

# The Influence of Transformational Leadership towards Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour

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**Abstract:**-The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry. The study also identified the influence of transformational leadership towards employee feedback seeking in construction industry. The study targeted on 50 employees who were involved in the Sarawak Highway project Kuching, and stratified random sampling technique was used for the sampling. Data was collected using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004) and Cavanaugh Feedback Seeking Questionnaires (Cavanaugh, 2016). Pilot study was conducted, in which Alpha Cronbach coefficient of 0.949 was obtained that deemed the survey approach reliable. Pearson's correlation and linear regression analysis techniques were used to analyse the data. The results showed that there were strong positive and significant correlation between both inspirational motivation ( $r = .405, p < .01$ ) and intellectual stimulation ( $r = .306, p < .05$ ) with employee feedback seeking behaviour. The study further depicted that employee feedback seeking behaviour was significant influenced by intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation. The study has shown that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour. The study further indicated that transformational leadership significantly influences employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry, thus encouraging frequency of feedback seeking among employees.

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, employee feedback seeking behaviour.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In general, construction industry requires demanding manpower, skills, commitment and effective manpower control. According to Ismail and Nur (2016), construction industry is categorised as one of the world's largest industries, which hold approximately 18 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in year 2016. In Malaysia, construction is a main development industry with fundamental economic, social and environmental responsibility. Construction industry drives the development of Malaysian economy and throughout many years, it improves the living quality of Malaysians. The

construction industry in Malaysia has seen a steady growth throughout years. The industry registered an approximate growth of 5.8 percent in 2009, 8.7 percent in 2010 and 11.2 percent in 2013 (Hadijah, Megat, Megat, & Noraini, 2015). The percentages of growth are translated into 26,300 projects awarded, which are valued at RM 380 billion. Malaysia's construction industry has established roughly 64,000 contractors and employs 800,000 workforces that include the professionals, supervisors, skilled and unskilled workers (Abu, Amin, Mohammad, & Nordin, 2015). These immense amount of workforce requires effective leadership in the industry to ensure effective performance of projects implemented. Leadership plays an indispensable role which determines successful project feedback delivery in construction industry. Leadership poses significant impacts on the corporate culture, project culture, strategy and team commitment in construction firms (Wan, 2017). The construction leaders' competence is a critical factor in project planning and scheduling, while the project team members collaborate and execute the tasks delegated to them. The success or failure of construction project is highly dependent on the project leaders and employees' performance.

## Problem Statement

Construction projects are expected to be completed within given contract period, budget and in compliance to technical specification (Bakar, Ramli, Roufechaei, & Tabassi, 2012). The difficulties and uncertainties of construction projects are creating problems for project leaders throughout the project life-cycle. The main challenge faced by most project leader is to provide influential leadership and bring people together to function as an effective team. In Malaysia, poor leadership capability in construction industry are causing issues such as poor communication, low productivity among employees, lack of strategic management and team supports, as well as wrongful abuse of power by project leaders (Halim, Libunao, & Muda, 2017).

