

Positive Leadership Styles of Managers

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Abstract

In the era of globalization and recession the managers were under tremendous pressure in India. The managers had to experiment with their approach towards leadership, which forced them to change leadership style. The recent study investigated the most and least preferred styles of managers in the large and medium scale organizations. The study was conducted on 102 middle level managers. The findings revealed that Missionary style (Mean 8.9) was the most preferred leadership style by managers and Deserter (Mean 4.8) & Autocrat leadership (Mean 4.9) styles were the least preferred styles by the managers. The study also found that most of the preferred leadership styles had components of positive psychology. Based on these findings of the present study, it is recommended that managers, executives, human resource managers and other leaders in the organizations to have more inclination to apply leadership styles consisting positive components.

Keyword: Leadership style, Psychology.

Introduction

At some time or other, almost everyone has dreamt of being a leader. To take charge, direct others and alter events or even history-these are all common day-dreams. In fact, however, only a very few number of individuals manage to live these fantasies by becoming actual leaders. To make these fantasies come true, leadership should be taken up as an experience instead of a job. Leadership should be approached with different styles. Once you gain experience, you can decide which style to adopt and which to put down as per the situation and demand.

Leadership

Leadership can be defined as the process where, upon contact, humans influence each others' behavior, successful or essential leadership. Leadership takes part when one man actually changes another man in the way intended (Bass, 1960). It is basically the ability to form and mould attitudes and behavior of other individuals. It is the process of influencing others to mobilize and direct their efforts towards specific goals and attain these goals through them. It should be noted that a formal head may not necessarily be an effective leader and that there may be an informal leader who may exert more influence on workers than the formal leader. Despite the difference, the task of managerial leader is to get things done through people by motivating them. This can be achieved

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effectively through human relations involving understanding of human factors, communication process, interpersonal and intergroup behaviour, organizational dynamics and allied concepts.

The Reddin's model demonstrates four more effective leadership styles and four less effective styles of managers. The four less effective manager styles are Deserter, Missionary, Autocrat and Compromiser, while the four more effective styles are Bureaucrat, Developer, Benevolent Autocrat and Executive. Below are given the details of the leadership styles:

Deserter - Deserter leader is uninvolved and passive.

Missionary – Missionary style leader is primarily interested in harmony.

Autocrat - Autocrat leader shows no confidence in others, feels unpleasant, and is interested only in the immediate job at hand. These leaders could be termed as tellers. They direct orders to their associates. Autocratic leaders usually keep decisions and controls to themselves because they have assumed full responsibility for decision making.

Compromiser – Leader adopting compromiser style is a poor decision maker that is over influenced by the pressures of work, who minimizes immediate pressures and problems.

Bureaucrat – A Bureaucrat is primarily interested in rules and procedures for his own sake. He wants to maintain and control situations by his conscientious enforcements.

Developer – Democratic style leader trusts people, and is concerned with developing them as individuals. This type of leader assumes that individual members of a group who take part personally in the decision-making process will have greater commitment to the objectives and goals of the organization.

Benevolent Autocrat - Benevolent Autocrat is a type of leader who knows what he wants from the people, situations and how to get things completed in his way without causing resentment.

Executive – Executive leader is a good motivator who sets high standards, treats everyone differently and prefers team management.

Historical Review

Leadership styles have been studied by various psychologists in the past and will be research studies in the future too. The recent study emphasizes the positive leadership style of the studies previously conducted. The researcher wants to state that there is at least one positive leadership style in nearly every theory of leadership styles. The Table no. 1 gives us a view of various theories of leadership styles and out of them which are the positive leadership styles:

Positive Psychology and Leadership Styles

The positive psychology includes components like Happiness, Mental health, Motivation, Positive mental attitude, Confidence, Conspiracy, Courage, Creativity, Curiosity, Hope, Kindness, Leadership, Love, Love of learning, Mercy, Positive organizational behaviour, Praise, Prudence, Psychological resilience, Wisdom and Gratitude. Leadership and leadership styles have components of positive psychology (Kumar & Talawar, 2010). Leadership can be considered to be the personal qualities, behaviours, styles and decisions adopted by the leader (Arnold, 1998). A person who is appointed, elected or informally chosen to direct and coordinate the work of others in a group (Fiedler, 1995). Leadership is best defined, not as the property of a person with rare trait, but as relationship between a person and a situation. In this process of leadership, positive psychology components play vital role in the application and effectiveness of leadership

