

Diversity in the Leadership Style: A Global View

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Abstract

The country origin holds a very strong character in the selection of those practices and styles that are to be adopted by the organizations while working as foreign organization in different countries. The practices and styles adopted or practiced within a number of organizations having the same foreign origin are much different than other local and foreign organizations, thus giving rise to a new breed of organizational working techniques, practices or even styles. The country of origin can hence be seen first as the organizational cultural settler, second as the influencer of styles and practices practiced there at the organizations and third as further integrated cultures based organizations. The second role is the main focus of this research centering on the effect of the country origin on the leadership styles and practices. The factors of the country origin that affects the leadership's styles are analyzed and the extent of their role in organization is considered.

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. "Leadership styles are reflected in behaviors and attitudes, but these in turn are the outcome of complex interactions between the way we think and feel". There are a number of different approaches or styles to leadership and management that are based on different assumptions and theories. "The style that individuals use will be based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others". Effective leadership is the only competitive advantage that will endure. That's because leadership has two sides what a person is and what a person does (Daniel, 1950).

At one level, the concept of "leadership style" is simple to define: it is the style that a leader adopts in their dealings with those who follow them. Clearly, underlying this is an assumption that there is a right and a wrong style. "According to the management literature, the appropriate style will depend on a wide variety of criteria, including the relationship between the parties involved, the nature of what needs to be done, and the match or mismatch between the difficulty of the task and the competencies available". But this very simplicity masks a much more complex subject (Rogar & Alvin, 1957). One of the first questions to ask is what we mean by style? Generally, in this type of context, style is taken to mean a way of behaving. "But behavior shows itself in many different forms". It can be mannerisms such as the use of voice and the tone and volume employed, or in body language and physical demeanor. It can be what we say words that can vary across the spectrum from aggressive to placatory. It can be in the form of conduct, which may express calmness or agitation (Robert & Mouton, 1964).

At a deeper level, behavior can be the loyalty we show, the trust we place, the commitments we make, the honesty and truthfulness with which we deal with others. "Taken together, different behaviors are read by others as the way we are acting toward them". But that is to reach just the outer layer of the complexities because the way we behave is not just defined by the situation. "Behavior is determined by many different things, things that psychologists and psychoanalysts spend their lifetimes seeking to understand" (Douglas, 1967). Behavior is an outcome of the interplay between our cognitive side, the way we think and reason, and our emotional side, the way we feel. And our cognitive and emotional responses are themselves a mix of nature. "The way we behave is a powerful reflection of our personality and character, the product of the often unconscious processes that are at work within us".

2. THE LEADERSHIP STYLES

In the late 1930's, the work in this area started with some pioneering leadership studies that were conducted. The studies revealed the decision making component of the leaders' behaviors and classified leaders into three types as authoritarian, democratic and laissez-fair. "The purpose of these studies was to identify various dimensions of leader's behaviors and identified two dimensions which comprises of initiating structure and consideration". Initiating structure refers to the leader's behavior to establish well defined patterns of organization, communication, methods and procedures (Freed, 1967). "Consideration refers to leaders interpersonal relationships with his subordinates. It was found that normally in small groups two different kinds of leaders

emerge". One kind was the ask leader and the other kind was called as socio-emotional leader.

The related studies revealed leadership as involving a high variety of styles, ranging from one that is highly boss centered to the one that is highly subordinated centered. The styles varied with a degree of freedom a leader or manager grants to the subordinates. "There are four variables involved in leadership, characteristics of leader; attitudes, needs, and personal characteristics of followers; characteristics of the organization and the social, economic and political milieu" (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). In 1965, White has summarized much of the research on the leadership roles and functions, "the question of why people attempt to lead leadership under stress conditions, the relationship of communication to leadership", the problem of leader assessment and the concept of leadership styles. In 1967, Fiedler, has developed as contingency model of leadership assuming that the effectiveness of leadership styles is based on the leader's own ability to act in terms of situational favorableness. Situational favorableness depends on three factors; leader-member relationship, task structure and position power (House, 1974).

In the beginning of 1970's the leadership places a pivotal role as an essential part of achieving ever better productivity and performance. "The shift from manual to knowledge work in most economies, the rise of living standards and therefore expectations, the growth in educational qualifications and sophistication, are just some of the things that have changed people's attitudes". We live in an age where people have choices, where the deference common in an earlier age has disappeared, where the right to personal self-fulfillment is a widely shared belief (Rangaswamy & Helmick, 1976). As a result it is now recognized that, to get the best out of people, they need to be led, not just managed as subordinates. They need to feel motivated, committed, and even inspired. Persuasion, not coercion, is required. "Status and position are no longer enough". Nowadays, competitiveness between organizations takes place not just at the level of the products and services they provide, but much more deeply at the level of the competences they possess. "And nowhere are those competences more critical than in the style of leadership they have" (Lokhande & Singh, 1977). The qualities, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of those whose task it is to bring out the best in their people.

The literature revealed that the concept of leadership style linked with the situational demands of a specific environment which further relates leadership behavior and participative decision making. "In the path goal theory, it was identified, that it is the leaders job to assist his followers in attaining there goals and to provide necessary directions and support to ensure that their goals are compatible with the overall objectives of the groups or organizations" (Joseph & Kesavan, 1977). The traditional leadership, political leadership, opinion making leadership, decision making leadership, and caste leadership was also identified in the literature. "The study from public and private sector show that in a private sector the emphasis is on production, whereas in public sector, supervisor orientation is prevalent". In some studies it was identified that there are three types of leadership styles comprises of participative, authoritarian and authoritative leadership (Robert & Warren, 1979). "Most of the studies revealed different styles of leadership; they are direction style, negotiation style, consultative style, participative style, delegated style". It indicates that the predominant style is direction followed by delegation and participation.

