The relationship of strategic leadership characteristics, gender issues and the transformational leadership among institutions of higher learning in Malaysia

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The under representation of women in higher education administrative positions is a paradigm of the situation that exists in many organizations, businesses, and institutions. Malaysian women, along with other women in the other part of the world, are increasing in numbers but are still experiencing personal leadership characteristic and challenges in academic environment that prevent them from entering and remaining in higher education administrative positions. In this paper, the theoretical model is empirically tested using data from 135 female academic leaders holding various positions such as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute of public and private institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. Data from the survey were analyzed using Multiple Regressions analysis. Thus, this paper is an attempt in such endeavour to examine to what extent gender issues and strategic leadership characteristics among academic leaders in institution of higher learning (IHL) are able to explain the variance in transformational leadership. The findings of this paper reveal that it is important for the universities to acknowledge the perception in strategic leadership characteristic among women leaders.

Keyword(s): leadership, women leader, transformational leadership, strategic leadership characteristic, higher education, Malaysia.

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MoHE) is currently operating in a post-modern setting that features a constantly changing external environment [5, 8, 20]. In recent decades, organizations in other fields have had to deal with knowledge economy which is marked by tremendous issues on managing change. In Malaysia, the country is still struggling to compete in an era of borderless globalization. This demands the MoHE is prepared to face the challenges of an extremely competitive and fast-moving global marketplace. With the right mechanism in place, Malaysians, particularly the MoHE as the base, is capable of becoming one of the sources of knowledge-based developments. Hence, the bottom line of the MoHE's strategies to built leadership is to contribute towards the growth of knowledge with development. In order to remain competitive, MoHE along with other organizations in Malaysia have to utilize their strategic resources, particularly leadership role among academicians; more proactively and they have to ensure their objectives and styles are consistent with the organization's vision and policy to become competitive.

In line with [1]'s study, 2003, MoHE supports each institution of higher learning (IHL)'s developmental strategies, particularly in producing highly qualified manpower. The success of these institutions in achieving this target, makes it necessary for them to have an appropriate strategic plan. Consequently, their performance must be based on a set of objectives that are linked to the mission of the institution and its vision for future [1, 13]. These define the customers and their requirements that the organization needs to satisfy. For instance, the quality

objectives pursued by Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia (UiTM), one of the largest universities in the country, are very much congruent to the established mission, vision and philosophy of the university and the nation.

1.2 Gender Issues

MoHE is increasingly aware that knowledge resources are essential to the development of IHL. The value it has in the competitive market with the increasing rate of innovation, has placed knowledge as an organization's key strategic resources. [9] advocates that in the 21st century; enterprise will be putting knowledge and knowledge workers regardless of males and females as their most valuable resources and assets, where, as intangible assets have become far more needed; their phycisal assets will be managed less. The concept of treating organizational strategic resources as valuable and strategic assets has become extremely common and had been support by many such as [4, 36, 37]. This is also in line with the strategies developed in the resource-based view of the firm [27].

Consequently, the role of both males and females academic leaders has been acknowledged as a key factor in the creation and maintenance of continuous learning environment as well as one of the strategic resources of academic institutions [2, 33]. Schein 2004 has described at length the influence of leaders and gender issues on the formation of the cultural boundaries of organizational learning and values. Differences among male and female academic leaders, their number of years as leaders/heads of department as well as the number of years working in other administrative positions may influence the way they build up their strategic leadership characteristics and transformational leadership style. They may also influence the level of motivation among followers to act in the area of quality, customer service, academic excellence, creativity, competitiveness and innovation where these values may also become models guiding the academic and non-academic staff behaviour. However, the strategic leadership characteristics that govern leadership styles and gender issues which tend to contribute to the formation of the values and the atmospheres that are conducive to effective and successful performance of IHL in Malaysia remains unchartered.