Review of Literature

The researches conducted by various psychologists and researchers also support, that leadership styles preferred by the managers included maximum components of positive psychology. R.S. Dwivedi (1967) researched on perceptions of management skills among Indian managers, conducted on 33 public and 30 private sector managers, showed importance to management skills. These skills had positive components which are as follows:

Rank	Quality
1	Ability to make quick decisions
2	High intelligence
3	Readiness to accept new ideas
4	Technical ability
5	Ability to understand people
6	Verbal ability
7	Willingness to ask other people for their opinion
8	Willingness to admit own mistakes
9	Available for discussions with workers
10	Willingness to pass on information to others

Hay and Mcber (2000) conducted a study on 4000 executives. The study identified six different leadership styles; coercive, pace-setting, democratic, affiliative and coaching. The result suggested that more the styles the leader uses, the better. In contrast, according to John Adair (2003), qualities of leaders may vary somewhat in different situation, but research and analysis of effective leaders have identified a number of generic characteristics which good leaders are likely to have. John Adair gave the list of following qualities which also have the components of positive psychology:

Enthusiasm- to get things done which they can communicate to other people.

Confidence-belief in themselves which again people can sense (but this must not be overconfidence, which again leads to arrogance.

Toughness-resilient, tenacious and demanding high standards, seeking respect but not necessarily popularity.

Integrity-being true to oneself-personal wholeness, soundness and honesty which inspires trust.

Warmth-in personal relationship, caring for people and being considerate.

Humility-willingness to listen and take the blame; not being arrogant and overbearing.

Binney and Williams (2005) proposed a way to reconceptualize change; based on the metaphor that organization is a living system rather than a machine. This perspective helped the leaders to see organizations as adaptive, self organizing, and interdependent with their environment and dynamic. This was called learning approach instead of leading approach. Later Mahalinga and Roy (2008) studied “A conceptual model of transformational leadership, organization culture and organizational effectiveness for NGO’s in Indian context. The study revealed that transformational leadership in NGO’s has direct impact on the culture and effectiveness of these organisations. Further, the study revealed transformational leadership has indirect impact on organizational effectiveness through organizational culture.

The recent “The Global Chief Executive Officer Study (2010)” researched on a sample of 1541 CEO’s, general managers and senior public sector leaders representing organizations of all sizes in 60 countries and 33 industries. Face to face interviews were conducted with all the CEOs. The study identified a new primary challenge: Complexity. It was suggested by them that no longer are the incremental changes sufficient for leaders but they also have to deliver the following:

1. Embody leadership
Embrace ambiguity.

Take risks that disrupt legacy business models.

Leapfrog beyond “tried and true” management styles.

2. Reinvent customers relationship
Honor your customers above all else.

Use two way communication to synchronize with your customers.

Profit from the information explosion.

3. Build operating dexterity
Simplify whenever possible.

Promote a mindset of being fast and flexible.

Be “glocal”.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the most & least preferred leadership style.
2. To find out whether the most preferred leadership styles have components of positive psychology.

Hypotheses

1. Bureaucrat, Developer, Benevolent autocrat and Executive leadership style are most preferred by executives.
2. Deserter, Missionary, Autocrat and Compromiser are least preferred leadership style by executives.

Research Methodology

Sample

The sample included the survey of 102 executives of middle level managers from large scale industries located in and around Nashik Industrial area. All the executives were male and had work experience ranging from 4 years to 15 years. These executives were from the middle level to top-level management. The executives were randomly selected by the investigator from the following organizations: EPCOS, Unideritend Ltd, Max Energy, Atlas Copco, Rothre and Blue Cross.

