



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP STYLES WITH REFERENCE TO PAST LITERATURE REVIEWS

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Abstract

Leadership styles have larger influence on the motivation level of the employees. The impact of leadership styles depend upon the type of organization, expectations of the employees and motivational factors. Over the years different researchers in their research studies have come out with leadership models, types, dimensions of job satisfaction, motivational theories. This research paper is focused upon understanding the dimensions of leadership styles based on past literatures and research reviews so as to understand what type of leadership styles are most appropriate to influence the level of motivation amongst employees.

Keywords: Leadership styles, motivation, job satisfaction.



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Introduction:

Leadership styles are considered to be one of the most important factors in influencing organizational productivity. Over the centuries, the changes in technology have led to changes in organizational styles of functioning. The cross cultural sets up of the organizations and changes in expectations of the employees have also led to changes in way a leader manages a particular organization. The effectiveness of a leadership style depends upon types of organization, situations, cultural trends and organizational objectives. The same style of leadership may not fit all heads. The employees basis of motivation and job satisfaction also differ based on their requirements. In the coming years the dynamism in industries backed by technology will change the organizational structure and so the leadership styles. Effective leadership represents the success of organization that can continuously keep updated with all the changing environment that establish an effective learning culture with latest methods and technology. Xaba and Nhlapo (2014) ensure that democratic leadership is based on human rights which believe that stakeholders have the right to participate in the school's decision making process. India after independence has experienced rapid growth in industrially. Indian companies are exploring and investing the next generation of leaders who have a great power to influence the workforce. Similarly the Government and its executives are exploring and

finding very difficult in getting qualified candidates for their senior managerial positions. An effective leader can bring revolutionary change in the economy and its institutions taking it to high growth trajectory.

Objectives of the Study: The main objectives of the study are following:

- a) To study various leadership styles.
- b) To identify various leadership traits and functional styles related to specific leadership styles.

Literature Review:

Leadership though is a common term but it has diverse meaning. Barnard (1991:81) identified that lead is both a noun and a verb and therefore it has different meaning. When we consider it to be noun, it means to guide others being the head of organization and in case of verb it means to excel and to be in advance. The term is also used to describe certain personality and behavioural traits and also denote the roles of individuals and collectives. Leadership is inherently complex and its very difficult to define in one particular context and so there is unlikely to be any common consensus on the term (Grint 1997). Northouse (2004) after reviewing leadership theory identified four common contexts as: Leadership to be process, it involves influence, it occurs in a group context and it involves goal attainment. Keith Grint (2005) identifies a similar four fold leadership typology of person, results, process and position. Manfred Kets (1994) found the literature on leadership traits overwhelming and confusing but identifies some commonality in the findings: conscientiousness, extroversion, dominance, self-confidence, energy, agreeableness, intelligence, openness to experience and emotional stability. Keith Davis and J .W. Newstrom (1989) defines leadership as the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically towards objectives. G. A. Yukl (1981) defines as an interaction between persons in which one presents information of a sort and in such a manner that the other becomes convinced that his outcomes will improve if he behaves in the manner suggested or desired.

Leadership Theories

From beginning of the 20th century, scholars have contributed in wide areas of leadership. There are various theories of leadership which have been conceptualized by various authors.

1.Trait Theory: This theory focus on the individual characteristics of successful leaders. Accordingly leaders possess a set of traits which make them distinct from followers. Gemmil

and Oakley (1992) identify resurgence in the 1990's of the traitist approach identifying charisma as an embodiment of the approach. The most common criticism of the trait/competency approach is that they are one size fits all approaches. Defining leadership by a set of given competencies or traits suggests a preferred leadership style which all individuals must have if they are to be successful leaders. Another criticism is that it is a one size fits all approach which ignores context. These frameworks are based on the assumption that leadership resides in the individual and does certain standard competencies such as self-belief, self-awareness, personal integrity etc. which are generic traits of any successful person. This approach ignores the context of a situation and complexity of organizational challenges. It may happen that under critical situations the decision making based on traits theory may not be effective. The list of personality traits of successful leaders is too long and there seems to be no end it. Besides how much of which trait a successful leader must have is not clear.