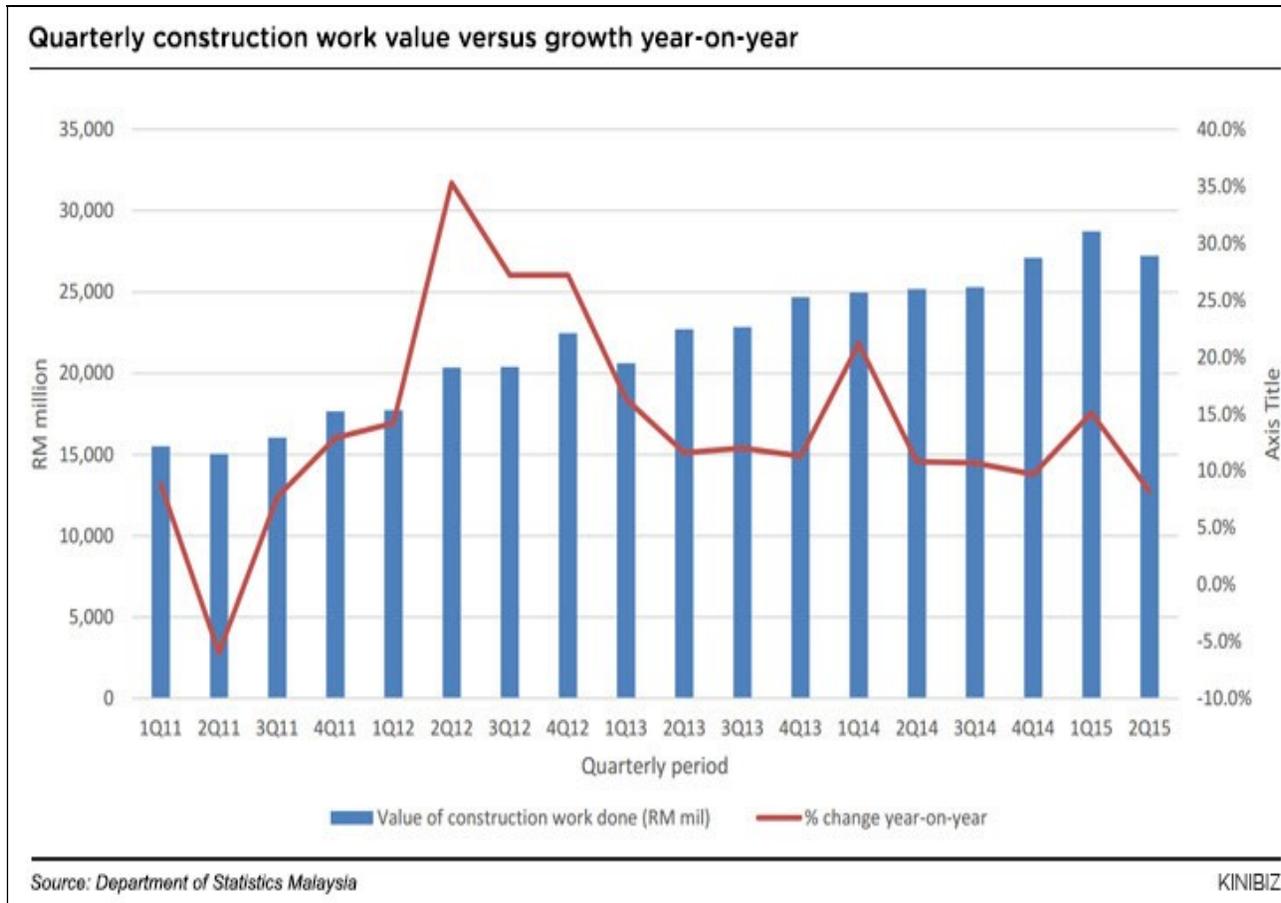


Figure 1.1. Construction work value versus growth in Malaysia.

Figure 1.1 shows another statistic by Department of Statistics Malaysia has shown that the value of construction work done versus percentage change are fluctuating from year to year (Malaysian Construction Output, 2018). This signifies that the Malaysian construction industry is in an unstable condition. The study conducted also shown that majority of 72 percent of construction leaders agreed that poor leadership is the main cause for poor quality project (Ismail & Nur, 2016). In fact, most construction firms in Malaysia focus mainly on profit generation and gaining reputation for the organisation, instead of stressing on significance of practicing quality leadership. These issues occur occasionally due to insufficient development of quality leadership and lack of influential leaders in the industry. In addition, some leaders have the tendency to blame employees without realizing the real mistakes are those of the leaders. This has resulted in some team members tend to possess different and negative feelings towards the leaders, which resulted in increased pressure of project leaders in responding to the subordinates' actions. This happens normally when the leaders and employees are having different judgment on priorities, which causes a lack of language and trust between leaders and employees. These challenging atmosphere might cause the project leaders to

practice inappropriate leadership and thus, creating resistance among team members towards the leadership styles and characteristics (Abdul Ghani & Ling, 2015).

#### *Theoretical Framework*

Transformational leaders in construction industries tend to transform subordinates' thinking and perception in such a way that they adopt the vision of the company as if it was their own (Ran, 2017). The transformation leadership style motivates the subordinates to subdue their own interests and instead, strive for collective goals, which is to achieve effectiveness in Malaysia construction industry. In this case, the four dimensions of transformation leadership function as the independent variables. The four dimensions are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. On the other hand, employee's feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry functions as the dependent variable that is influenced by the four dimensions. Figure 1.2 depicts the independent variables (four dimensions) and dependent variable (Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour in the Construction Industry) for the study.

