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Academic Leadership Qualities Towards Innovation Endeavours in an Organisation: A Comparative Study of Malaysia and Singapore Perceptions

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Introduction

The buzz word in the twenty-first century for continual sustainability and success of educational institutions is the ability of leaders to create an innovative climate within the organisation. Thus, the survival of today's educational institutions is different from a decade ago. Amidst the fast pace of technological advancement, in order to sustain a competitive environment, the authors perceived that leaders need to be innovative not only in their own institution but also in the global business world. Innovation has become increasingly popular among staff in organisations to boost organisational performance success and

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to survive in this era of technology. Leadership is a catalyst and source of innovation for organisations. Importantly, organisations need effective leadership to encourage innovation. Successful leaders are necessarily innovators (Poonam and Arvind, 2014); thus, a more powerful way to think of leadership and innovation is that innovation and leadership are interdependent. For an organisation to sustain continuous innovation, leaders play a pertinent role to generate creative ideas, provide support and motivate followers.

In this study, the authors postulated universities as organisations, a similar notion held by Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersonn (2000). The term 'endeavours' as used in this study means efforts to do or attain something (Collins English Dictionary, 2015).

Literature Review

Innovation is defined as "the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations" (OECD, 2005, p. 46). According to Zaltman et al. (1973, p. 10), innovation relates to "any idea, practice, or material artifact perceived to be new by the relevant unit of adoption". Similarly, innovation is the creation and implementation of new ideas or improvement in the products, services or processes that could benefit end users (Lousã, 2013; Şena and Erena 2012). According to a general broad definition by Baregheh et al. (2009, p. 1334), "Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby organisations transform ideas into improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves successfully in their marketplace."

Over the past years, research on factors to enhance organisational innovation has been rampant. According to a few researchers, leaders' characteristics significantly affect organisational innovation (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Makri & Scandura, 2010). Therefore, leadership plays an integral part towards organisational success because without effective leadership in the organisation, innovation will not succeed. Hence, leadership is one of the crucial factors to manage innovation. This stems from the fact that "innovation depends on ideas, and the primary source of ideas is talented individuals" (Leavy, 2006, p. 40). In this respect, effective leadership is vital for an organisation to bring constructive changes to the rapid change in the current environment (Cabeza-Erikson, Edwards, and Van Brabant, 2008; Moo and Yazdanifar 2015).

According to Lousã and Mónico (2018, p. 12), leadership should focus on "an innovation driven culture". That is why good leaders can inspire and

cultivate, encouraging an innovative as well as creative climate in an organisation (Denti and Hemlin, 2012; Ionescu, 2014). In line with this, good leadership is vital to support, sustain, encourage and inspire followers to embark on innovation processes in any organisation. It is imperative that an organisation establishes the right leader and leadership structure in place. Hence, leadership is a key factor for facilitating innovation (Chan et al., 2014; Ozorhon et al., 2016; Zheng et al., 2017) as well as significantly affecting organisational innovation (Makri & Scandura, 2010). Therefore, leaders can guide organisations towards becoming more innovative through their actions. Additionally, leadership is a central position to initiate, implement and support innovation by influencing firm strategic decisions, policies and procedures (Mokhber, Wan, & Vakilbashi 2018; Prasad & Junni, 2016).

Moreover, a few prominent leadership qualities associated with innovation also include strategic planning (Bouhali, Mekdad, Lebsir, and Ferkh 2015; Kazmi, Naaranoja, Kytola, and Kantola 2016), executing proper measurement (Human Capital Management, 2011), developing human capital, ensuring adequate allocation of resources, and providing best customer service to garner customer satisfaction, leading to growth of the organisation (Semuel et al., 2017).

Besides that, having the right type of leadership is equally important for organisational innovation (Mokhber et al., 2018, p. 109). Indeed, "not every kind of leadership model is effective in creating this opportunity" (Agbor, 2008, p. 41). Moreover, De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) emphasised that different types of leadership are needed to develop innovation at different organisational levels. Thus, different innovation phases need different leadership behaviours to be effective.

