unique as it will focus on the Malaysian context. Besides, there are a lot of studies on leadership, but not many are on arrogance leadership, especially in Malaysia.

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