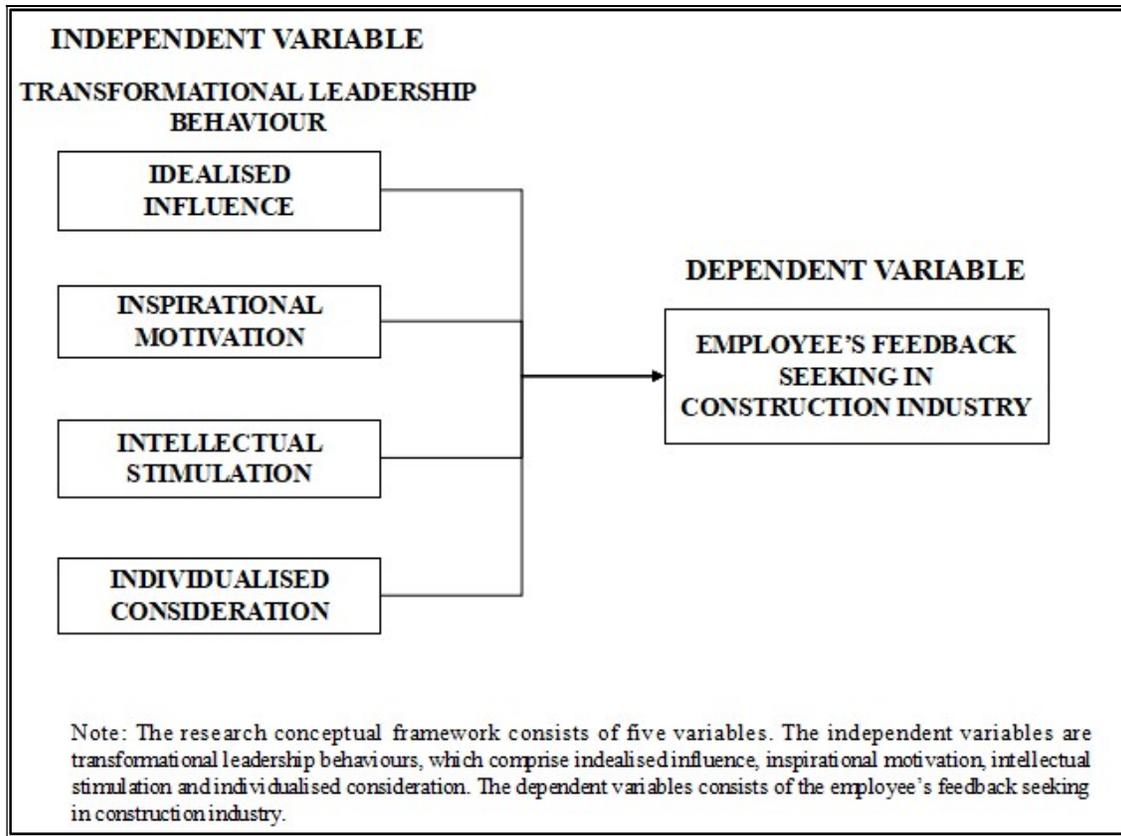


Figure 1.2. Research conceptual framework.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With increased emphasis on the construction management systems, most construction firms are now seeking professionals with high quality leadership attributes, apart from technical skills (Wan, 2017). Leaders who exhibit transformational leadership behaviours and qualities tend to show genuine concern, transparent and act with integrity. They also resolve complicated problems and support development culture in the organisation. This type of leadership behaviour and quality is much needed by the construction industry for effective management and employee performance. This includes the employee's adoption of the organisation's strategic and marketing initiatives. Their research has shown significant and positive relationship between project leadership, team performance and construction project performance. The efficacy of transformational leadership is ultimately gagged by level of impact it has on the employees (Buda & Ling, 2017). Transformational leaders provide supports to employees through their charisma (idealised influence), create enthusiastic vision to employees (inspirational motivation), pay attention and respond to employees' individual needs (individual consideration), and encourage creative thinking and innovation (intellectual stimulation). Transformational leadership involves human interaction that are positively related to characteristics, which are essential in employee performance.

