Tri dimensional Leadership model: Its application in the hierarchical levels

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Abstract: Bygone leadership theories have been successful in guiding managers on how to motivate fellow colleagues (subordinates) to excel in their performance. But these theories have failed to identify a single best approach of leadership for all situations. But William James Reddin's three dimensional management style Theory provides insight on the leadership styles to be employed in relevance to situations. This paper is based on a study of 3D management style theory and Tri Dimensional leadership effectiveness model in practice where the researcher has made an attempt to differentiate leadership styles and examine the association between leadership behavior and hierarchical levels. Analysis of data reveals that there exists a significant association between the two. The reveals that managers at lower level who follow separated and dedicated basic leadership style are employing ineffective style adaptability; Managers at middle level following Dedicated, Integrated and Related basic leadership styles are observed to employ effective style adaptability and managers at the top level following Integrated, Separated and Related basic leadership styles employ a blend of both effective and ineffective style adaptability.

Keywords: Style adaptability, ineffective style, effective style

I. INTRODUCTION

The era of industrialization and globalization has posed intense competition amongst the corporate world. With such a scenario, one of the behavioral concepts that are gaining attention and importance throughout is – "Leadership". The success of an enterprise depends on the leader's knowledge, abilities and skills to effectively and efficiently cope with external and internal environmental changes. In Kenneth Blanchard's words "The job of the leader is to bring about magnificence in people and to create an environment where they feel safe and supported and ready to do the best job possible in accomplishing key goals". The role of a leader now has drastically switched from being directive to participative. The horizon of a leader and leader's responsibilities are widened. One of the prime and contemporaneous responsibilities of a leader is to anticipate the situation and employ appropriate leadership style accordingly.

Paul Hershey and Kenneth Blanchard's Tri dimensional Leadership Effectiveness model provides adequate information on the effective and ineffective leadership styles. Their remarkable work on leadership comprise of 3 dimensions – Task orientation, Relationship orientation and Effectiveness.

Task orientation – Represents an authoritarian Leader behavior.

Relationship orientation – Represents participative Leader behavior.

Effectiveness – Represents appropriate (or) inappropriate leadership styles employed in accordance with the situations.

Tri dimensional Leadership Effectiveness model shows how and when each leadership style is effective and matches style to situation. The 4 **latent leadership styles** are **Related, Integrated, Separated and Dedicated.** It is further sub classified into

more effective and less effective styles. **More effective styles** include **Developer, executive, Bureaucrat and Benevolent autocrat. Less effective styles** include **Missionary, Compromiser, Deserter and Autocrat.**

Style Adaptability: style adaptability is the degree to which leader behavior is appropriate to the demands of a given situation.

Effective leadership styles: Effective leadership styles (Developer, executive, Bureaucrat and Benevolent autocrat) are those where the leader behavior is considered to be appropriate in a particular situation.

Ineffective leadership styles: Ineffective leadership styles (Missionary, Compromiser, Deserter and Autocrat) are those where the leader behavior is considered to be inappropriate in particular situations.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are numerous studies which reveal that there are various leadership styles employed in enterprises. An attempt is made by the researcher to assess Tri – dimensional Leadership effectiveness model at Lower, Middle and Top level in mechanistic and organic structures.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To differentiate Leadership styles and examine the association between Leadership behavior and Hierarchical levels.

IV. METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the objective of differentiating leadership styles and examining the association between leadership behavior and hierarchical levels, the researcher has made use of a questionnaire that is descriptive of effectiveness of leadership style and ability to adapt and required information was collected from employees belonging to manufacturing and IT sectors.

V. RESEARCH DESIGN

Experimental and descriptive research design is employed to examine the association between leadership behavior and hierarchical levels.

VI. DATA COLLECTION

The requisite data is collected through both primary and secondary sources.

The primary source of information is collected by using a questionnaire that is descriptive of effectiveness of leadership style and ability to adapt and was distributed amongst the employees belonging to manufacturing and IT sectors.

Secondary source of information is collected from various research journals for compilation of supportive data.

VII. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Structured questionnaire comprising of 12 situations developed by Paul Hershey and Kenneth Blanchard which evaluates self-perception of adopted leadership styles is administered to manage at different hierarchical levels. Also secondary information including designation, work experience, number of employees reporting, number of training programs/ seminars / conferences organized and Number of promotions are also included in the questionnaire for further analysis.

Subjects

A sample size of 300 respondents is considered for the study which includes 150 respondents each from manufacturing and IT firms. Further classification of the respondents is as follows:

1. 20 respondents belonging to supervisory level

2. 20 respondents belonging to Middle level

3.   10 respondents belonging to Top level

Hence 50 respondents each from Larsen &Tubro Mysore, Rane (Madras), JK Tyre and Industries ltd, Mysore constitute respondents of manufacturing firms and 50 employees each from Infosys, Excel soft and Techmill Technologies constitute respondents of IT firms.