Procedure

The Management Style Diagnosis Test of W.J. Reddin (1988) was used for the study. The test is designed solely for the use of managers. It is directly related to the eight styles of the 3-D theory of managerial effectiveness and it has been widely used in business, government and universities in various countries. It has a total of 56 pairs of statements and respondents have to choose “A” or “B” based upon its appropriateness. Later the respondents’ responses are taken on individual score sheets which helps in obtaining preferred managerial style; supporting and over reject style. The reliability of the test was found to be 0.69 and 0.76.

Data Collection

Data was individually collected on ‘The Management Style Diagnosis Test’. The questionnaires were individually given to respondents with the prior permission of the organization. While giving the questionnaire, oral instructions were also given apart from the instructions on the diagnosis test. Some of the executives even asked questions about the test. Some of the executives had high including doctorates in their respective fields. It was a fruitful experience for the researcher to have interaction with different managers of various organizations.

Results

The table 2 shows that the Missionary style, with a mean score of 8.9, was the most preferred leadership style by the managers, followed by the Developer (Mean 7.83), Benevolent autocrat (Mean 7.83 and Executive leadership styles (Mean 7.83). Autocrat (Mean 4.8) and Deserter (Mean 4.9) leadership styles were the least preferred leadership

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styles by the managers. The result also reveals that the large scale organizations prefer either Missionary style or Developer leadership styles over other leadership styles. The result contradicts, regarding Missionary style, as being included in less effective leadership styles by Reddin in his research.

Table 3 shows the preferred leadership styles by the organizations. The Table indicates that Missionary leadership style is most preferred by most of the organizations followed by the developer leadership style. The table also shows that Deserter leadership style is least preferred style by most of the organizations.

Conclusions

From the study the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Missionary style was the most preferred leadership style by the executives; hence we reject the first hypothesis.
- Autocrat and Deserter leadership styles were the least preferred styles; therefore we partially accept the second hypothesis.

Based on these findings of this study, it is recommended that managers and executives, human resource managers and other leaders in the organizations to have more inclination to use leadership styles comprising of positive components.

Table 1 Showing the Various Theories of Leadership and the Positive Aspects

Year	Name of Psychologist	Name of Theory	Positive Leadership Style
1927	Elton Mayo	Human Relationship	Human relationship
1957	Douglas McGregor	Theory X and Y	Theory Y
1940	Ohio University Studies	Structure and Consideration	High structure and high consideration
1970	W.J. Reddin	Less Effective and More Effective	More effective
1975	Dansereau	Leaders Member Exchange	Leaders member exchange
1983	Alastair Mant	Binary & Ternary style	Ternary style

Table 2 Mean Scores of Managers Leadership Styles in their Respective Organizations

Name of the Orgn & Mean score	Deserter	Missionary	Autocrat	Compromiser	Bureaucrat	Developer	Benevolent Autocrat	Executive
Epcos	4.6	8.2	4.6	6.3	7.3	8.5	8.3	7.8
Uniderit-end	5.2	9	4.6	6.2	7.3	7.2	8.6	8.4
Max Energy	4	8.9	5	6.6	7.2	9.1	7.5	7.4
Atlas Copco	4.1	9.8	4.3	6.5	6.9	8.6	7.6	7.8
Rothre	6.2	9.2	5.6	6.2	7.6	6.7	7.1	7.2
Blue Cross	5.2	8.6	5.5	6.9	7.8	6.9	8.0	7.4
Total	29.3	53.7	29.6	38.7	44.1	47	47	46
Mean	4.8 (Least preferred)	8.9 (Most preferred)	4.9	6.4	7.3	7.83	7.83	7.83

Table 3 Preferred Leadership Styles by the Organizations

Organization	Least preferred Leadership style	Most preferred Leadership style
EPCOS	Deserter	Developer
Unideritend Ltd.	Autocrat	Missionary
Max Energy	Deserter	Developer
Atlas Copco	Deserter	Missionary
Rothre	Deserter	Missionary
Blue Cross	Deserter	Missionary

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