2. Behavioural Theories: The period from 1940 to 1960 experienced researchers moved away from trait theory. This new theory differs from trait theory as behaviours of leaders were the main focus in contrast to personal traits.

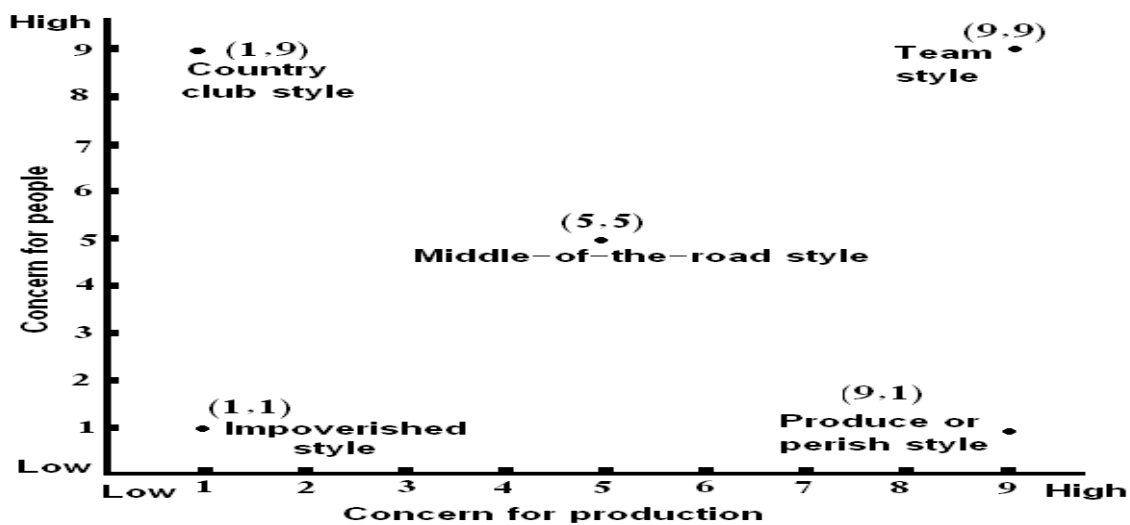
a) Ohio State University Studies: The main motive of the study was to identify major dimensions of leadership and to investigate the effect of leader behaviour on performance and satisfaction. The study focused on two leadership dimensions: the initiating structure and consideration. The initiating structure refers to leader behaviour that identifies and organizes the group tasks, assign the tasks to employees and supervise their activities. Consideration refers to leader behaviour that can be characterized by friendliness, respect, supportiveness, openness, trust and concern for the welfare of the employees. Their major findings are as follows:

- i. Consideration was positively related to low absenteeism and grievance but it was negatively or neutrally related to performance.
- ii. Initiating structure was positively related to employee performance but was also associated with such negative consequences as absenteeism and grievances.
- iii. In case of both factors being high, performance and satisfaction tends to be high.

b) The University of Michigan Studies: These studies focused on two dimensions of leadership: production centred and employee centred. Production centred leaders set rigid work standards, organized tasks down to the last detail, prescribed the work methods to be

followed and closely supervised subordinates' performance. Employee centred leaders on the other hand encouraged employee participation in goal setting and in other work related decisions and helped ensure high performance by inspiring respect and trust.

c) The Managerial Grid by Blake and Mouton: They proposed a Managerial Grid based on the styles of concern for people and concern for production which correspond to the Ohio state dimensions of consideration and initiating structure or the Michigan dimensions. The grid identifies five basic styles of leadership. The 9,1 (task management) leader is primarily concerned with production and has little concern for people. The 1,9 (country club management) leader is primarily concerned with people. The 5,5 (middle of the road management) leader represents a moderate concern for both. The 9,9 (team management) leader demonstrates high concern for both production and people and is therefore the ideal approach to leadership. The 1,1 (impoverished management) has minimum concern for people and production. The model is useful to managers in as much as it helps them identify their current styles and develop the most desirable style.