### *Transformational Leadership and Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour*

A leader's behaviours and attitudes influence how the followers perceive information received and value of seeking feedback. Transformational leaders with idealised influence, inspirational motivations, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration tend to view feedback as the medium for development and learning, instead of only focusing on self-presentation costs. Past researches have shown that transformational leadership will positively influence employee's feedback seeking as the experiences of transformational leadership renders feedback seeking more valuable and meaningful in construction industry (Huang et al., 2016). Transformational leadership behaviour enables project team members to treat the seeking of feedback as routine tasks that should be undertaken continuously (Huang et al., 2016). The employees' attitude towards the leader, which is the feedback source, is vital in whether or not the employees respond positively to the transformational leader by seeking feedback. Followers' trust in their leader is one of the most important attitudes towards the leader, and can serve as an underlying mechanism to ensure effective transformational leadership (Jin et al., 2017).

Transformational leadership behaviour in project leaders helps to reduce uncertainties and development of feelings of acceptance among employees (Wan, 2017). This increases the

employees' commitment and motivation of feedback seeking, which is an essential prerequisite for a successful construction project. With intellectual stimulation, employees can feel valuable as they are encouraged to contribute to the organization. It enhances employees' ability to design, realize and analyze problems and improve the quality of solutions, which positively reflects on the company performance. Also, the leaders' inspiration and encouragement of the employees, as well as reaction to employees' problems pose positive impacts on post-acquisition performance (Qian & Xu, 2016). Positive and encouraging messages are transferred to the employees, which positively affect their emotional connection with the company and strengthen their faith in their ability to perform tasks.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### *Population and Sampling*

Simple random sampling is used as the preferred form of probability sampling in this study. This type of simple random sampling method enables each respondent in the population equal opportunity of being included in the sampling (Huang et al., 2016). This sampling method minimises the chances of human bias as the process is independent of the respondents' capability and interests. The samples are chosen in such a way that each individual in the population has a known likelihood of being selected. This sample yield research information that can then be generalised to a large population which enables inferential statistics to be applied to the data. Furthermore, target population is defined as the number of potential respondents that could be included in the study. The outcomes of the sample population can be used for the generalisation of results. In this study, the target population are respondents from Pan Borneo Highway project in Kuching. The population are selected based on their working experiences, level of education and maturity, which are significant to the research findings. The respondents are chosen from Diploma to Postgraduate Level; Twenty years old and above; minimum one year working experience and above; and from different working background and industries. The target population consists of 50 respondents.

#### *Research Instrumentations*

Survey questionnaires will be adopted for this study to collect data. This is because the instrument is beneficial in yielding responses in standard format from large amount of respondents. The questionnaire is the combination of open-ended and close-ended questions, and contain the measurement of transformational leadership behaviour and employee feedback seeking strategies. There are few measurements adopted in the survey questionnaire, which are (a) Respondent Profile; (b) Transformational Leadership; and (c) Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour. For Part A, data collection from respondents of different qualification, education and maturity level is carried out. For Part B, the measurement focuses on transformational leader, and is adopted and assessed using Avolio and Bass's Multifactor

Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X (2004) that has been widely used by past researchers to measure leadership behaviours (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

#### *Pilot Study*

In this study, a common reliability coefficient is used to validate the survey questionnaires, which is the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Cronbach Alpha estimates the internal consistency based on average inter-item correlation. The coefficient ranges between 0 to 1. The closer the value is to 1, the greater the internal consistency of variables in the scale. The reliability of the construct is acceptable based on the rule of George and Mallery (2003), in which Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.9 is considered as 'Excellent'; value of 0.8 is deemed as 'Very Good'; value of 0.7 is rated as 'Good'. The reliability value of 0.7 and above is considered as acceptable. Copies of questionnaires and research questions were distributed to some construction project personnel in Kuching. These personnel went through the questionnaires carefully to ascertain the appropriateness and adequacy of the instrument. Having validated the questionnaires, pilot test was carried out on the instrumentation using 30 construction project personnel from the Sarawak Highway project in Kuching. From the pilot test, the researcher is able to understand some ambiguities of the items in the questionnaire, and modified the ambiguities to achieve the validity required. For this study, the Alpha Cronbach coefficient obtained from the data collected is 0.949, which is considered as 'Excellent'. Thus, the survey questionnaire of the study is considered as reliable and valid.