Methodology

This study employed mixed methods to explore the perceptions of university staff pertinent to the contribution of academic leadership qualities towards innovative endeavours. Two types of instruments were used to collect data for this study. The quantitative data pertaining to leadership qualities were based on the instrument adopted and adapted from the questionnaire "Are We Making Progress as Leaders?" by the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2011), whereas the qualitative instrument was designed by the researchers (Quah & Sim, 2016). Simple random sampling was employed to determine the samples representing the population of lecturers in the study, involving 60 lecturers from

Singapore (n = 30) and Malaysia (n = 30). The aim of this study was to examine the comparison between Malaysia and Singapore in terms of the contribution of leadership qualities towards innovation endeavours. In addition, it examined the significance of the relationship between academic leadership qualities and innovation endeavours in both countries. This study also aimed to examine the impacts of innovation endeavour(s) towards organisation, university students and lecturers in both countries. Distribution of frequencies, percentages, means, t-test, ANOVA and multiple regression were used to analyse and describe the results of the research findings.

Research Questions

1. Is there any significant relationship between leadership qualities and innovation endeavours in Singapore and Malaysia?
2. To what extent do leadership qualities contribute to innovation endeavours in Singapore and Malaysia?
3. What are the impacts of innovation endeavour(s) in both countries?

Findings

1. Is there any significant relationship between leadership qualities and innovation endeavours in Singapore and Malaysia?

Findings in Table 20.1 show that there are significant correlations for emphasising the importance of innovation as well as enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas with six of the academic leadership qualities in Singapore. These findings illustrate that Singapore university lecturers emphasising the importance of innovation as well as enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas are positively correlated with a few qualities, namely, leadership, strategic planning, measurement, workforce focus, operational focus and result (p<05). The highest score for Pearson correlation is operational focus with r = .813 and r = .655. The findings showed that there is a strong positive relationship with emphasising the importance of innovation with the operational focus domain (r = .813) and inspiration on innovative ideas with operational focus (r = .655).

Conversely, findings revealed that there is no significant correlation for enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas with any academic leadership

Table 20.1 Correlation between leadership qualities and innovation endeavours in Singapore and Malaysia

		Innovation endeavours			
		Emphasising the importance of innovation		Inspiration on innovative ideas	
Country	Leadership qualities	Sigma (2-tailed)	Pearson correlation	Sigma (2-tailed)	Pearson correlation
Singapore	Leadership	.001	.589	.000	.597
	Strategic planning	.001	.568	.000	.627
	Customer focus	.057	.352	.061	.347
	Measurement	.002	.547	.009	.471
	Workforce focus	.001	.559	.018	.428
	Operational focus	.000	.813	.000	.655
	Result	.000	.643	.000	.655
Malaysia	Leadership	.348	−.177*	.238	−.222**
	Strategic planning	.005	−.501**	.499	.128*
	Customer focus	.029	−.399	.919	−.019
	Measurement	.001	−.564**	.607	.098**
	Workforce focus	.001	−.585**	.254	.215
	Operational focus	.053	−.356**	.576	.106*
	Result	.053	−.356**	.417	.154**

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

qualities in Malaysia. Nonetheless, there is a significant correlation for emphasising the importance of innovation with six of the academic leadership qualities in Malaysia. This finding illustrates that Malaysia university lecturers' emphasis on the importance of innovation is negatively correlated with strategic planning, measurement, workforce focus, customer focus and result (p<05) except leadership. The highest score for Pearson correlation is workforce focus, with r = −.585. The finding showed that there is a strong negative relationship, emphasising the importance of innovation with workforce focus.

2. To what extent do leadership qualities contribute to innovation endeavours in Singapore and Malaysia?

Findings demonstrated that there are significant correlations for emphasising the importance of innovation as well as enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas with six of the academic leadership qualities in Singapore. Conversely,

there is only a significant correlation for emphasising the importance of innovation in Malaysia with academic leadership qualities but not enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas.

In terms of emphasising the importance of innovation, the model in Table 20.2 shows both Singapore, $F(9, 20) = 8.793$; $p < 0.05$, and Malaysia, $F(9, 20) = 3.813$; $p < 0.05$, reached statistical significance, emphasising the importance of innovation (dependent variable) and academic leadership qualities (predictors).