Statistical Tools used

To assess and interpret the collected data descriptive statistics and contingency coefficient is used.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1.   Determining the association between Basic leadership styles and hierarchical level

Table 1

Basic Leadership Styles		designation			Total
		lower level	middle level	top level	
Dedicated		12	6	2	20
		60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Dedicated/Integrated		4	12	0	16
		25.0%	**75.0%**	0.0%	100.0%
Dedicated/Related		2	2	0	4
		50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Integrated		90	74	34	198
		45.5%	37.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Integrated/Related		4	14	2	20
		20.0%	**70.0%**	10.0%	100.0%
Integrated/Separated		0	0	4	4
		0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Related		16	12	6	34
		47.1%	35.3%	17.6%	100.0%
Related/separated		0	0	2	2
		0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Separated		2	0	0	2
		100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		130	120	50	300
		43.3%	40.0%	16.7%	100.0%

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Contingency Coefficient		.387	.000
N of Valid Cases		300	

From the above table we can infer that a significant association was observed between basic styles of leadership and hierarchical levels, where contingency coefficient value of 0.387 was found to be significant at 0.000 level.

From the table it is evident that in **lower level** we find more of **separated and dedicated**, where as in **middle level** we find more of **Dedicated/Integrated and Integrated/Related** and in the **top level** there are more of **Integrated/Separated and Related/Separated** form of leadership styles.

Discussion

At **lower level** of the hierarchy the dominant leadership style followed by leaders is either **Separated style or dedicated style.** In **separated leadership style**, emphasis on both Task and Relationship are low. At the supervisory level, the exposure individual possess on matters of decision making are comparatively less than at the middle and top level. This might be one of the possibilities for following separated leadership style at supervisory level. On the other hand, **dedicated leadership style** emphasizes more on task and low on relationship. Competent individuals at this level strive more for recognition and rewards. One of the superlative means of accomplishing their need of being recognized is by getting the task done through group members. Individuals following this leadership style do not emphasize much on maintaining personal relationships between members of his group.

At the **middle level** of the hierarchy the dominant leadership style followed by leaders is **Dedicated/Integrated (or) Integrated/Related.** Leaders at this level exercise a blend of various leadership styles depending on the situations. Amongst the blend of styles, more frequently employed style is **integrated leadership style**. This is an ideal leadership style where prominence for both task and relationship is high. One of the best approaches a leader can adopt for getting the task done effectively and efficiently by his group members is by providing them socio – emotional support and by maintaining a healthy relationship with his followers.

At the **top level** of the hierarchy the dominant leadership style followed by leaders is **Integrated/Separated (or) Related/Separated.** Leaders at this level have vivid and wide range of responsibilities which includes decision making, formulation of plans, budgeting and controlling. Amidst these responsibilities, leaders at this level delegate authority to their subordinates and are inclined to practice Management by exception hence follow more of **separated leadership style** where task and relationship orientation tends to be low. Leaders following separated leadership style at top level reflect the trust and confidence they have in their followers.

2. Determining the association between Style adaptability and hierarchical levels

Table 2				
Style adaptability		designation		**Total**
		lower level	**middle level**	**top level**	
	Autocrat	0	2	2	4
		0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Autocrat/compromiser	2	2	0	4
		50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Autocrat/Missionary	2	0	0	2
		100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Benevolent .Autocrat	12	2	0	14
		85.7%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
	Benevolent Autocrat/Developer	0	2	0	2
		0.0%	**100.0%**	0.0%	100.0%
	Benevolent Autocrat/Executive	2	8	0	10
		20.0%	**80.0%**	0.0%	100.0%
	Compromiser	8	4	6	18
		44.4%	22.2%	33.3%	100.0%

Compromiser/Deserter	0	0	2	2
	0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Compromiser/Missionary	0	0	2	2
	0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Deserter	2	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Developer	10	12	2	24
	41.7%	50.0%	8.3%	100.0%
Developer/Bureaucrat	0	0	2	2
	0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Executive	82	70	26	178
	46.1%	39.3%	14.6%	100.0%
Executive/Bureaucrat	0	0	2	2
	0.0%	0.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%
Executive/Developer	4	14	0	18
	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Missionary	2	0	4	6
	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	100.0%
Neutral	4	4	2	10
	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	130	120	50	300
	43.3%	40.0%	16.7%	100.0%

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Contingency Coefficient		.501	.000
N of Valid Cases		300	

From the above table we can infer that a significant association was observed between style adaptability and hierarchical levels, where contingency coefficient value of 0.501 was found to be significant at 0.000 level.