#### *Research Design*

The study applies both descriptive and quantitative approaches. Descriptive research describes the traits of the subjects that are to be studied (Levy & Williams, 2004). Descriptions will be used for frequencies, mean and standard deviation. For quantitative research, it is known as the position which highlights the significance of imitating the natural sciences related to what is regarded as the common knowledge in a discipline (Whitaker, 2007). This includes data collection that can be quantified with visual perception to describe the relationship between theory and the research as inferential. Descriptive research design is first adopted, in which two variables will be measured, which are transformational leadership and employee's feedback seeking. The characteristics of the data collected will be described. Next, quantitative approach will be adopted to analyse the data collected. This quantitative approach is a formal and systematic process that explains and examines relationship and cause among variables. Quantitative approach is later adopted as the research which involves large amount of data to be collected in a relatively short period, and this method is cost effective and survey questionnaire can be created quickly, as well as administered handily (Levy & Williams, 2004).

#### IV. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

##### *Descriptive Findings*

Descriptive statistics are used to define the data collected for the study by analysing the distribution of scores obtained for all the variables to determine the relationship between the variable scores (Ling, 2017). The purpose of descriptive statistic is to obtain a clear view of the data collected during the study. The statistics were obtained for the samples and the dependent (criterion) and independent (predictor) variables. To determine the significant relationship and influence between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour, the four dimensions of transformational leadership were analysed. The findings revealed that transformational leadership has positive influence and significant relationship with employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry. The Pearson Correlation of inspirational motivation is at .306 at a significant level of (0.05), while correlation of intellectual stimulation is at 0.405 at a significant level of (0.01).

##### *Inferential Findings*

Inferential statistics enable the findings from the study to be generalised (Qian & Xu, 2016). Pearson Correlation is used to determine if there is any significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour as shown in Table 4.1. Besides that, regression analysis is used to identify if there is any significant influence of transformational leadership towards the employee feedback seeking behaviour, as shown in Table 4.2.

##### *Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour*

It is vital to assess possible relations between variables. In a correlation relationship, the researcher has no control over the values of variables controlled by the entities being studied. The focus is to merely observe the covariance of the variables in natural environments. The relationship may be positive or negative, depending on the data, and it may be unrelated or uncorrelated (Ndirangu, 2018). The correlation coefficient ' $r$ ' ranges in value from -1.00 to +1.00.  $r = +1.00$  signifies a perfect positive linear correlation relationship.  $r = -1.00$  signifies a perfect negative linear correlation relationship (Ling, 2017).  $r = 0$  means that there is no relationship exists between the variables. In this study, of significance is the amount of covariance between the independent and dependent variables. Covariance is the degree in which variation in one variable can be attributed to variance in another. This signifies that the greater the degree of similarity, the greater will be the degree to which values on the two variables covary (Lam, Huang & Snape, 2007). Meanwhile, the square of the correlation coefficient, ' $R^2$ ' indicates the proportion of variance in one of the variables accounted for. Table 4.1 shows the correlation between transformational leadership and

employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry.

Table 4.1

*The correlation between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry*

	Transformational Leadership			
	Idealised Influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualised Consideration
Feedback Seeking Behaviour	.013	.306*	.405**	-.014

Note: \* Significant at the 0.05 level.  
\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level.

Pearson correlation of 0.05 means the correlation is significant on a 95% level of significance, while correlation of 0.01 means the correlation is significant on a 99% level of significance (Ling, 2017). The results in Table 4.6 showed a strong correlation and positive influence between inspirational motivation and employee feedback seeking ( $r = .306, p < 0.05$ ), and between intellectual stimulation and employee feedback seeking ( $r = .405, p < 0.01$ ). However, the findings also showed that idealised influence and individualised consideration do not have significant and positive relationship with employee feedback seeking behaviour. The results have shown a weak correlation and negative influence between individualised consideration ( $r = -.014, p < 0.05$ ), and between idealised influence and employee feedback seeking ( $r = .013, p < 0.05$ ). The findings demonstrated the need of construction leaders to motivate employees consistently in seeking feedback to improve performance. From here, it can be described that transformational leadership dimensions such as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation is consistent with certain findings of some researches regarding transformational leadership has positive relationship with employee feedback seeking. The project leaders inspired the employees to go beyond their self-interest and provide them with employee empowerment that strongly affect the employees' performance (Wan, 2017). On the contrary, it was further observed that the Pearson correlation shows weak correlation between two dimensions of transformational leadership, which is idealised influence ( $p = .013$ ) and individualised consideration ( $p = -.014$ ). This suggests that there is low or insignificant relationship between these two dimensions and employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry.

