Relationship Between Humility-Based Leadership And Students' Satisfaction With University Services (Case Study: Georgian Technical University [GTU], Tbilisi, Georgia)

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Abstract:

Nowadays, with revealing the importance of higher education in society, people are becoming more sensitive to issues related to higher education, such as leadership style. Also, satisfaction plays a major role in determining the authenticity and accuracy of a system, especially the educational system. The highest level of satisfaction leads to the highest level of development of skills, knowledge and mentality in students. In other words, student satisfaction is one of the main goals of higher education institutions. Given what was stated and the fact that the authors are working in education system and had similar research based on performance on another university in Georgia (Moghimi, 2021), the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with the services of Georgian Technical University. The present study was a descriptive-correlational study. The statistical population of the study included all administrators, officials and master students of Georgian Technical University. According to Morgan's table, the sample size was estimated at 108 people for the group of administrators using a convenience random method and 384 for the group of students using a cluster random method. In the present study, standard questionnaires of humility-based leadership and satisfaction with university services with appropriate validity and reliability were used. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-24 software and Pearson and one-sample t-tests. The results revealed that 51 (47.22%) of university administrators had humility-based leadership characteristics. Also, 195 students (50.78%) had low satisfaction with university services. The level of students' satisfaction with university services and the components of satisfaction with administrative, educational and research services were at an unsatisfactory level. The level of students' satisfaction with welfare services was at a desirable level. The results showed that there was a significant and inverse relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with university services and the components of satisfaction with university educational and administrative services and there was a direct and significant relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with university welfare services.

Keywords: Humility-based leadership, Student Satisfaction, Service Satisfaction, University.

Introduction

In the theory of customer-oriented marketing in the 1960s, the goal was identifying the needs of a group of customers and then maximizing their satisfaction by offering appropriate product or service. Based on this approach, customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal of the organization's marketing measures (Alsaad, 2020). Unfortunately, it seems that in the 1990s, marketers became somewhat short-sighted and instead of focusing on customer benefits, they turned their attention to the physical characteristics of the offered products or services

offered to realize the principle of customer orientation. This issue is actually more observed in certain service industries such as universities or state-b2b organizations. Wherever there is this inappropriate orientation, it is likely that customer satisfaction will lose its top priority among the organization's key policies (Supriyanto, 2021).

Customer orientation has a background of two to three decades in various area of health, treatment and education system. Considering students as consumers is under serious attention on educational studies. However, the views of customers and recipients of services is a basis for measuring executive processes, planning and a way to empower a set of service providers as well as the participation of service recipients in decisions (Padron, 2012), being aware of the level of satisfaction of service recipients or students is one of the most basic management mechanisms (Johnson, 2009). In higher education institutions as mentioned above, students are considered as the main audience and customers of the educational process. If the educational services provided by a specific university in comparison with the educational services provided by other higher education centers or similar universities cannot satisfy the student, fewer new students will be attracted to that university (Van Ameijde, 2019). Regarding the importance of paying attention to customer demands based on the studies conducted, each of the customers expresses his or her point of view to 9 people. If this dissatisfaction is high and increases exponentially, the existence of the organization will be meaningless, as the existential philosophy of any organization is customer service (Yeo, 2018).

Elliott (2002) defines student satisfaction as "the popularity of students' subjective evaluation of the various outcomes and experiences associated with higher education that are continually shaped by repeated experiences in college life" (2017). Hoang defines student satisfaction as "student's short-term attitudes toward evaluating higher education services." Researchers believe that students, as recipients of teachers' professional services, are the best source for identifying their teachers' educational behaviors (Sadeh and

Garkaz, 2016). Identifying the issues in the educational process and skills of students and then taking action to eliminate the problems and enhance them will improve the achievements of educational goals and ultimately shall train and educate skilled people and providing high quality services in the community and the country. Based on the basic missions of the universities, which mainly include education, research, publishing and creating a documented-culture, providing scientific and consulting services to society and professional growth and similar academic goals, university officials play a fundamental and strategic role in fulfilling these missions. The results of research conducted by Gill (2020) and Arif (2016) showed that university leadership style has a significant effect on student satisfaction and student anxiety.