From the table it is evident that in **lower level** we find more of **Deserter and Autocrat/Missionary**, where as in **middle level** we find more of **Benevolent autocrat/Developer and Benevolent autocrat/Executive** and in the **top level** there are more of **Compromiser / Deserter, Compromiser / Missionary, Developer / Bureaucrat and Executive / Bureaucrat** form of leadership styles.

Discussion

Style adaptability (or) Effectiveness determines whether the behavior exhibited by the leader in a given situation is appropriate (or) inappropriate. Effectiveness results from a style's appropriateness to the situation in which it is used. Accordingly, in the above table effective and ineffective leadership styles corresponding to the basic styles of leadership is assessed.

From Table 1, we see more of **Separated** and **Dedicated** leadership style at **lower level**. But their style adaptability **(Table 2)** indicates that they are following **ineffective leadership styles** namely **Deserter and Autocrat / Missionary.**

Deserter is a manager who has low orientation on both task and relationship in given situations. These individuals remain uninvolved or passive on matters of decision making. The possible reason for adopting this ineffective leadership style would be either to avoid or minimize immediate work pressure. An **Autocrat** is a manager who uses high task orientation and low relationship orientation in situation where such behavior is considered to be inappropriate. An autocratic manager is perceived to have very low or no confidence on his subordinates and hence keeps the decision making authority with self. The possible reason being , having the fear of losing power and authority or getting the task accomplished immediately without any flaws.

Missionary is a manager who has high relationship orientation and low task orientation in situations where such behavior is inappropriate. Managers with this style emphasize more on harmony as contrast to accomplishment of tasks. One of the probable reason for exhibiting such behavior would be avoiding risks relating to both task and relationship.

In correspondence to basic leadership styles followed by leaders at the **middle level**, it is seen that their style adaptability follows **effective leadership style** namely **Benevolent Autocrat / Developer and Benevolent autocrat / Executive.**

Benevolent autocrats are managers whose major emphasis is on getting the task accomplished and hence they employ high orientation on task and low orientation on relationship in situations where such behavior is appropriate. **Developers** are managers having high orientation towards relationship and low orientation on task. Managers who are developers accent more on developing their subordinates as individuals. **Executives** are managers who prefer team management and are considered to be following an ideal style of leadership in organizations. They prefer to employ high orientation on both task and relationship. These managers set high standards for their subordinates and act as a good motivating force to accomplish the task with desired standards.

At the **top level,** the analysis reveals that style adaptability followed in correspondence to their basic leadership styles are an a combination of both ineffective and effective leadership styles namely **Compromiser / Deserter, Compromiser / Missionary, Developer / Bureaucrat and Executive / Bureaucrat.**

These combinations of leadership styles are used by top level managers depending on the maturity level of the followers. As defined by Paul Hershey and Kenneth Blanchard "Maturity is defined by the level of achievement – motivation, willingness and ability to take responsibility and task relevant education and experience of an individual (or) group.

The combination **Compromiser / Deserter** is an ineffective leadership style where, as a **Compromiser** a manager uses high orientation on both task and relationship in situations where such behavior is inappropriate. As a **Deserter,** a manager uses low orientation on both task and relationship in situations where such behavior is considered to be inappropriate. These managers are considered to be poor decision makers and hence they fail in identifying appropriate and inappropriate situations and relevant leadership styles as the situation demands.

A combination of **Compromiser / Missionary** is a form of ineffective leadership style. In this combination manager uses high orientation towards relationship in situations which are considered to be inappropriate. These managers have high affinity towards maintaining cordial relationship with their subordinates. One of the possible means of getting the work done is by influencing their subordinates by providing them with psychological support.

A combination of **Developer / Bureaucrat** is a form of effective leadership style. In this combination managers use low orientation on task in situations which are considered to be appropriate. Managers using this combination of leadership style are believed to have utmost trust on their subordinate's maturity level in carrying out the assigned task. As a **Developer**, managers have great affinity towards developing the personality of his subordinates. As a **Bureaucrat**, managers are primarily interested in administering rules and procedures for their own sake.

The combination **Executive / Bureaucrat** is an effective leadership style where, as an **Executive** managers use high orientation on both task and relationship in situations where such behavior is appropriate. As a **Bureaucrat**, managers use low orientation on both task and relationship where such behavior is considered to be appropriate. These managers are good decision makers and have the capability of differentiating favorable and unfavorable situations and employ leadership styles accordingly.

IX. CONCLUSION

As evidenced by the data presented, it can be concluded that statistically there exists a significant association between leadership behavior and hierarchical levels. Further, the analysis also reveals that leaders at lower level are following ineffective leadership styles which are considered to be inappropriate in given situations. Leaders at the middle level are following effective

leadership styles which are considered to be appropriate in specific situations. Accordingly, at the top level an assortment of both effective and ineffective leadership styles are followed which are viewed to be appropriate in few situations and inappropriate otherwise.

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