The R^2 value in Table 20.3 shows the amount of variance, emphasising the importance of innovation as explained by the model, which includes the variables of six academic leadership qualities (customer focus, workforce focus, measurement, operational focus, result, strategic planning and leadership). The six academic leadership qualities for Singapore's model contributed 79.8% of the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation. In contrast, Malaysia's independent variables only contributed 63.2% of the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation. The model summary in Table 20.3 on the total R^2 values for both countries illustrates a strong

Table 20.2 ANOVA model on emphasising the importance of innovation for Singapore and Malaysia

Country	Model		Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	Sigma
ANOVA[a]							
Singapore	1	Regression	25.677	9	2.853	8.793	**.000**[b]
		Residual	6.489	20	.324		
		Total	32.167	29			
Malaysia	1	Regression	10.614	9	1.179	3.813	**.006**[c]
		Residual	6.186	20	.309		
		Total	16.800	29			

[a]Dependent variable: emphasising the importance of innovation (Innovative_R41)
[b]Predictors: (Constant), customer focus mean, workforce focus mean, measurement mean, operational focus mean, result mean, strategic planning mean, leadership mean
Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Table 20.3 Model summary

Country	Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of the estimate
Model summary[b]					
Singapore	1	.893[a]	.798	.707	.570
Malaysia	1	.795[c]	.632	.466	.556

[a]Dependent variable: emphasising the importance of innovation (Innovative_R41)
[b]Predictors: (Constant), customer focus mean, workforce focus mean, measurement mean, operational focus mean, result mean, strategic planning mean, leadership mean

correlation of academic leadership qualities, emphasising the importance of innovation.

Findings in Table 20.4 illustrate that operational focus (beta = .536) makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining variance in emphasising the importance of innovation in Singapore. Conversely, measurement (beta = −3.82) makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation in Malaysia. Findings also demonstrated that operational focus in Singapore has a part correlation coefficient of .289, indicating that operational focus uniquely explains 8.3% of the variance in explaining the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation. Whereas measurement domain in Malaysia has a part correlation coefficient of −.175, indicating that the measurement domain uniquely explains 3.0% of the variance in explaining the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation.

In terms of enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas, the model in Table 20.5 shows only Singapore, $F(9, 20) = 6.577$; $p < 0.05$, reached statistical significance with enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas (dependent variable) and academic leadership qualities (predictors) and not Malaysia.

The R^2 value in Table 20.6 shows that customer focus, workforce focus, quality measurement, operational focus, result, strategic planning and leadership qualities for Singapore's model contributed 74.7% of the variance in enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas.

Findings in Table 20.7 indicate that the strategic planning domain makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the variance in enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas. Finding also showed that strategic planning in Singapore has a part correlation coefficient of −.106, indicating that strategic planning uniquely explains only 1.1% of the variance in explaining the variance of enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas.

3. What are the impacts of innovation endeavour(s) in both countries?

Findings in this study revealed that the university lecturers in both countries perceived that innovation works can impact their universities in terms of 'Introduction of new product in the market', 'Customer satisfaction' and 'Up-lifting the image of their university'. Besides that, Singapore university lecturers opined the positive impact of innovation on the university in the aspect of dissemination of knowledge through the creation of journals as a channel to share knowledge with researchers and other interested readers. Some samples of excerpts to illustrate the respondents' responses on the impact of innovation endeavours on the universities are provided in Table 20.8.

Table 20.4 Variance contribution: beta coefficients and part correlation coefficient on emphasising the importance of innovation

			Standardised coefficients			Correlations		
Country	Model		Beta	*t*	Sigma	Zero-order	Partial	Part
Coefficients[a]								
Singapore	1	(Constant)		−2.810	.011			
		Leadership	−.108	−.396	.697	.589	−.088	−.040
		Strategic Planning	−.283	−1.060	.302	.568	−.231	−.106
		Customer focus	.180	1.203	.243	.352	.260	.121
		Measurement	.184	.906	.376	.547	.199	.091
		Workforce Focus	.132	.738	.469	.559	.163	.074
		Operational focus	.536	2.882	.009	.813	.542	.289
		Result	−.116	−.505	.619	.643	−.112	−.051
Malaysia	1	(Constant)		.155	.879			
		Leadership	.134	.784	.442	−.177	.173	.106
		Strategic Planning	.024	.124	.903	−.501	.028	.017
		Customer focus	.063	.358	.724	−.399	.080	.049
		Measurement	−.382	−1.288	.213	−.564	−.277	−.175
		Workforce Focus	−.326	−1.680	.109	−.585	−.352	−.228
		Operational Focus	.146	.595	.559	−.356	.132	.081
		Result	.018	.074	.942	−.356	.016	.010

Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Table 20.5 ANOVA model on enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas for Singapore and Malaysia

Country	Model		Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	Sigma
ANOVA[a]							
Singapore	1	Regression	27.132	9	3.015	6.577	.000[b]
		Residual	9.168	20	.458		
		Total	36.300	29			
Malaysia	1	Regression	6.201	9	.689	2.120	.078[c]
		Residual	6.499	20	.325		
		Total	12.700	29			

[a]Dependent variable: enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas (Innovative_R42)
[b]Predictors: (Constant), customer focus mean, workforce focus mean, measurement mean, operational focus mean, result mean, strategic planning mean, leadership mean
Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Table 20.6 Model summary for enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas

Country	Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of the estimate
Model summary[b]					
Singapore	**1**	**.865[a]**	**.747**	.634	.677
Malaysia	1	.699[c]	.488	.258	.570

[a]Dependent variable: enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas (Innovative_R42)
[b]Predictors: (Constant), customer focus mean, workforce focus mean, measurement mean, operational focus mean, result mean, strategic planning mean, leadership mean
Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Based on these findings, the authors concluded that while the university lecturers from Malaysia and Singapore have positive perceptions on the impact of innovative endeavours on their universities, those from Singapore have a more constructive method of reaching out to a wider range of customers globally via the creation of journals to disseminate their innovative works. The findings also revealed that innovation endeavours have promising impacts on the students in Malaysia and Singapore. The respondents from both countries possessed similar views that innovation works in their institutions have enhanced students' learning as well as inspired and motivated students not only to be creative but also to be innovators alongside their lecturers. Some samples of the respondents' responses on the impact of innovation on the students are presented in Table 20.9.

Other than that, innovation endeavours were found to have profound impacts on the respondents from both countries. They viewed that innovation endeavours have provided them a sense of self-improvement, self-motivation, self-satisfaction, self-efficiency and a sense of achievement. Some samples of the respondents' responses on the impact of innovation on the respondents themselves are shown in Table 20.10.

Table 20.7 Variance contribution: beta coefficients and part correlation coefficient on enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas

Country	Model		Standardised coefficients			Correlations		
			Beta	*t*	Sigma	Zero-order	Partial	Part
Coefficients[a]								
Singapore	1	(Constant)		−.407	.689			
		Leadership	.057	.186	.854	.589	−.088	−.040
		Strategic planning	.400	1.341	.019	.568	−.231	−.106
		Customer focus	−.035	−.207	.838	.352	.260	.121
		Measurement	.104	.460	.650	.547	.199	.091
		Workforce focus	−.387	−1.938	.067	.559	.163	.074
		Operational focus	−.002	−.010	.992	.813	.542	.289
		Result	.050	.197	.846	.643	−.112	−.051
Malaysia	1	(Constant)		−1.146	.265			
		Leadership	−.301	−1.493	.151	−.177	.173	.106
		Strategic Planning	.336	1.462	.159	−.501	.028	.017
		Customer focus	−.059	−.285	.779	−.399	.080	.049
		Measurement	−.048	−.138	.892	−.564	−.277	−.175
		Workforce focus	.296	1.293	.211	−.585	−.352	−.228
		Operational focus	.168	.582	.567	−.356	.132	.081
		Result	−.019	−.067	.947	−.356	.016	.010

Significant at the 0.05 level ($p<0.05$)

Table 20.8 Impact of innovation endeavours on the organisation

Country	Impact of innovation endeavours on the organisation	Examples of excerpts
Malaysia	Introduction of new product in the market	• Obtain intellectual property of the product for my organisation • Provide more alternative product in the market
Singapore		• Develop the product
Malaysia	Customer satisfaction	• Increase productivity • Reduce costs as the new product is cheaper compared to what is available in the market
Singapore		• Better customer satisfaction • More students' satisfaction and enrolment
Malaysia	Uplift image of university	• Good image for my organisation • Help my organisation to be known outside
Singapore		• Recognition • Increase enrolment in my university • Positive impact. The PISA programmes have been in their nascent stage
Singapore	Dissemination of knowledge	• We created a journal (three of them) to disseminate knowledge about business issues in Asia. We now have over 300,000 readers • Share knowledge of innovative products with others through publications