1.1 Strategic leadership characteristics and Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership (TL) is defined as the capability that one has in stimulating interest among colleagues and followers to view their work from new perspectives, generate awareness of the mission or vision of the team and organization, developing colleagues and followers to higher levels of ability and potential, and motivating colleagues and followers to look beyond their own interests toward those that will benefit the group [6]. In this paper, strategic leadership characteristics (SLC) is defined as personal practice an individual possesses which separates him or her as a leader from the others. This personal strategic leadership characteristics brings him or her to create the fit between the goal sets in operational effectiveness and strategic positioning of his or her IHL in the industry. The SLC goal in operational effectiveness which is internally focused is firstly targeted in the reduction of cost, increasing productivity and speed; and secondly is aimed at the effectiveness in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

Based on comprehensive literature, the researcher combined some earlier proponents of strategy such as [19, 30] and integrate it within the domain of SLC and leadership. Further to this, an emphasis was given to the strategy perspective which focused on [23] on strategic positioning and operational effectiveness; as well as [24] on value chain. These two models were extended into a new concept or approach in an effort to develop academic leadership value-chain model and linking strategies with university corporate goal for leadership investment.

Extending the work of [23, 24, 29, 35], the researcher defines SLC value-chain as the utilization of specific character or behaviour aiming and emphasizing the effectiveness and efficiency organizational knowledge resources to enhance the value-creating potential within each of the primary and supporting activities of the IHL. Adopting several measures related to leadership focused goals and knowledge value chain [23, 24, 29, 35], the researcher synthesizes this into one model. The model is shown in Figure 1.

In achieving a fit between strategy and SLC, the researcher noted evidences from the theoretical and empirical views that IHL appear to focus on two key core objectives; namely, operational effectiveness and strategic positioning, [23, 24, 29, 35]. As indicated in the Table 1, the researcher highlights the distinction between operational effectiveness and strategic positioning that can be translated directly into the corresponding goals for SLC investment. Nevertheless, though both key IHL objectives above are crucial in characterizing strategy and SLC contributions to superior performance of IHL, they work in number of different directions and have their own unique nature of effectiveness and positioning.

The operational effectiveness entails specific characteristic performing similar activities better than rivals, while strategic positioning entails performing different activities or performing similar activities, but in strategically different ways [35]. According to [23, 24] in [35], organizations that focus on operational effectiveness *"get more out of their inputs than others because they eliminate wasted effort, employ more advanced technology, motivate employees better, or have greater insights into managing particular activities . . . operational effectiveness includes, but is not limited to, efficiency"* (p. 62).

1.3 Gender Issues and Transformational Leadership

The growing focus on gender differences among academic leaders appears to be the result of the increasing number of women occupying leadership role and supervisory positions. Hence, the identification of female leadership has become a focus of research inquiry. Research investigating the relationship between gender and leadership style have reported equivocal results. [14] postulated that gender issues do account for differences in the leadership styles while [16] found that gender did not indicate significant differences in their self-reported leadership styles. Supportive and interpersonal appear to be the most accepted characterization and expectation of female leadership behavior; while self-reliant and task-oriented was dominantly reinforced among male leadership [26]. Both male and female academic leaders exercise different styles of leadership styles, where a transformational leadership style was more often associated with women and a transactional leadership style with men, although some men also used transformational styles [9, 14, 17, 31].

Another study conducted by [10] stated that little difference in leadership style between genders is indicated in organizational studies, except for the finding that women tend to be more democratic in their leadership style while men tend to adopt a more autocratic style. As noted in other studies, there appears to be fewer female serves as faculty deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute than males, but more female in the supporting administrative roles. As a whole, there were more females academicians holding administrative positions than males. In many contemporary university climate recently have viewed the aggregate of each individual ability could contribute to the quality decisional entity. Despite the fact that numbers of IHL have created a leadership layer in the university's structure of the organization, males tend to outnumbered females which eventually appears to be a reflection of its top management decision.

The researcher predicts that IHL in Malaysia may have very different goals for their leadership style. This may be dependant to the context or environment in which leadership style impact the activities of the organizations in the aspect of the IHL's goals. The researcher conjectured that by analyzing the differences in IHL's goal for transformational leadership, these transformational leadership may be categorized into the following framework: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart [15]. According to [15] challenging the process relates to the empowering and support of others in risk-taking behaviors that allow employees to try new strategies and improve their styles. Instead of restricting creativity, effective leaders encourage others to seek original and unorthodox responses to organizational situations. This may involve improvement in worker performance as well as in organizational initiatives can be enabled through leadership that challenges the accepted processes, procedures, and styles.