Source: Debra L. Nelson, et. al. p. 397

3. Contingency Theory: Leadership effectiveness in reality is more complex than identifying a few traits or preferable behaviours. The failure to obtain consistent results led to a focus on situational or contingency theories of leadership. The basic tenet is that most effective leaders are contingent upon characteristics of the situation in which the leaders find themselves and take appropriate decisions.

a) Fiedler's contingency approach: It attempted to find a new theory from the simplistic notion of one best fit leader for all situations. Fiedler proposed that leadership style would be

different in different types of situations. The contingency approaches focused on the two factor model of relationship or task centred leader. The task centred leaders focus on the task rather than people and are more directives. This approach may suit in hierarchical organization while relationship centred leaders are favoured in the majority of situations as they focus on people and participation. It attempts to address some of the social context issues faced by leaders and managers but tries to package it into oversimplistic assumptions.

The model proposes that organizational performance depends on the proper match between the leader's style and the degree to which the situation gives control to the leader. Fiedler created the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) questionnaire in order to measure whether a person is task or relationship oriented. The LPC questionnaire contains set of 16 contrasting adjectives and respondents to rate on a scale of 1 to 8. Fiedler has identified three contingency variables that determine leadership effectiveness. These are leader member relations, task structure and position power. The position power can be described as the degree of influence a leader has over power variables such as recruitment, lay off, discipline, promotion, increment etc. Fiedler states that better the leader member relations, the more highly structured the job and the stronger the position power, the more control the leader has. A high LPC score suggests that the leader has a "human relations orientation", while a low LPC score indicates a "task orientation". Fiedler assumes that everybody's least preferred coworker in fact is on average about equally unpleasant. But people who are indeed relationship motivated, tend to describe their least preferred coworkers in a more positive manner, e.g., more pleasant and more efficient. Therefore, they receive higher LPC scores.

b) Cognitive Resource Theory: This theory has been conceptualized by Fiedler and Joe Garcia based on original theory of Fiedler. Both have focused on the role of stress management by the leader based on their intelligence and experience. They found that a leader's intellectual abilities correlate positively with performance under low stress but negatively under high stress.

c) Hersey and Blanchard's Situational theory: It is a contingency theory which focuses on the followers. They emphasized upon maturity of followers as a contingency variable which deserves due consideration. They believe that the relationship between the leader and subordinates move through four phases. In the initial phase when subordinates first enter the organization- a high task orientation by the manager is most appropriate. Subordinates must be instructed in their tasks and familiarizes with the organization's rules and procedures. This

style is called the directing or telling approach of leadership. As subordinates begin to learn their tasks, task oriented leaders remain essential as subordinates are not yet willing or able to accept full responsibility. Thus the leaders may choose to initiate employee oriented behaviours. This style is called selling or coaching approach to leadership. In the third phase of participating or supporting style, the subordinates ability and achievement motivation are increased and subordinates actively begin to seek greater responsibility. The manager will no longer need to be directive. Delegating is the style which the manager follows in the final stage. The manager can reduce the amount of support and encouragement as subordinates gradually become more confident, self-directing and experienced.

Leadership Styles

Leadership is the typical approach a particular person uses to lead people. In other words the behaviour the leader exhibits during supervision of subordinates is known as leadership style. It comprises of two distinct elements i.e. the leader's assumptions about subordinates and the leader's actual behaviour while interacting with subordinates. The leadership styles can be divided based on different parameters i.e. based on authority retained by the leader, task to be performed versus that placed on people, Likert's four styles and styles based on assumptions about people made by the leader.

I. Styles based on Authority Retained

a) Authoritarian Style: It is also known as autocratic style. It involves retention of full authority by the leader. Subordinates are expected to do what the leader has told them to do. The basic advantage is that tasks are completed efficiently and there is no opportunity for time consuming two ways communication associated with democratic styles. But it may lead to low employee morale and avoid taking new initiatives and responsibility for any errors.

b) Participative Style: Participative leaders can be consultative, consensual and democratic. Consultative leaders always seek opinions from the subordinates before making a decision, yet they do not feel obliged to accept the groups thinking. Consensual leaders encourage group discussion on an issue and then make a decision that reflects the general agreement of group members. They delegate more authority to the group than do the consultative leaders. The democratic style confers final authority on the group. It aims to share decision making and give employees responsibility and a degree of autonomy to bring about dual benefits in terms of satisfaction to the employees and increased output. Kurt Lewin and colleagues

produced work on democratic leadership isolating it from autocratic and laissez faire leadership style. This style is more relevant for community activities than for work settings.

c) Free Rein Style: It is also called as laissez-faire. Such leaders choose not to adopt a leadership role and actually abdicate leadership position to someone else in the group. It works when the group is composed of highly committed members. Such leaders are characterized by avoiding responsibility and decision making.