Table 20.9 Impact of innovation endeavours on the students

Country	Impact of innovation endeavours on the Students	Examples of excerpts
Malaysia	Enhance students' learning	• The products that I have innovated made the work process easier and user friendly • Able to use the product in practical areas
Singapore		• Enhance engagement in students' learning • My experienced students now have a template to do applied research, they understand the needs of applied research are actually harder, often you have to satisfy both academic and corporate worlds
Malaysia	Inspire and motivate students	• Inspire them • Encourage creativity and potentiality • Students also joined force with lecturers to innovate products and bring those innovative products for competitions at national and international levels
Singapore		• More inner reflection and broader view of world • Students also innovate alongside lecturers

Table 20.10 Impact of innovation endeavours on the respondents

Country	Impact of innovation Endeavours on the respondents	Examples of excerpts
Malaysia	Self-improvement	• Teach me to be more innovative • Learning new ideas
Singapore		• I learnt and developed personally • I have learnt a lot on my journey in the PISA programme as well—how to balance the need of quality and pragmatism. Guiding applied research takes both theorised and applied knowledge
Malaysia	Self-motivation	• I become more alert of things around so that I can innovate better products • Makes my mind become more creative
Singapore		• Feels good to be able to teach and innovate products at the same time. That makes me want to be more innovative
Malaysia	Self-satisfaction	• Satisfied with creation • Feel proud and happy, especially when I won the gold medal during the innovation competition
Singapore		• Self-fulfilment • Contented with my creation
Malaysia	Self-efficiency	• Make work procedure or process easier and time efficient • Helps me to be more productive as it improves my task efficiency
Singapore		• My work can be done faster and more efficiently
Malaysia	Sense of achievement	• A bonus to add into year-end assessment • It gives me a sense of achievement
Singapore		• For the honour and glory • Attain success and achievement

Discussion and Implication

Findings showed that there are significant correlations for emphasising the importance of innovation as well as enhancing inspiration on innovative ideas with leadership, strategic planning, measurement, workforce focus, operational focus and result. The findings demonstrated that there is a strong positive relationship with emphasising the importance of innovation with operational focus as well as inspiration on innovative ideas with operational focus. These findings coincide with findings in Gilley et al.'s (2008) study which revealed six sets of leadership skills and abilities that positively influence organisations' success rates in implementing change and driving

innovation, namely, ability to coach, reward, involve and support others, promote teamwork and collaboration, communicate and motivate. Their findings concluded that the ability to communicate and the ability to motivate others have the most significant influence to effectively drive innovation and implement change. In addition, according to Horth and Dan Buchner (2009), the essential qualities of leadership for organisational innovation include organisational support, absence of organisational obstacles, leadership support, adequate resources, reasonable workload, courageous work confrontation, cooperation and teamwork. Martins & Terblanche (2003) opined that organisation's support for innovative behaviour is an important factor to mobilise the innovation process. Furthermore, the five fundamental leadership qualities to lead innovation as outlined by Staff (2012) include zeal for innovation, visionary, boldness to encounter and learn from failure, establish linkages with innovators and willingness to endure and support individualist from management. Thus, "knowledge, skills, values, and talents are the key qualities for leaders and followers to make innovative changes" (Şena & Erena, 2012, p. 11).

Findings showed that operational focus and quality measurement make the strongest unique contribution to explaining the variance in emphasising the importance of innovation. These findings are substantiated by Stevenson's (2012) findings that organisational success requires innovation leaders who can inspire a mindset that opens an organisation to discovery and the development of a framework that supports an innovation strategy and empowers people to make the right choices. Moreover, these findings also concur with Pelz and Andrews' (1966) stance that individuals and teams need to be given the autonomy and freedom to generate ideas and be engaged in creative problem solving. This implies that an effective leader plays a pivotal role in navigating the organisation to greater heights by planning and searching for continuous quality improvement to sustain the organisation in the modern market. Furthermore, for effective innovation, tactful balancing between creativity and efficiency needs to be monitored as organisations need to "learn how to walk the fine line between rigidity – which smothers creativity – and chaos – where creativity runs amok and nothing ever gets to market" (Leavy, 2006, p. 42). In other words, leaders need to allow freedom of thinking to innovate and to provide the necessary support to ensure high-quality innovations that are marketable.