3. DISCUSSIONS

The related literature revealed the leader's behavior that exist in ineffective and effective organizations producing similar commodity and located in the same area geographically and socially. It further describes two types of leadership that are most appropriate for high and low self-monitoring individuals. "It examined the relationship between junior and middle managers power styles and their influence over different dimensions of decision making activities through participative-ness in three industrial organizations" (Joseph & Kesavan, 1977). An examination of the literature in the fields of organizational culture and leadership finds that the areas have been independently linked to organizational performance. For example, researchers have examined the links between leadership styles and performance and also between organizational culture and performance (Swarna & Srivastava, 1985). "Furthermore, numerous aspects of the organizational culture literature allude to the role of leaders in creating and maintaining particular types of culture". Equally, the literature on leadership suggests that the ability to understand and work within a culture is a prerequisite to leadership effectiveness.

However, despite the implicit and explicit linking of leadership and culture in many parts of organization theory, little critical research attention has been devoted to understanding the links between the two concepts and the impact that such an association might have on organizational performance. "The absence of critical literature exploring the performance implications of the links between organizational culture and leadership is surprising given the numerous references to the importance of the two concepts in the functioning of organizations" (Prabhakar, 1987). The first independent variable is characteristics of the leader. The characteristics of the leader

no doubt will be derived back from the origin of the country to which he belongs. "All the employers and the floor managers acknowledge that the manager's personality has various innate or unchangeable traits which probably have derived from the country from where he has come". The foremost is the value of the leader or of the organization's top management or of the country where they are working (Lynn, 1990). The managers normally are belonging to and even the organizations normally having high culture have high concern towards their own values. "Some employees also told that the managers even vary in their attitudes which definitely are the derivative of their own country of origin".

Another common way to look at it is to observe or even discuss some of believes. "Obviously the different country gives rise to different believes hence creating a special environment even for the person belonging to different believes area due to some influenced believes". Some leaders hold due to their characteristics evolved from the country environment in which they have lived. The way to discuss the idea at hand could be to link the position with it. Some positions require different characteristics in different regions. "The immediate boss enjoys the supreme authority in some organization thus giving birth to a whole new variety of leadership style". Another way to discuss is to observe the communications skills and ability to handle stress of the leader (Manisha & Agrawal, 1995). "Some countries culture gives more ease of work to their employees because they think that this could increase productivity hence willingness of the leader to give freedom to its employees could also be seen as a contributing factor for the discussion of the research topic at hand". The last but not least important area of study that remained is experience the experience of the leader which he gains over the period of time or from varying situation also serves as the stoning brick in shaping or adapting a respective leadership style.

The second variable is the characteristics of the followers. "A large number of flour managers have accepted that the characteristics also of the followers also shape or have and influenced weight or effect over the leadership style introduced by the organization having different origin of country for their workers in some of this part of the world". The foremost in the sense is values of the employees. "The values of the employees belonging to the same country are similar with references to their own work group but are much different from those of the country that has its organization working in some different part of the world". Some of the workers have also shown the difference in attitudes. Some of the workers or even bosses and specifically the followers of the leader differ in attitudes with them (Thiru & Nagabrahmam, 1997). This is due to the origin difference standing between the two as a wall. Next the life stage of the organization is important. "Definitely as the organization passed through different stages the leadership needs start differing and when they first come to a country and set up their business their leadership needs are different than those when they have spent many years in a respective country".

Another very important aspect is the cohesiveness in groups. The countries the hours where there is a strong interaction or we can say that that relational bonding exists, the inter group cohesiveness is seen to be bulky. "Some of the believers definitely vary at the followers end and the leadership style that is to be adopted for them should definitely be debated over by the issues of those believes hold by followers belonging to the entirely different background". Another very important aspect is the image or expectancy of authority from followers. "The third independent variable is the situations prevailing and for which the organizations has to devise a full proof strategy" (Manisha & Agrawal, 1995). The foremost in this regard that effects the leadership style is the nature of the task. Obviously for the task that is completely employee oriented and very strenuous the leader who is much supportive is much more needed than a leader who is not involved in much communicative activities with the employees. Another very important thing is the organizational structure the leadership is actually derived from the structure. "There is no doubt in the fact that the organizational structure would be a very important while decided what style for leadership should be adopted while working as a foreign organization in some other country".

4. CONCLUSION

By observing the literature for each and every variable involved in the present study it is found that the first variable does not enjoy a significant correlation with leadership style whereas the remaining two show a significant relationship as shown in the above correlation tables. It is hence clear that there are not enough evidences to accept the first hypothesis but the remaining two hypotheses must be accepted. Hence it is concluded that the country of origin does not affect the leadership style and the concrete evidences are found that the leadership style is culturally bound i.e. to say that the leadership that is to be adopted must be in line with the culture of the country where the organization is working and not in line with the country of origin. It is the culture to which the people belong because the organizational culture is actually a derivative of the culture of its employees. The culture effects the leadership style in a way that it is not possible to foreign its effect while

deciding and later on adopting the leadership style while working in different countries that are different from the home or parent country or simply the country of origin. Last but not least is the socio-political and economic environment of the country for which a style is needed. Certainly the social, political and economic environments of the countries are different and when a leadership style that must be effective is to be selected these are considered in designing of that. Thus we can say that leadership style has a direct relationship with the different situation and origin.

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