II. Styles based on task versus people emphasis

It is based on the relative concern the leader places on the task to be performed vis a vis the people performing the task. A leader who places greater emphasis on task performance often organizes and defines the roles of group members specifying what activities each has to do and where and how tasks are to be accomplished. A leader emphasizing on people develop mutual trust, establishing channels of communication and developing empathy for them. Based on this four quadrants can be drawn:

High		
People Emphasis	High Relationship and low task (Supporting Style)	High Task and High Relationship (Participative Style)
	Low task and low relationship (Free Rein Style)	High Task and low relationship (Autocratic style)
	Task Emphasis	
Low	Low	High

Source: Own

III. Recent Leadership Styles

A new set of leadership theories emerged in 1970's in the form of Transactional and Transformational leadership. Transactional and Transformational leadership styles were first introduced by Burns (1978). Bass (1985) expanded the theory and came up with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The full range of leadership models that was introduced by Avolio and Bass (1991) gave more advancement to the theory. This theoretical model included three styles of leadership: (a) transactional, (b) transformational, and (c) Laissez- Faire. According to Hartog et al. (1997), Bass's theory or the new leadership approach integrates ideas from trait, style, and contingency approaches of leadership and also incorporates and builds on work of sociologists such as Weber (1947) and political scientists such as Burns (1978) (P.19).

a) Transactional leadership style: According to Stoner, transactional leaders determine what subordinates need to do to achieve their own and organizational objectives; classify those

requirements and help subordinates become confident that they can reach their objective by expanding the necessary efforts. Most of the earlier leadership theories like Ohio state, Fiedler's model, path goal theory have specified transactional leaders. Their major characteristics are:

Contingent Reward: They contracts exchange of rewards for effort, promises rewards for good performance and recognize accomplishments.

Management by Exception (Active): Investigates for deviations from rules and standards and takes corrective measures.

Management by Exception (Passive): Intervenes only when standards are not met.

Laissez faire: Abdicates responsibilities and avoids making decisions.

b) Transformational Leadership Style: Such leaders inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organization as well as the followers. According to Stoner transformational leaders are characterized by distinct skills such anticipatory, visionary, value centric, empowerment and self-understanding. The major characteristics of such leaders according to Bass (1985) are:

Charisma: Provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust

Inspiration: Communicates high expectations, expresses purposes in simple ways.

Intellectual Stimulation: Promotes intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving.

Individualized Consideration: Gives personal attention, treats each employee individually, coaches, and advises.

Burns (1978) noted that transactional leadership refers to a type of leadership that is based on an exchange relationship between leader and follower. Burns felt that this exchange could take different economic, political, or psychological forms. Such leadership, he argued, does not bring leaders and followers together to pursue higher purposes. According to Bass (1990), transactional focus on the clarification of task requirements and the specification of contingent rewards. Transformational leaders interact with their followers in such a way that both leader and followers raise each other to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). In *Leadership and Performance beyond Expectations*, Bass (1985) expanded the theory of transactional and transformational leadership. While Burns (1978) had focused on the application of the theory in political setting, Bass (1985) was concerned with its application to business organizations. According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders are those who motivate followers to do more than originally was expected. That could be achieved, Bass

argued, through anyone of the following steps: (1) increasing followers awareness and consciousness of the importance of designated outcomes and the steps that lead to these outcomes, (2) encouraging followers to transcend their own self-interests, and (3) expanding or altering followers needs and wants according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs .In distinguishing between the Burns and

Limitations of the study:

- a) The study is only limited to small sample of literature reviews and it is difficult to make generalized conclusions.
- b) The perceptions of the respondents and the researcher about various leadership styles may vary.

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