

The Styles of Leadership: A Critical Review

Muhammad Saqib Khan¹ Irfanullah Khan² Qamar Afaq Qureshi²

Hafiz Muhammad Ismail³ Hamid Rauf¹ Abdul Latif³ Muhammad Tahir¹

1.Department of Business Administration, Gomal University, Dera Ismail khan, Pakistan

2.Department of Public Administration, Gomal University, Dera Ismail khan, Pakistan

3.Deputy Director Finance, Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Abstract

Leadership is a personal relationship in which one person directs, coordinates and supervises other in the performance of a common task. The social contract of leadership is viewed as a myth that functions to reinforce existing social believes and structure about the necessity of hierarchy and leaders in organization. Leadership seems to be a matter of aligning people towards common goals and empowering them to take the actions needed to reach them. The ability to influence a individuals/group towards the achievement of common goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

Some 2500 years ago Socrates argued that leadership is always situational: a leader has qualities and especially professional or technical knowledge that are specific to the situation hence not transferable. But he also argued the other side of the coin: a good Business leader, he said, would also make a good military commander for both shared certain generic leadership skills such as being good at choosing the best people to work with, and being able to identify and work with the right allies.

Knowledge about leadership accumulated through decades of research into leadership issues seems to suggest that certain leadership characteristics that are useful in one field or culture are likely to be useful in another. If this is in fact the case, then despite significant regional differences, we would in principle be able to design courses and programs which especially with tailored alterations would be effective in any part of the world. As leadership is "the process of influencing a Organized group toward accomplishing its goals. The purpose is that to study different types of style (leadership style) to follow the most appropriate style to influence subordinates/followers in a better way.

2. THE STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

The terminology style is roughly equivalent to the leader's behavior. It is the way in which the leader influences the followers (Luthans, 1977). There are many ways to lead and every leader has own style. Some of the more common styles include autocratic, bureaucratic, leadership and laissez-faire. In the past several decades, management experts have undergone a revolution in how they define leadership and what their attitudes are toward it. They have gone from a very classical autocratic approach to a very creative, participative approach. Somewhere along the line, it was determined that not everything old was bad and not everything new was good. Rather, different styles were needed for different situations and each leader needed to know when to exhibit a particular approach.

2.1 Autocratic Style of Leadership

This is often considered the classical approach. It is one in which the manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible. The manager does not consult employees, nor are they allowed to give any input. Employees are expected to obey orders without receiving any explanations. The motivation environment is produced by creating a structured set of rewards and punishments.

This leadership style has been greatly criticized during the past 30 years. Some studies say that organizations with many autocratic leaders have higher turnover and absenteeism than other organizations. Certainly Gen X employees have proven to be highly resistant to this management style. These studies say that autocratic leaders:

- Rely on threats and punishment to influence employees
- Do not trust employees
- Do not allow for employee input
- Autocratic leadership is not bad. Sometimes it is the most effective style to use.
- New, untrained employees who do not know which tasks to perform or which procedures to follow.
- Effective supervision can be provided only through detailed orders and instructions.
- Employees do not respond to any other leadership style
- There are high-volume production needs on a daily basis
- There is limited time in which to make a decision
- A manager's power is challenged by an employee

- The area was poorly managed
- Work needs to be coordinated with another department or organization

The autocratic leadership style should not be used when:

- Employees become tense, fearful, or resentful
- Employees expect to have their opinions heard
- Employees begin depending on their manager to make all their decisions
- There is low employee morale, high turnover and absenteeism

2.1.1 Advantages of Autocratic Style of Leadership

- Good control, overview
- Unimpaired programme
- Laws: Youth protection laws
- No long discussions
- Group members know what they must do
- Rules give security
- Discipline

2.1.2 Disadvantages of Autocratic style of leadership

- Defiance
- No development of freedom of choice
- Listlessness
- Less own initiative (Fears, hatred toward other members)
- No trust
- Less or no self-confidence
- Hierarchy is promoted
- Group interests are suppressed
- Groups are not relaxed
- Rivalry amongst the group members
- Ability to criticize is suppressed
- The independence of the group is weakened by the authority of the leader
- Talents are not recognized and therefore not promoted
- Fear turns into aggression, therefore violence

2.2 Authoritarian Style of Leadership

Authoritarian leaders, also known as autocratic leaders, provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is also a clear division between the leader and the followers. Authoritarian leaders make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group. Researchers found that decision-making was less creative under authoritarian leadership. Lewin also found that it is more difficult to move from an authoritarian style to a democratic style than vice versa. Abuse of this style is usually viewed as controlling, bossy, and dictatorial.