Inspiring a shared vision gives direction and purpose to the workplace team, [15]. They further claimed that promoting a shared vision is a vital leadership skill often lacking in leaders. In addition, enabling others to act is the essence of collaboration, [15]. The leader's example appears to be a powerful influence on followers' perceptions of their leader and on their own behaviors. [15] defines modeling the way as a leader's ability to conduct himself in a manner that exemplifies his beliefs, vision, and expectations. Effective leaders model the behaviors they value and demonstrate their commitment to those values. In turn, followers may be induced to emulate the leaders' actions. Creating a supportive and caring climate establishes positive relationships among leaders and followers. The personal attention afforded members of an organization can produce a secure foundation for the improvement of performance. Recognizing the accomplishments of employees generates the camaraderie that encourages the heart [15]. [15]'s framework for effective leadership aligns with the commonly identified components of collaborative or transformational leadership.

2. Statement of Problem

Although research has uncovered important predictor of IHL performance, yet it has been absent and has not been fully explored particularly in measuring the issues on strategic leadership characteristics, gender issues and transformational leadership. The success of transformational leadership brings to the performance in the perspective of IHL has been observed by many and has significant contribution towards organizational performance [13, 17, 20, 21, 34]. With the move by the IHL embracing globalization, [13], the IHL performance appears to be geared consistently with the objectives of IHL as a whole. Consequently, in achieving this performance, IHL would require individuals who can inspire and transform the team and its member to achieve its extraordinary outcomes.

For a long time, the relationship of strategic leadership characteristics of leaders, gender issues and transformational leadership has been analyzed in the literature [6, 14, 19]. However, these are done in isolation [3]. This paper seeks to explore how IHL manage challenges in forming transformational leadership styles particularly differences among genders and their strategic leadership characteristics as an important asset of the organization and serves as a strategic resource. The results of this empirical study may indicate that indeed leadership style, gender and their strategic leadership characteristics play key roles in the opportunities that each offers to the IHL.

The under representation of women in higher education administrative positions is a paradigm of the situation that exists in many organizations, businesses, and institutions [17, 25,

28]. Malaysian women [17, 28], along with other women in the other part of the world [25], are increasing in numbers but are still experiencing personal, cultural, and structural barriers that prevent them from entering and remaining in higher education administrative positions. Thus, this study is an attempt in such endeavour to further examine the relationship of transformational leadership, gender issues and their strategic leadership characteristics.

The purpose of the paper is to identify the relationship of transformational leadership, gender issues and strategic leadership characteristics of female leaders among IHL in Malaysia. Therefore, this paper proposes to search the answers to these research questions.

1. Is there a relationship between the perceived gender issues and transformational leadership as identified by academia of IHL in Malaysia?
2. What are the perceived strategic leadership characteristics that exist among academic leaders in Malaysia?
3. How much variance in transformational academic leadership among IHL in Malaysia can be explained by scores on gender issues and strategic leadership characteristics?

3. Conceptual framework

The present paper developed a conceptual framework, which aims to examine the extent of the relationship of transformational leadership, gender issues and the strategic leadership characteristics of female leaders among IHL in Malaysia. All variables were conceptualized to fit better into the current study setting based on the original view of [15]; transformational leadership was conceptualized as individual capability in being able to stimulate interest among colleagues to view their work from new perspectives and may be categorized into the following framework: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart [15]. The gender issues resolves around the differences among men and women on perception each has on the number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute, and the number of years working in other administrative positions in which the individual served as dean were gathered along with the deans' self-assessments of their commonly employed leadership styles.