University officials and leaders, who are at the frontline of making general decisions and those who teach in the classrooms, must act based on the varieties of roles of higher education. In other words, they determine the path of movement (Bryman, 2021). University leadership has its own unique challenges. Due to the organizational complexity of the university and its varied goals and traditional values, the nature of leadership in higher education is ambiguous and controversial. The university is described as "organized chaos", unknown technology and problematic goals because of the fact that the leadership of universities and academics is very complex and paradoxical. Despite their high power, the system of prominent universities lies in the independent thinking, creativity, humility and independence of its employees (Douglas, 2018). Very little research has conducted to evaluate the impact of the humility of the leader and administrator of the organization on important organizational outputs such as satisfaction with the services of the organization. However, there is much evidence on the importance of leadership humility in organizations.

In recent years, much attention has been paid to the concept of humility in research communities regarding the organizational issues. The traces of recent organizational challenges are attributed to the arrogance, selfishness, and self-aggrandizement of administrators (Rego, 2016).

Also, virtues such as humility have gained great interest and have become an important characteristic for people who want to lead modern organizations or work in these organizations. Humility is one of the key competencies in organizational virtues that is recommended and considered to create a moral context in organizational environments (Gonçalves, 2016). Theorists suggest that humility is becoming a vital issue for leaders who want to lead their organizations in a dynamic and chaotic environment (Owens, 2015). Despite the importance of humility to leaders and other members of organizations, there is a gap between our knowledge of what humility means in academic practices (Mohammadian, 2018). Some view humility as a multidimensional force of adaptation (Tangney, 2000) and some relate humility with feelings of inferiority and humiliation (Exline, 2004). Some others view humility-based leadership as acknowledging individual limitations, highlighting the strengths of others, and having willingness to learn from role models (Owens, 2013).

A humble leader will initially be able to stand firm and approach his or her subordinates by acknowledging individual limitations. Second, by identifying and highlighting the strengths of others (especially subordinates), leaders will respect for their subordinates and participate in the development of subordinates, which is likely to strengthen the relationship between leaders and followers. Finally, a trainable leader is a person who actively seeks feedback, is open to the ideas of others, and is equipped to up to date with new information (Owens, 2013). This issue benefits the relationship between the leader and the subordinates because the leader becomes aware of the subordinates' worries, ideas, opinions, and ideas and subsequently accountable (Morris, 2005). Some scholars have argued that humility is perceived as a positive human trait that is both lasting and immortal. However, they recognized that humility is affected by situational factors (Owens, 2012). Two points are very important in this perception of humility:

First, humility does not involve positivity or negativity, but it is merely a desire to obtain an objective and realistic view of oneself. Second, humility implies a desire for objective self-

perception rather than real and careful achievement (Peterson, 2012). The second point is that humans are subject to certain perceptual and decision-making biases. Genuine humility includes neither self-sufficiency nor positive over-selfishness. This definition includes three interrelated but distinct dimensions, including self-awareness, openness, and transcendence (Davis, 2010).

In the research conducted by Rahimi (2018) with the aim of assessing students' satisfaction with the educational, research, welfare and administrative services of technical and vocational colleges in Markazi province of Iran, results revealed that according to the level of significance for educational, research and welfare services, which is less than 0.05, the mean level of each of these services is significantly different. The mean level of educational services was above average and the mean level of research and welfare services were below average. Regarding the administrative services, the mean level of administrative services is not significantly different. Zadaen (2020) conducted a study entitled "The role of humility-based leadership in increasing organizational learning: An experimental study of the opinions of a sample of employees at the Faculty of Basic Education of Kufa University". The results showed that this study has reached cognitive and practical results such as the existence of a statistically significant correlation and the existence of a statistically significant effect between humility-based leadership and organizational learning.

Moghimi and Dastouri had a very wide and careful research (2022) on student satisfaction to propose a model of Student Relationship Management and extracted the critical factors affecting students' satisfaction for success of CRM (SRM) including lecturers' methods, administration and welfare and social life of the students of the University of Georgia in Tbilisi.

Nirvana (2020) conducted a study with the aim of evaluating the level of students' satisfaction with online classes during the COVID-19 epidemic. The tools for measuring student satisfaction included 20 questions in 4 facilities and infrastructures supporting online classroom implementation, teacher innovation in designing educational materials, attitude and response in the

online classroom process, and teacher-student behavior. The results revealed that the respondents are very satisfied with the services provided. However, 70% were dissatisfied with the facilities and infrastructures, while 65% of them were very satisfied with teacher's innovation in designing teaching materials. Respondents were completely satisfied with their attitudes and responses in class and 45% were completely satisfied with treatment of teachers with the students.