##### *Influence of Transformational Leadership towards Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour*

In order to determine whether there is a significance difference of the transformational leadership dimensions' impacts on employee feedback seeking, they were investigated separately to determine whether there are any outstanding effects. Results of the analysis indicate the influence of transformational leadership dimension intellectual stimulation has the effect significantly towards employee feedback seeking behaviour ( $\beta = .306, p < .05$ ). The

finding revealed that intellectual stimulation has significant and positive influence on employee feedback seeking behaviour. The coefficient value is increased during the influence of integration of both intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation on employee feedback seeking behaviour ( $\beta = .369, p < .05$ ). This signifies that during the integration of both intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, inspirational motivation has more significant and positive influence on employee feedback seeking behaviour. Table 4.7 shows coefficient value for the impact of transformational leadership on employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry. The findings illustrate that employees are satisfied with their work as their leaders encouraged them to consider problems from new and unique perspectives. According to Linge et al. (2017), leaders with intellectual stimulation style encourages their followers to challenge the status quo and look at old problems in new ways. The results indicated significant influence of transformational leadership on employee feedback seeking behaviour (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

*Coefficient value for the impact of transformational leadership on employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry*

		Dependent Variable: Employee Feedback Seeking Behaviour	
Mode	Independent Variable: Transformational Leadership	Standardized Coefficient, Beta	
1	Intellectual Stimulation	.306*	
2	Intellectual Stimulation		.053
	Inspirational Motivation		.369*
	R	.306	.407
	R <sup>2</sup>	.094	.166
	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.075	.130
	F Value	4.96*	4.66*
	Durbin Watson	1.638	

\*Significant at level 0.05.

The results revealed that intellectual stimulation significantly influence employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry. From the findings, it can be observed that the transformational leadership dimension practiced by the project leaders as selected by the employees is intellectual stimulation. The employees agreed that their leaders demonstrate intellectual stimulation style. These leaders are also emotionally intelligent communicators, whereby they recognize their employees' state of mind and take them into account when taking action. According to the study findings, the project leaders stimulate the employees to pursue creativity and innovation in their work. Linge et al. (2017) stated that intellectual stimulation is related to challenging

followers to be creative, think analytically and proactively in making solutions. This way, the employees tend to stay motivated, more positive on their work and examine things critically.

However, as seen in Table 4.2, the influence of transformational leadership on employee feedback seeking behaviour changes to more significant after inspirational motivation is included in the regression equation. The coefficient for intellectual stimulation has significantly weakened. The significant F-value (4.66\*) provides evidence for the fact that the model fits the data and the model is valid. Thus, it can be implied that inspirational motivation plays more significant role than intellectual stimulation in affecting employees' feedback seeking behaviour. Employees seek feedback that helps them to improve their performance and make progress at work. This supports Jomon and Srikanth (2013) study that feedback is effective when it is continuously sought after and provided. Particularly in complicated project like Sarawak Highway Project, it is highly important for employees to always progress in their work, stay motivated and enhance their performance. Leaders with inspirational motivation characteristic always find ways to stimulate employees' motivation and drive them to continuously improve themselves. Motivated employees are essential to the company in the sense that motivation drives the employees to be more productive. Thus, feedback seeking has to become a routine and should be perceived as essential.

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the study has achieved the stated objectives of describing the relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking in the construction industry. It is also found out that there is significant and positive influence of transformational leadership towards employee feedback seeking behaviour in construction industry. The literature review also provided perception on the impacts of the dimensions of transformational leadership, particularly intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation on the frequency of employee's feedback seeking. The study further found out that idealised influence and individualised consideration have no significant influence and positive relationship towards employee feedback seeking behaviour. The combination of dependent and independent variables has provided insights into the possible influences and relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour.