4. Hypothesis
4.1 The relationship between the perceived gender issues and transformational leadership as identified by academia of IHL in Malaysia.

a. The relationship between the transformational leadership styles of male and female leaders of Malaysian IHL

[7] claimed that transformational leadership increases the optimism of its colleagues and practice communicating future-oriented vision themes with their direct reports. [12] further support that leaders that place much value and emphasis on developing a vision and inspiring followers to pursue the vision. However, [22] surveyed principals among public high school principals in Illinois to identify if there is any possible relationship between male and female principals' leadership styles. The data revealed no significant relationship in leadership styles on the principals' responses. Based on these evidences, the linkage is anticipated as follows:

H1:   There are no significant relationships between transformational leadership styles of male and female deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute of Malaysian IHL.

b. The relationship between the number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and transformational leadership styles.

A wide variety of studies has been done to support the link between the number of years as deans and leadership styles [17, 28]. [28] and [17], similarly claimed that there were no relationship exist between the number of years as deans and transformational leadership styles. The perceptions of principals and those of their department heads on the transformational and transactional styles of the principals among male and female Massachusetts public high school principals was conducted, [18]. The gender along with years of experience in their respective positions of both principals and department heads was also analyzed. According to [18], there were no significant relationships on the basis of gender or years of experience, although principals rated themselves as more transformational than the department heads who indicated that principals used more transactional leadership styles. Given the above the following is hypothesized:

H2: There is no significant relationship between the number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and transformational leadership styles.

c. The relationship between the number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles

It is believed that IHL would like to know whether the relationship exists between the number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles. A recent study reveals that there were no relationship exists between the number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles [17, 28]. Evidence is provided by [28] who reported the finding of no significant association between the above two variables. Based on these evidences, the linkage is anticipated as follows:

H3: There is no significant relationship between the number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles

4.2 The relationship of transformational leadership, gender issues and the strategic leadership characteristics of female leaders among IHL in Malaysia.

As an extension to what [15] proposed in their studies, the researcher contributes the result of this study in a new dimension of leadership and gender perspectives. Thus, the researcher considers these five focus types important since it is likely that goals for transformational leadership influence an organization leadership investment. This is consistent with the result of [17, 28] which agreed that these investments had contributed to the IHL performance. The level of perceived benefits or impact of transformational leadership is directly related to University goals for leadership issues and challenges.

H_4: There is a positive, linear, and significant relationship of transformational academic leadership and the factors: (a) gender issues, and (b) strategic leadership characteristic.

5. Research Methodology

The *Leadership Practices Inventory-Individual Contributor Survey* (LPI) was used and this instrument consists of 30 statements concerning leadership styles. Participants respond on a Likert scale ranging from 1-10 indicating their frequency of engaging in these styles. Four additional non-identifying demographic questions have been added to the survey to determine their relationship to leadership styles. In order to test the research model, the researcher conducted a cross-sectional survey among academic leaders of the public and private institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. A self-administered questionnaire was designed and delivered to a number of 400 academic leaders; consisted of all IHL' as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute. From this, 146 responded to the survey, representing a 37% response rate. However, 11 responses were unusable (5 dues to incomplete answers and 6 was left return

with blank answers). Hence, a total of 135 responses were received and the effective response rate is 33%. These response rates are comparable to similar previous studies.

The instrument was categorized into three sections and the alpha coefficient was calculated for the three sections and for the questionnaire in its entirety. The level of significance for items was established at .05. The Alpha score obtained for all the three sections were above .90 that was well above the .70 level and this was generally acceptable for field research [11]. Additionally, according to [32] the value of alpha level of more than 0.6 shows the research instrument is reliable for the purpose of the study. The data, therefore, suggest that the questionnaire is a reliable instrument to consistently measure the intended variables of interest. All the questions items were measured on the 10 point Likert scale from (1) "*almost never*" to (10) "*almost always."* Six statements, distanced from each other on the survey, are related to each of the five leadership styles [15].

6. Results
6.1 The relationship between transformational leadership styles of male and female deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute of Malaysian IHL

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between gender and leadership styles. The test of correlation assumption found expected patterns for non-violation of the assumptions and this result supports the use of Pearson correlation coefficient as an appropriate statistical analysis for this paper. The following Table 2 postulates the results of this analysis.