Hosseini (2019) conducted a research is to investigate the effect of leadership quality on student satisfaction in private universities. The statistical population of the mentioned study included students in seven private universities in Herat. Questionnaires were distributed among the subjects and finally 287 usable questionnaires were returned. The results showed that the leadership quality has a significant effect on student satisfaction in private universities. Piri conducted a research (2018) with the aim of evaluating the students' satisfaction with the quality of educational, research, student and financial services and university support. The results showed that students' satisfaction with educational services was appropriate and in research, student and administrative services was inappropriate and generally moderate and low. Bachelor students had lower levels of satisfaction with university services than master and doctoral students, but there was no significant difference between the levels of students' satisfaction in terms of gender.

Thurston Gerber et al. (2020) examined students' satisfaction with the higher education services of the Ludwigsburg University in Germany. The results of this study showed that students are satisfied with the educational services of the Ludwigsburg University, especially their educational facilities and the atmosphere among students, and most of them are dissatisfied with the university building and the quality of lectures in theaters. In a study entitled "Understanding Level 5 leadership based on the ethical perspective of a humble leader", Caldwell et al. (2017) identified 12 different factors for the variables of Level 5 humility and found that the most important characteristic of level 5 leaders is humility and the level 5 leadership is indisputable without the humility of the leader.

Zheng (2020 investigated the multilevel leadership effects on employees' work well-being, psychological safety, and error management climate. Research data were collected from 221 team members from 12 small and medium-sized enterprises in China. The results showed that humility-based leadership at the team level is positively related to employees' work well-being. Psychological safety and error management both played a mediating role in the relationship between humility-based leadership and employees' well-being. Error management positively moderated the relationship between humility-based leadership and psychological safety. Satisfaction of learners in higher education centers will make them dynamic and will lead to the promotion of organizational goals and increase the rate of return of students (Moghimi and Dastouri, 2022). The higher education system is one of the key elements of human development in any country. An important characteristic of higher education over the past four decades has been the rapid expansion of higher education institutions in all developing countries, including Georgia. In other words, higher education represents investment in human resources, which contributes to the comprehensive development of the country by providing and promoting the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in human resources. The higher education system plays an essential role in the development of organizations that accept specialized and trained personnel and the promotion of societies in general.

To make significant changes in any existing educational system, it is necessary to have descriptive information about the current situation and the level of students' satisfaction with the services provided. Using this information strengthens the positive factors and corrects the negative factors and students' satisfaction can be provided. Universities, as the driving force of knowledge-based economies, also need Level five leaders or humble leaders to achieve maturity and greatness to direct these important organizations in the path of change and transformation towards success. In other words, to achieve success, maturity and greatness and to be presented in the global arena, universities need the professional will and courage, humility,

commitment and enthusiasm of professors and students to stimulate thoughts, ideas, and to teach and inspire them to create the desired behaviors of the academic community. Thus, it is necessary to conduct a research on leadership and satisfaction of students and the relationship between these two variables. In this research, the researchers seeks to answer the following main question:

Does humility-based leadership have a significant relationship with students' satisfaction with the services of Georgian Technical University?

Methods

The present study was a descriptive and correlational research. The statistical population of this study consisted of two groups. The first group included all about 1500 administrators and officials of high, middle and operational level of Georgian Technical University. The second group included about 25000 bachelor students in the academic year of 2021-2022. The sample size according to Morgan table was estimated at 108 people for the group of administrators selected by using a convenience random sampling method and 384 people for the group of students selected by cluster random sampling method. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-24 by Pearson correlation coefficient and one-sample t-test. The questionnaires used in the research include 2 questionnaires:

A) Humility-based leadership questionnaire

This questionnaire consists of 9 questions designed based on Owens et al. (2011) model. It consists of 3 components of acknowledging individual limitations, appreciating the strengths of others, and educability. The questions of the questionnaire are evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by Owens et al. (2011) and a sample pre-test of 9 staff. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was obtained at 0.9 by using Cronbach's alpha method.

B) Satisfaction with University Services Questionnaire

 To assess students' satisfaction with university services, the Rahimi Questionnaire (2018) was used and customized according to Georgian academic atmpsphere. For each question, the respondent determines his or her satisfaction on a 5-point scale, ranging from very high (5) to very low (1). This questionnaire assesses students' satisfaction with university services in 4 components of satisfaction with educational services, research services, administrative services and welfare services. Rahimi (2018) reported the validity and reliability of the questionnaire at appropriate levels and pre-tests were done in two random classrooms for reliability of translation and customized questionnaire. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was obtained at 0.89 by Cronbach's alpha method.