From the data collected, it is shown that there is a correlation between independent variables and dependent variables. The results of inter-correlation have shown significance at  $p < .01$ . This suggests that a change in independent variables might result in significant and positive changes in the dependent variable (employee feedback seeking behaviour). This could be interpreted to signify that if efforts are made by project leaders to demonstrate and improve their motivational and intellectual styles of leadership, positive results could be

expected from employees in terms of the frequency of feedback seeking. Furthermore, this study sought to determine the influence of transformational leadership on employee feedback seeking behaviour, with a focus on the construction industry. The study was guided by specific objectives that determine: the relationship and influence of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration on employee feedback seeking behaviour. Idealised influence and individualised consideration are found to have no significant influence on employee feedback seeking behaviour, whereas inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation are found to have significant impacts on employee feedback seeking behaviour. The study concludes that leaders constantly stay creative in problem solving and encouraged employees to openly approach issues without fearing negative consequences (Lam et al., 2007). Also, Employees are provided with inspiring mission and vision, which involved them in attaining positive vision of company's future direction. The leaders are able to inspire confidence, motivation and a sense of purpose in the employees.

## VI. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

### *Theoretical Implication*

To begin with, the findings have important theoretical contributions for the upcoming research in identifying transformational leadership's role in promoting proactive feedback seeking. Addressing this issue, and building on the employees' well-accepted model of feedback seeking, it is found that transformational leaders could promote employee feedback seeking behavior through influencing the perceived value of feedback seeking. The findings suggest that employees' perceptions on the leadership style play a role in affecting feedback seeking frequency. The first implication for theory that comes up from this study is that only two transformational leadership dimensions, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation are significantly correlated to employee feedback seeking behaviour. Other researchers will need to be aware of this discovery and take into consideration the implications. Another implication of theory is the usage of existing questionnaire that may well produce different results, which could be more negative or positive in certain environment. If another survey questionnaire is used to measure this survey population, the comparison of results may be skewed by the nature and choice of words within that questionnaire (Anseel & Lievens, 2006).

Previous studies have also analysed the leaders' expressed humility and employees' feedback seeking (Qian & Xu, 2016), authentic leadership and employee feedback seeking (Chen, Lin, & Qian, 2010) as well as transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking in communication industry (Huang et al., 2016). However, these studies are lack of the examination of transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry. Therefore, present study highlights on the relationship

between transformational leadership and its influence on the employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry. The present study also provides insights into how the process and frequency of feedback seeking behaviour is manifested when the project leaders adopt the transformational leadership style. In regards to the feedback seeking behaviour, the instructive power of feedback seeking behaviour might be enhanced to an independent variable (Eichhorn, 2009). There are multiple dimensions of feedback seeking behaviour that may possess theoretical implications for the project leaders as well. By focusing on these dimensions, the project leaders can understand that it is not sufficient to only suggest employees to seek feedback, but the leaders should also need to understand how to seek and provide feedback more effectively (Fu & Zhuo, 2015). Also, by exploring how transformational leadership correlates to and impacts employee feedback seeking behaviour, future research can identify the specific transformational leadership styles and feedback seeking strategies that are most effective within the construction industry.

### *Practical Implication*

Organisations are normally characterised by ambiguity and uncertainty, especially in construction industry. An important way in which the employees cope with these conditions is to seek performance feedback. Feedback seeking can provide employees with role clarifying information and evaluations of adequacy of work behaviour, which can then improve their performance (Fu & Zhuo, 2015). Constructive feedback enables employees to obtain accurate and objective appraisals of their performance. Thus, gaining insight into the individual and contextual variables which influence feedback seeking behaviour is necessary in managing environment in which feedback seeking takes place (Jin et al., 2017). Current findings are particularly useful for the construction project leaders and employees in Malaysia. Regardless of locality and culture, constructive feedback is valuable resource for employees that can lead to improved performance (Fu & Zhuo, 2015). A project leader who understands and identify the concerns and needs of employees can encourage them to seek peer-based feedback, or approach them directly with performance feedback. According to past research by Turner & Pearce (2011), it is indicated that leadership styles are the key to successful performance of the construction project. Regardless of the project type and complexity, leadership styles of the leaders play an important part in employee feedback seeking behaviour and project success. It is important for project leaders to understand the significance of leadership style so that they can create an environment that encourages effective employee feedback seeking.