In fact, the implementation of operational focus and quality measurement should involve many individuals with various tools and skills to transform the organisation. Barsh et al. (2008) asserted that leaders need to set performance metrics and targets for incremental innovation. According to Bel (2010),

innovation requires an IDEA (to generate energy, create commitment and direct individuals towards the vision) and ARMS (to ensure that people really do act accordingly). If we look at the Japanese innovation model, it is based on capability accumulation through mid- and long-term objectives which regard human as the medium of innovation (Yusof and Othman 2016). This implies that the primary role of innovation leaders should be able to create a climate for innovation (Isaksen & Todd, 2006). They need to create an environment for innovation within the organisations as they learn to operate in challenging and unpredictable circumstances because innovation in the workplace represents a return process based on continuous feedback, learning and improvement. Hence, the findings in this study imply that employers need to undergo training to build their skills and knowledge to execute effective strategies in innovation (Freifeld, 2013) and employees also need to attend training programmes to enhance their ability to undertake the required changes in an organisation. In other words, leaders need to create a supportive environment and foster innovative thinking. Moreover, they also need to take a prominent role in making a leap to support innovation by providing avenues to patent new products and avenues for journal publications and commercialisation of the products to stay ahead of others. However, management must bear in mind that some innovations may fail initially, but given time and experimentation, they will succeed.

The findings that both Malaysia and Singapore university lecturers perceived that innovation works can impact their universities in terms of 'Introduction of new product in the market' coincide with the findings in Jafari's (2014) study that organisational innovation has a substantial impact on product innovation, market operation and innovative performance of the organisation. Similarly, Keskin's (2010) and Tajeddini's (2012) studies found that increased innovation produced a positive impact on the organisation's performance. Likewise, Peter et al.'s (2002) study revealed a relationship between innovation and benefits to customers. These findings are substantiated by Amabile et al. (1996) and Chandler, Keller and Lyon's (2000) viewpoint that an organisation that promotes, supports, encourages and explores new approaches has an influence on the innovation in the organisation. This stance is similar to Şena and Erena's (2012) notion that innovation introduces new ideas, creations, services, processes and means as a solution to problems to satisfy human demands. Moreover, the Special Report on Leadership and Innovation by Capozzi (July, 2019) stated that all organisations have pockets of innovation that if tapped can unleash impact. This report showed how leaders can create conditions for greater innovation within and beyond their organisations to increase development impact.

Additionally, the findings that innovation endeavours have promising impacts on the students or stakeholders in Malaysia and Singapore in that innovations helped to enhance their learning, inspire and motivate them concur with Somech's (2006) statement that innovation encourages team reflection processes to stimulate innovative thinking. This is in line with Craig's (2018, p. 3) assertion that "[i]n the digital age, companies challenge themselves to innovate, collaborate and give back". Other than that, the findings that the respondents viewed innovation endeavours to have provided them a sense of self-improvement, self-motivation, self-satisfaction, self-efficiency and a sense of achievement correspond with findings in Simpson et al.'s (2006) study, which found that an innovation-focused environment will possibly lead to more pleasure, self-fulfilment and job satisfaction among the staff in the organisation.

As gathered from the findings, it can be implied that innovation endeavours among the university lecturers of both countries have helped to unleash their self-potential in the world of innovation, encourage their quest for continuous professional improvement and provide them the avenue to feel accomplished upon the recognition of their innovation.

Conclusion

Through the comparison of both countries, the findings provide insights for academic leaders to enhance their innovative endeavours. With the advent of technology in this age of Industrial Revolution 4.0, the ability of leaders to engage their employees in innovation endeavours has become the core business and challenge of many universities to survive. Therefore, the authors concluded that leaders play a pivotal role in creating the right environment to unleash the innovation impact on the universities, staff or lecturers and students. Nevertheless, there are no best-practice solutions to seed and cultivate innovation but holding leaders accountable for encouraging innovation makes a big difference (Barsh et al., 2008). This stems from the fact that different organisations use different types of stimulating factors to promote organisational innovation. Different leadership styles would have different influence on employee motivation and commitment in innovation endeavours. Even though innovation leaders share a common set of qualities and abilities, in complex organisations and environments, leadership roles are diverse and must fit organisation and innovation stage, strategy and organisational level (Bel, 2010). There are no one-size-fits-all types of leadership for positive impact on innovation endeavours; rather, the type of leaders chosen depends

on the goals or targets of the organisation. Importantly, innovation and leadership are interdependent as effective leaders will strive and motivate the employees to bring betterment for the university as well as organisation through innovation endeavours.

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