Table 2 indicated there was no significant association between gender and leadership styles. Hence, the result of the hypothesis 1 supports that there is no significant relationship between gender and leadership styles. The result of this paper is consistent with the earlier studies involving the use of [15] instrument. As indicated in the study of [14] and [22], the researcher extends this study in the leadership strategy and higher educational studies. This reveals that although considerable progress has been made over the past two decades in the advancement of women in academic leadership, however in the Malaysian perspectives, the findings indicated that there appears to be no significant relationship between gender and the leadership styles that they used.

6.2 The relationship between the number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and transformational leadership styles.

Table 2 indicated there was no significant and positive association between number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and leadership styles. This is in line with the study of [14, 17, 18, and 28]. These studies found similarly that there was no relationship existed between number of years as deans and leadership styles. Consequently, the result of the hypothesis 2 support that there is no significant relationship between number of years as deans and transformational leadership styles. Based on this result, H2 was supported.

6.3 The relationship between the number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles

Table 2 indicated there was no significant association between number of years working in other administrative positions and leadership styles. Consequently, the result of the hypothesis 3 supports that there is no significant relationship between number of years working in other administrative positions and transformational leadership styles. Based on this result, H3 was supported.

In summary, all the hypotheses were strongly supported and the proposed framework of the present study was able to demonstrate strong explanatory power. This in turn in line with research assessing the effect of gender on transformational leadership styles which has produced mixed results [16, 17]. As claimed by [16], the finding of this paper further supports that there is no relationship exist between gender and transformational leadership styles. Furthermore, with respect to the numbers of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and numbers of years working in other administrative positions; both appear to have no significant relationship with leadership styles.

This paper provides evidence for the insignificant relationship between the leadership styles of academic leaders as suggested in the literature. This is in line again with the relatively recent inclusion of women in positions of leadership in the field of education, among the IHL in Malaysian settings.

6.4 What are the perceived strategic leadership characteristics (SLC) as identified by academia of IHL in Malaysia?

The findings in Table 3 indicated that the mean ratings for SLC in descending order of high to low were leaders with ability to enhance the effectiveness of its overall performance (M = 7.22, SD = 2.307), leaders with ability to help the University to change industry and market place (M = 7.11, SD = 2.405) and leaders with ability to extend its market and geographic reach (M = 6.91, SD = 2.520) and leaders with ability to reduce costs and increase quality and speed (M = 6.77, SD = 2.238). For the overall sample, the variable means ranged between 6.77 to 7.22.

To explore research objective 3 in determining variance that can be explained by gender issues and SLC in predicting transformational leadership style, multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data. A number of assumptions were checked before running the output to ensure no violation of the assumption of multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

6.5 How much variance in transformational academic leadership among IHL in Malaysia can be explained by scores on gender issues and strategic leadership characteristics?

H_1: There is a positive, linear, and significant relationship of transformational academic leadership and the factors: (a) gender issues, and (b) strategic leadership characteristic.

In order to determine how much variance in developing transformational academic leadership among IHL in Malaysia can be explained by scores on gender issues and characteristic as perceived by academic leaders; a-two predictors multiple linear regression model was proposed. The two predictor variables are gender issues faced by academic leaders (X_1) and strategic leadership characteristics of academic leaders (X_2). The equation of the proposed multiple linear regression model is as follows:

$Y (TL) = b_0 + b_1(X_1) + b_2(X_2) + e$
Where:
Y = Transformational leaderships
b_0 = Constant (Intercept)
b_{1-2} = Estimates (Regression coefficients)
X_1 = gender issues
X_2 = strategic leadership characteristics

e = Error

Based on this method, only one predictor variable was found to be of significance in explaining TL. The predictor variable is strategic leadership characteristics (X_2). The gender issues faced by academic leaders (X_1) was excluded because it did not contribute in significance (t = -1.302, p = 0.195) and to the variation of the dependent variable (TL). As depicted in the coefficients table (see Table 4), the estimates of the model coefficients for b_2 is 0.564. Therefore, the estimated model is as below:

$Y (TL) = 2.110 + .564(X_2) + e$
Where:
 Y = transformational leaderships (TL)
b_0 = Constant (Intercept)
b_{1-2} = Estimates (Regression coefficients)
X_2 = strategic leadership characteristics and
e   = Error.