Results

Out of the 108 administrators studied, 67 (62%) were females. Also, 80 people (74%) had master and doctoral degrees. Seventy and five people (69.5%) had more than 5 years of employment history. Out of 384 students, 253 (65.88%) were female. The results of describing the humility-based leadership variable showed that out of 108 university administrators, 18 (16.67) had low humility-based leadership characteristics, 39 (36.11%) had the moderate humility-based leadership characteristics, and 51 (47.22%) had high humility-based leadership characteristics. The results of describing the variable of satisfaction with university services among students showed that out of 384 university students, 195 (50.78%) had low satisfaction with university services, 107 (27.86%) had moderate satisfaction with university services and, 82 (21.36%) had high satisfaction with university services. One-sample t-test was used to assess the satisfaction with university services in different dimensions. According to Table 1 and that the significant level of satisfaction with university services and its components (educational services, research services, administrative services and welfare services) is less than 0.05. Thus, the mean level of each of these services has a significant difference (theoretical mean). Since the mean difference is positive for the component of satisfaction with welfare services and the difference is positive, it can be concluded that the mean level of students' satisfaction with welfare

services is higher than the average level and has a desirable level.

However, for the satisfaction with university services and the components of satisfaction with administrative, educational and research services, the difference between the means is negative and the difference is negative. Hence, it can be concluded that the mean level of student satisfaction with university services and components of satisfaction with administrative, educational and research services is below average level and is undesirable. The component of satisfaction with administrative services is at the lowest level compared to satisfaction with educational and research services.

Table 1- Results of one-sample t-test for satisfaction with university services in different dimension

Variables	T	df	p-value	Mean difference	Low limit	High limit
Satisfaction with service	-6.95	383	0.001	-0.379	-0.486	-0.271
administrative services	-3.74	383	0.018	-0.228	-0.230	-0.027
educational services	-2.503	383	0.021	-0.188	-0.274	-0.102
Research services	-2.179	383	0.031	-0.117	-0.14	-0.28
welfare Services	4.366	383	0.001	0.213	0.117	0.310

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with university services and its components (satisfaction with educational services, research services, administrative services and welfare services). The results of Table 2 showed that the p-value (significance) for the relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with services and components (satisfaction with educational, welfare and administrative services) are less than the significance level of 0.05. Hence, there is an inverse and significant relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with services and the components of satisfaction with university educational and administrative services. The negative coefficient of correlations suggests an inverse relationship between these variables. There is a direct and significant relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with welfare services (Table 2).

Table 2: Pearson correlation test statistics related to the relationship between humility-based leadership and student satisfaction with university services and its components (satisfaction with educational services, research services, administrative services and welfare services).

Variable	Pearson coefficient of correlation	p-value	Relationship	Type of relationship

satisfaction with university services	-0.319	0.021	Yes	inverse
Satisfaction with educational services	-0.289	0.036	Yes	inverse
Satisfaction with research services	-0.127	0.274	No	-
Satisfaction with administrative services	-0.410	0.001	Yes	inverse
Satisfaction with welfare services	0.311	0.022	Yes	direct

Conclusion

The constructive and significant role of leadership in universities is clear. Moghimi (2021) stated in his research that humble-management of the rector of the university of Georgia has correlation and positive effect on teams' transactive memory (TMT). It means that leaders in universities can bring competitive advantages to their organization based on their specific views and decisions. The role of leaders in universities as a service provider organization is crucial, since there are complex conditions in these organizations. Also, student satisfaction plays a major role in determining the authenticity and accuracy of an educational system. Highest level of satisfaction leads to the highest level of development of skills, knowledge and mentality in students. The results of describing the variable of humility-based leadership showed that 51 people (47.22%) had high characteristics of humility-based leadership. The results of describing the variable of satisfaction with chosen university services (GTU, Tbilisi) among students showed that 195 people (50.78%) had low satisfaction with university services. The results of the present study showed that the mean level of students' satisfaction with university services and the components of satisfaction with administrative, educational and research services are lower than the average level and are actually undesirable. The mean level of students' satisfaction with welfare services is higher than the average level and has a desirable level.