In this study, information on employees' perception of their project leaders, employees' attitudes towards their project leaders' abilities to engage in and demonstrate transformational leadership, as well as tendency of employees to seek feedback are studied. The outcomes of the study are of interest at the practical level for employees, project leaders

and construction firms in the Malaysian construction industry. The major outcomes of the study are that employees' perceptions of two transformational leadership dimensions (intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation) are on the high side of what could be considered as reasonable to demonstrate that transformational leadership is being practised. Given that the scale results are high, it signifies that transformational leadership is being practised and the employees are fully engaged. Lastly, a diverse range of leadership styles guarantee success due to the dynamics of construction industry (Wan, 2017). The current project leaders need to be prepared to listen to the followers' perceptions and change their leadership styles in order to improve. The outcomes of this study also implied that leaders have to be aware of the transformational leadership framework to meet the challenges faced in the construction industry, that require higher level of skills and knowledge to enable the leadership practices to be more effective and progressive. Transformational leadership has a direct, positive and significant influence on feedback seeking. The finding suggests that if employees perceive their leaders as influential models and motivators, they are more likely to seek feedback directly. Individual employees who think that their leaders who demonstrate high leadership quality tend to ask direct questions, while those who do not are less likely to seek feedback actively.

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the research has responded to some questions which might be left partially answered, and several areas of research are identified. It is suggested that future research should include larger sample of population and principals from variety of settings. The small size of current study impacts the generalizability and statistical validity of the conclusions (Wan, 2017). This allows for variety of perspectives and more inclusive picture of the relationship between two variables to be measured. The study can be replicated involving larger cross-section of project leaders and employees, which can provide in-depth information in greater details regarding transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour. The study should not only focus on the project leaders, but also at all levels of the company. The study can also be replicated within an entire Sarawak Highway project involving larger population. Majority of the project leaders in all packages of the project can be evaluated. Future studies can also include different industries to improve leadership practices and feedback seeking. A comparison of construction industry and other industries can help to gauge the need for professional and transformational leadership development (Brutus & Cabrera, 2004).

Further implications could also arise where the transformational leadership can enhance employees' feedback seeking behaviour. Other than the leaders' own personality and learning orientation, transformational leadership can be developed through training programmes. The companies can provide opportunities for managers to develop

transformational leadership in order to motivate employees to seek feedback. Accordingly, strategies that enhance the employees' motivation and efforts in seeking feedback should be incorporated into the transformational leadership training programmes (Chambel et al., 2011). This is required into leadership development initiatives through leadership interventions, which can provide deeper insight into leadership challenges and needs in the construction industry. Lastly, future research in this area should look at educating the employees on how to accurately rate the leadership styles of their leaders in order to reduce rater errors (Brutus & Cabrera, 2004). The employees should be provided with examples and types of leadership styles so they know how to properly use the 6-point Likert scale. This also includes trying to calibrate the employees on how they rate their leaders, in order to make all ratings comparable. According to Brutus & Cabrera (2004), this process might be extensive, but it greatly increases the reliability of the results. For instance, by giving descriptions of transformational leadership styles to employees and see how they would rate their leaders is one of the way. Another way is to have the leaders fill out the self-rated forms of the MLQ questionnaire and compare the results to those of the employees.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study are consistent with most of the previous studies, which show significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour in the construction industry (Qian & Xu, 2016). The research hypotheses have been testified and proven. The findings further provide evidence that transformational leadership positively and significantly influences the employee feedback seeking behaviour, except for idealised influence and individualised consideration. It can be indicated that employees in the Malaysian construction industry are practising stereotyped thinking patterns that decrease the influence of idealised influence and individualised consideration of the project leaders (Ani et al., 2007). Thus, it is necessary to develop the concept of transformational leadership further and undertake researches to test the construct in the construction industry. The study found out that different level of transformational leadership quality indeed influences the feedback seeking behaviour. The results of the study provide initial support for the theoretical and practical framework in the construction industry. The results also provide promising platform for future research on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee feedback seeking behaviour.

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