The R-squared of 0.281 implies that the strategic leadership characteristic of academic leader predictor variable explain about 28.1% of the variance/variation in the TL. This is quite a good result. The ANOVA table revealed that the F-statistics (17.076) and the corresponding p-value is highly significant (0.0001) or lower than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that the slope of the estimated linear regression model line is not equal to zero confirming that there is linear relationship between TL and this predictor variable.

As depicted in Table 4, the largest beta coefficient is 0.571 which is for leadership strategic leadership characteristics. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable (TL), when the variance explained by all other predictor variables in the model is controlled for.

7. Contribution to the theory and body of knowledge
This paper appears to be new within the context of Malaysian higher education perspective emphasizing transformational leadership in the gender issues and the strategic leadership perspectives. Empirical findings from this paper combines aspects of disparate research and integrates unique perspective and ideas from scholars in the field of gender issues [16, 17, 28 and 29] and strategic leadership perspectives field [15].

Next, the theoretical advances in resource-based views domain are mainly evidence from the western perspectives. Hence, utilization and integration of transformational leadership in developing a cultural boundary of gender issues from the viewpoint of higher education field and strategic leadership management as well as its operationalization received little attention among researchers in the Malaysian view. Hence, the results of this finding empirically contribute to a new area in the Malaysian context since lack of previous research has been undertaken.

Comparatively, fewer empirical studies have been carried out to either validate the assumptions of resource-based view in the context of IHL in Malaysia or to provide clear practical guidelines for enhancing IHL' leadership-based strategies and styles.

8. Practical Implications
8.1 Managerial Contribution
While this paper reveals some evidence that the academic leaders such as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute among IHL in Malaysia practice transformational leadership behaviors, the results are based on the perceptions of the respondent themselves. The longer a respondent spent as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute the more he or she was likely to practice transformational leadership.

8.2 Contribution to Organizations
Regardless of private or public institutions of higher learning or even organizations, perhaps, organizations can expand the function of the strategic leadership issues including functions that require individual to be ready with these five issues; challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. An important implication of this paper is the utilization and integration of a specific type of academic leadership character in crafting corporate university strategy from the viewpoint of strategy or the strategic management of academic leadership and its operationalization, has yet to be looked into by research in the Malaysian view. Hence, the results of this finding empirically contribute to a new area in the Malaysian context since no previous research was undertaken.

8.3 Curriculum Development and Educators
The impact of transformational leadership in the perspective of issues in gender imbalance requires educators to design programs that promote lifelong learning. The increasing attention put by many in emphasizing the need to have a balance leadership system in resolving gender issues remain unanswered. Furthermore, leadership styles in the organizational setting demand the changes in the mindset of the educator to continually cope-up with the recent trends of the management of change. There appears to be an increased participation of female academic leaders holding administrative roles, however, it will depend on the willingness of top management of the IHL to hire and promote potential female academic leaders to hold the dean position. In addition, co-operation between education and industry must be intensified so that academic leadership styles knowledge can create value which can contribute to a relevant curriculum development. The presence of the industry in the development of educational programs cannot be discounted nor can the presence of the academician in the business organizations be considered trivial.

9. Conclusion
Focusing on the contributions among academic leaders, the researcher quantitatively determined the existence of transformational leadership styles among female and male academic leaders in IHL in Malaysia. In this paper, the findings revealed that there was no significant relationship between male or female academic leaders and transformational leadership styles.

The results of this paper, further, indicated that among IHL in Malaysia, numbers of years working as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute and the respondents' services in other administrative roles are not associated with transformational leadership. The SLC choice can serve and guide academic and assist them in learning and building the IHL strategic resources into not just sustainable competitive advantage, but also facilitating the increase effort to develop TL. The SLC choice as studied in this paper can be applied in a turbulent environment, is not constrained to university level of analysis, and can also provide guidance for action for firms competing in several related industries. Those streams involved the resource-based view (RBV), strategic management, gender issues and leadership in higher

educational studies. The issues on the SLC choice appear to have a sound theoretical base, which has not necessarily been the case for other generic strategy typologies.