These results are consistent with those of study conducted by Nirvana (2020) and Thurston Gerber et al. (2020), which showed that students are satisfied with the university's educational services, especially their educational facilities and the atmosphere among students. They are inconsistent with the results of the study conducted by Piri (2018), which showed students' satisfaction with educational services is at appropriate level and their satisfaction with student and administrative services was at inappropriate level and their satisfaction in general was at moderate and low as well as the results of a study conducted by Rahimi (2018), which showed that the mean level of educational services is above the average and the mean level of research and welfare services is below the average. The reason for the discrepancy among the results might be either not having very strong humble-leadership characteristics that the current level was not effective enough or the fact that the culture of heavily-diversified students' in Georgian Technical University had strong role and impact on the outcome.

In general, it can be said that the level of student satisfaction with the services of the Technical University is not at a high level. It has many

reasons that need to be identified, reviewed in different researches and contributions and of course appropriate measures should be taken in that regard. Given the determining role of the university - specially this specific one that is the oldest and biggest university of the country – and its affects in the development of the country and the importance of education and training of students as a young and future generation of the country, it is necessary for officials to pay more attention to university services. Thus, university administrators are recommended to attract research funding and consultants from outside and within the university to monitor and increase students' satisfaction with the university educational and research services, encourage faculty members and researchers in scientific and research activities, and determine and plan research priorities. They are also recommended to hold national and international conferences for researchers and faculty members. University decision-makers should try to encourage faculty members to enhance their knowledge and expertise by giving points and academic promotion to professors, and improve faculty members' teaching methods by giving specialized and up-to-date books in various fields of knowledge.

Other results also revealed a significant and inverse relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with university services and the components of satisfaction with university educational and administrative services. This result is inconsistent with the result of a research conducted by Hosseini (2019), which showed that leadership quality has a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction in the university as well as the result of a study conducted by Zadaen (2020), which showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between humility-based leadership and organizational learning. However there is a direct and significant relationship between humility-based leadership and students' satisfaction with welfare services. These results are in line with those of study conducted by Zheng (2020). The results showed that humility-based leadership at the team level is positively associated with employees' well-being.

In explaining this result, it can be said that a humble leader is a leader who accepts the mistakes and failures and confronts the unknowns, acknowledges the strengths of team members, and provides many advantages and benefits for team effectiveness. Evidence suggests that the benefits of humility-based leadership over organizational performance include accepting new paradigms and focusing on dynamism, learning from others, eagerness to understand individual limitations and failures, correcting past mistakes, being willing to follow advice, and respect to the experienced people, avoiding selfishness.

All of these actions together may lead to greater satisfaction, emotional commitment, and individual and collective effort to seek consistent compliance, better team integration, greater innovation, and enhanced productivity of group members, customer (Students, Families and Society) satisfaction with services that all can lead to immediate financial benefits and rewards for the university and academic institution. By appreciating the strengths and values of individuals, appreciating the positive contribution of individuals in the organization, accepting new ideas and opinions, accepting their limitations, employees' and students' participation in decision making, personal attention and mental stimulation of stakeholders, humility-based leadership can lead to growth and development of their talents and potential abilities and ultimately lead to job satisfaction at the employee level and satisfaction with services and products at the customer and client level for a very better science and society. Humble leaders encourage employees and customers to comment on the organization's issues and problems, and ask employees and customers to comment on the Institution's new policies and strategies to use their opinions and views in presenting new tactics. Thus, university administrators are recommended to strengthen the spirit of servicing in the faculty members by honoring and encouraging compassionate and helpful professors to achieve their educational and research goals.

It is recommended that a favorable model of humility-based leadership for universities and

higher education Institutions be designed and validated based on the diversity of the cultural requirements of Georgian universities. Definitely the state or private universities and available programs to study would have effect on this customization. It is also recommended to provide ongoing and specific opportunities to develop humility-based leadership skills and reinforce positive attitudes among employees and students toward this leadership style. A working group should be formed to identify talented administrators with healthy and strong human relationships and flexible, and compassionate, responsible, and good manner administrators and appoint them to different levels of university management .One of the limitations of the present study is the limited number of foreign studies because of many Covid-19 situations and online classes also limited international programs available at GTU, which made it difficult to expand the results of this study for more internationalized universities. Also, this study was limited to the Georgian Technical University, so we should treat with caution in generalizing of the results to other universities and other countries and cultures.

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