Authoritarian leadership is best applied to situations where there is little time for group decision-making or where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group. Lewin's study found that participative leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is generally the most effective leadership style. Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members. In Lewin's study, children in this group were less productive than the members of the authoritarian group, but their contributions were of a much higher quality. Participative leaders encourage group members to participate, but retain the final say over the decision-making process. Group members feel engaged in the process and are more motivated and creative. (google.com)

2.3 Democratic Style of Leadership

The democratic leadership style is also called the participative style as it encourages employees to be a part of the decision making. The democratic manager keeps his or her employees informed about everything that affects their work and shares decision making and problem solving responsibilities. This style requires the leader to be a coach who has the final say, but gathers information from staff members before making a decision.

Democratic leadership can produce high quality and high quantity work for long periods of time. Many employees like the trust they receive and respond with cooperation, team spirit, and high morale. Typically the democratic leader:

- Develops plans to help employees evaluate their own performance
- Allows employees to establish goals
- Encourages employees to grow on the job and be promoted
- Recognizes and encourages achievement.

- Like the other styles, the democratic style is not always appropriate.
- It is most successful when used with highly skilled or experienced employees or when implementing operational changes or resolving individual or group problems.

Democratic leadership should not be used when:

- There is not enough time to get everyone's input.
- It's easier and more cost-effective for the manager to make the decision.
- The business can't afford mistakes.
- The manager feels threatened by this type of leadership.
- Employee safety is a critical concern.

2.3.1 Advantages of Democratic Style of Leadership

- Self-sufficient
- Compromises are agreed
- Motivating
- Varied ideas
- Has the confidence of the group members
- Strengthens public interests
- Prohibitions are understood
- An understanding of most problems
- The possibility to grow creatively is given
- Freedom of opinion
- Equal rights
- Makes integration of outsiders possible

2.3.2 Disadvantages of Democratic leadership style

- Time consuming for the leader
- Difficult for the leader
- Very dependent upon age
- No optimal solutions
- Lots of discussions can become boring (google.com)

2.4 Participative /Democratic Style of Leadership

Lewin's study found that participative leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is generally the most effective leadership style. Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members. In Lewin's study, children in this group were less productive than the members of the authoritarian group, but their contributions were of a much higher quality.

Participative leaders encourage group members to participate, but retain the final say over the decision-making process. Group members feel engaged in the process and are more motivated and creative.

2.5 Laissez-Faire style of Leadership

The laissez-faire leadership style is also known as the "hands-off" style. It is one in which the manager provides little or no direction and gives employees as much freedom as possible. All authority or power is given to the employees and they must determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own.

This is an effective style to use when:

- Employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated.
- Employees have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own.
- Outside experts, such as staff specialists or consultants are being used
- Employees are trustworthy and experienced.

This style should not be used when:

- It makes employees feel insecure at the unavailability of a manager.
- The manager cannot provide regular feedback to let employees know how well they are doing.
- Managers are unable to thank employees for their good work.
- The manager doesn't understand his or her responsibilities and is hoping the employees can cover for him or her.

2.5.1 Advantages of Laissez-faire Style of Leadership

- Freedom to choose
- No burden on the team members
- Sometimes: independent
- The group leader hardly requires any preparation time
- There is a lot of freedom
- Own social structures

- Less chance of the leader being unpopular
- 2.5.2 Disadvantages of Laissez-faire Style of Leadership**
- The group attempts to overstep the limit
 - Unsatisfied minorities
 - Tolerance between the group members is destroyed
 - Misuse of rules
 - Team members are no longer taken seriously
 - No responsibility
 - Weaker members are held back
 - Resignation
 - No initiative
 - No We Feeling
 - The group does not stick together
 - High danger of injury to supervision laws.

2.6 Delegative (Laissez-Faire) Leadership

Researchers found that children under delegated leadership, also known as laissez-fair leadership, were the least productive of all three groups. The children in this group also made more demands on the leader, showed little cooperation and were unable to work independently.

Delegative leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members. This style can be effective in the situations where group members are highly qualified in specific area.

2.7 Bureaucratic Style of Leadership

Bureaucratic leadership is where the manager manages “by the book” Everything must be done according to procedure or policy. If it isn’t covered by the book, the manager refers to the next level above him or her. This manager is really more of a police officer than a leader. He or she enforces the rules.