This paper, nevertheless, has a number of limitations. Firstly, the nature of sampling unit cannot be generalized to a larger population as only public institutional of higher learning was examined. Administering the survey instrument to all deans, head of programmes as well as top level academic administrator such as Vice Chancelors from private IHL across the nation may demonstrate leadership practice trends a smaller sample may not reveal. Lastly, the use of cross-sectional data in a single academic views also limits some of the conclusions obtained. In view of the limitations, future study should use different sampling units which are more generalizable and conduct nationwide. The proposed model can also be extended to other form of industries.

Figure and Tables
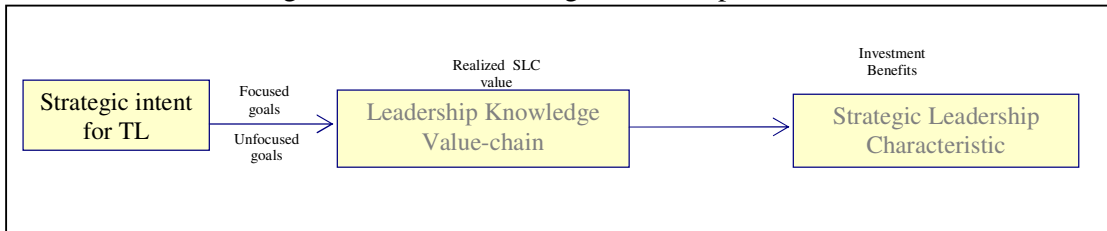
Figure 1: Model of Strategic leadership characteristics

Table 1: Linking strategy with corporate goals for Leadership Investment

Corporate strategy	Goals for Leadership Investment
Operational effectiveness	**Internal**
Efficiency	The University appears to have/appoint a leader who has the strategic leadership characteristics and ability to reduce its costs and increase quality and speed
Effectiveness	The University appears to have/appoint a leader who has the strategic leadership characteristics and ability to enhance the effectiveness of its overall performance
Strategic positioning	**External**
Reach	The University appears to have/appoint a leader who has the strategic leadership characteristics and ability to extend its market and geographic reach
Structure	The University appears to have/appoint a leader who has the strategic leadership characteristics and ability to help the University to change industry and market styles

Source: Modified by the researcher from [19, 20, 26, 21]

Table 2: Correlations of Gender, Leader Practices and selected demographic profiles

		Gender	Number of years working in other administrative positions	Number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers /institute	Leadership styles
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.198[*]	.350[**]	.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021	.000	.961
	N	135	135	135	135
Number of years working in other administrative positions	Pearson Correlation	.198[*]	1.000	.264[**]	-.138
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021		.002	.110
	N	135	135.000	135	135
Number of years as deans, deputy deans, and heads of programs/centers/institute	Pearson Correlation	.350[**]	.264[**]	1.000	.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002		.829
	N	135	135	135.000	135
Leadership styles	Pearson Correlation	.004	-.138	.019	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.961	.110	.829	
	N	135	135	135	135

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: The perceived leadership strategic leadership characteristics

	Strategic leadership characteristics Dimensions	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
1.	Leaders with ability to enhance the effectiveness of its overall performance	1	10	7.222	2.3072
2.	Leaders with ability to help the University to change industry and market place	1	10	7.111	2.4054
3.	Leaders with ability to extend its market & geographic reach	1	10	6.911	2.5200
4.	Leaders with ability to reduce costs & increase quality & speed	1	10	6.778	2.2383

Table 4: Estimates of coefficients for the model

TL dimension	B (Unstandardized Coefficients)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized Coefficients)	t	*p-value*
Constant	1.166	0.322		3.625	0.0001
Strategic leadership characteristics of academic leaders (X_2)	.564	.089	.571	6.332	0.001

Notes: R = 0.530; R^2 = 0.281; Adj. R^2 = 0.265

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