This style can be effective when:

- Employees are performing routine tasks over and over.
- Employees need to understand certain standards or procedures.
- Employees are working with dangerous or delicate equipment that requires a definite set of procedures to operate.
- Safety or security training is being conducted.
- Employees are performing tasks that require handling cash.

This style is ineffective when:

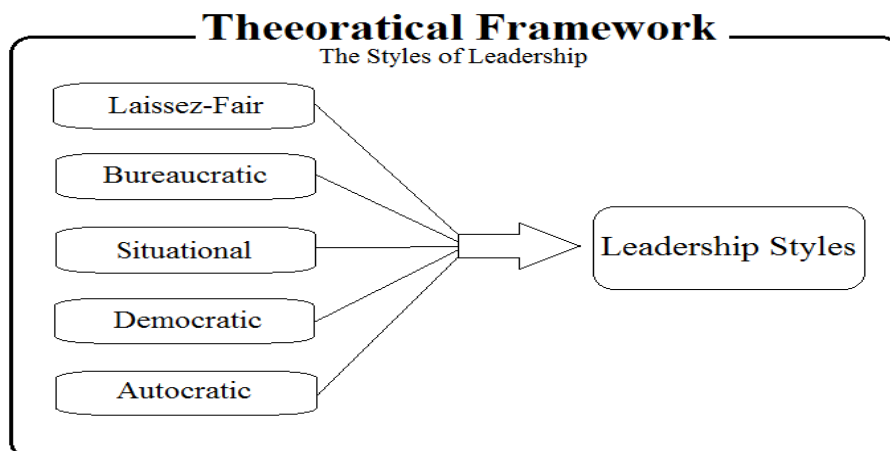
- Work habits form that is hard to break, especially if they are no longer useful.
- Employees lose their interest in their jobs and in their fellow workers.
- Employees do only what is expected of them and no more.

2.8 Extracted variables/working Concepts

	Concepts	Definitions
1	Autocratic	The dictator lays down the law in his or her group and expects individuals to perform without questioning his or her authority
2	Democratic	It capitalizes on their skills and talents by letting them share their views, rather than simply expecting them to conform
3	Laissez-Faire	Very little guidance from leaders Complete freedom for followers to make decisions Leaders provide the tools and resources needed Group members are expected to solve problems on their own
4	Bureaucratic	Every thing is decided in the light of predetermined Every thing is done as per policy or procedure.
5	Situational	In it every thing is decided on the spot. No pre-plan is required rather every thing is decided as per requirement. The leader changes his/her pace with the changing situation.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework will be as under according to literature review:



DISCUSSIONS

As there are different styles of leadership and all have advantages and disadvantages. Leadership is always situational. For highly qualified and morally developed people democratic leadership style is preferred while for undeveloped people autocratic style is good. Similarly laissez faire leadership style is better for most qualified peoples. All the styles are important in different situations. It will be blunder to adopt single style in all the situations. Now days people are getting aware and socially advanced, therefore democratic style should be adopted. But the success of leadership style also depends on the quality of influence of leaders. The leaders should be well qualified. Well qualified and influential personality can manage the followers in a better way while using any type of leadership style. Honesty is the common quality for all leadership styles. Honesty is responsible for the success of all leadership styles.

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.

3. CONCLUSION

The researchers who have evaluated the significance of the style of leadership as a crucial project success factor in recent years feel sure that project managers’ style of leadership will have an impact on the project team’s outcomes. There were three major objectives which were addressed by the current review. Firstly, to explore the managers’ influential leadership styles including Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-Faire. Secondly, to get a detailed examination of variation that could be defined in criterion variable in connection to the predicting variables (Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-Faire Styles of leadership). The is concluded from the present study that the Leadership was found as the influential leadership style among the managers that combines both the features of Transformational and Transactional Leadership. In second place, the style of Transactional Leadership was found the most influential styles of leadership among these managers.

4. SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of finding and conclusion the researcher recommended that:

- Programs should be arranged for promotion of leadership.
- Democratic leadership style should be adopted as it is the most important style.
- The followers should be given participation in decision making.

- Laissez faire style should be adopted if the followers are highly qualified.
- Faithful and honest people should be selected as leaders.
- The leaders should share information to the followers.
- Friendly situation should be prevailing in the organization.
- Authorities should arrange more and more conducive environment for the followers.
- Leaders should arrange training programme to increase the efficiency of the followers.
- Autocratic style should be adopted if the followers are morally poor people.

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