

Implications of Leadership Styles

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ABSTRACT

In this global competitive environment, success of any organisation depends on the leaders; effective leadership style needs to be adopted to reduce the attrition rate. There are several leadership styles and which style one adopts depends on the followers and the situation. The organizational goals can be achieved in an effective manner only if the effective style of leadership is followed. The paper details the various styles of leadership and their implications. Secondary data is collected from various sources like journals, websites and articles to ensure detailed understanding of the subject and genuineness of information.

Keywords- *leadership, autocratic, democratic, employee.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The term leadership is widely used by political orators, business executives, social workers, philosophers and scholars both in speech and writing. Different authors have given the definitions for the term leadership. The core points that run through all the definitions and which constitute the essence of leadership are

- [1.] Leadership refers to the ability of one individual to influence others.
- [2.] The influence is exercised to change the behaviour of others.
- [3.] Behaviour is changed through non-coercive means.
- [4.] Change of behaviour is caused with an objective of achieving a shared goal.
- [5.] The person influencing others (leader) possesses a set of qualities or characteristics which he or she uses to influence others.
- [6.] Leadership is a group phenomenon. It involves interaction between two or more people

II. CLASSIFICATION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

Leadership style is divided into five types

- A) Styles based on Authority Retained
- B) Styles based on Task versus People emphasis
- C) Style based on Assumptions about people
- D) Likert's four styles
- E) Entrepreneurial leadership styles

A] Styles based on Authority Retained

It is the classical approach of classification of the leadership style and is followed now-a-days. Styles in this approach are classified depending on the authority retained by the leader versus delegation of authority to the subordinate employees. It is classified further into three types

1. Authoritarian style: It is also known as autocratic style of leadership. Autocratic leaders are classic "do as I say" types. This style involves retention of full authority by the leader. Leader decides, decision is passed on to subordinate instructions about the implementation of the decision are given and the subordinates are expected to do what the leader has told them to do.

Implication of Authoritarian style

- The tasks are completed efficiently by the employees
- It may lead to low morale of the employees
- Workers may lose initiative and avoid responsibility for any errors

2. Participative style: There are three related types of participative leaders

a) Consultative leaders seek opinions from group before making a decision, yet they do not feel grateful to accept the group's thinking's; these leaders make it understandable that they alone have final authority to make final decision.

b) Consensual leaders promote group discussion on an issue and then make a decision on that reflects the general agreement (consensus) of group members. Consensual leaders delegate more authority to the group than do the consultative leaders. This style leads to considerable delay in decision making because every member has to give his/her consent.

c) Democratic leaders confer final authority on the group. They function as collectors of opinion and take a vote before making a decision. Democratic leaders delegate full authority to subordinates. This style is more relevant for community activities than for work settings.

3. Free-rein style: Also known as laissez-faire style of leadership. The leader here chooses not to adopt a leadership position, generally relinquishing it to someone else in the work group. This style of leadership works when the group is composed of highly committed members. It gives chance to the employees to take the initiative. But on the other side there are chances that the employees who are new may not get proper guidance.

Implications of Participative style of leadership

- It is highly effective where group comprises competent and motivated members who want to get involved in making decisions and giving feedback to the leader.

- Employee’s feelings of self worth and satisfaction are increased because the leader conveys a sense of confidence in employee judgment.
- Employee’s participation allows them to satisfy high level needs such as esteem and self-actualization by allowing them to take part in decision making.
- Employee’s participation in decision making improves the quality of decisions, because when more people think about problem it is likely that a better solution will be found and also there will be less resistance to change because those who have developed the solution will usually support its implementation

B] Styles based on Task versus People emphasis

One more way of classifying the leadership style is based on the relative concern the leader places on the task to be performed vis-à-vis the people performing the tasks.

A leader who places greater emphasis on task performance tends to exhibit the following behaviours:

- ✓ Organizing and defining the roles of the group members
- ✓ Explaining what activities each has to do and when, where and how tasks are to be accomplished.
- ✓ Establishing well defined patterns of organisation, channels of communication and ways of task accomplishment

A leader who places greater emphasis on people tries to gain their relationships by exhibiting such behaviours as

- ✓ Establishing channels of communication
- ✓ Extending psychological support to them
- ✓ Developing mutual trust
- ✓ Developing empathy for them



Depending on the task emphasis or people emphasis, the above four combination are possible and a brief description is given below

a. Higher task and Low relationship- Here the leader emphasizes employees how to get the tasks accomplished and spends minimum time giving psychological support. This style may be effective where the employees are inexperienced with the work to be performed. This style may be well suited to situations where seasonal help is involved. Seasonal employees may be unfamiliar with the task and these require direct guidance on performing the work properly. The leader is not necessarily rude or discourteous. He simply takes the expedient route of focusing on work rather than people.

b. Higher-task and Higher relationship- The leader spends considerable time showing employees how to get the work accomplished and provides them psychological support. It results in high productivity and personal satisfaction. This style works best in situations where people need an active and involved leader. This style is effective when employees are lacking in self-confidence and technical skill.

c. Higher relationship and Low task- This style gives employees much encouragement and support but a minimum guidance about the task accomplishment. In some situations employees need more psychological support rather than technical instructions.

d. Low-relationship and Low-task- A leader using this style is neither here nor there. It is essentially a free rein style. Subordinates are given considerable autonomy in performing their work. They are also given very little encouragement, psychological support and praise. Therefore the employees are free to run their own show. When subordinates are highly skilled and psychologically mature, this style can be effective.

C] Style based on Assumptions about people

Depending on what assumptions a leader makes about his/her followers, two styles may be distinguished. This two way classification is based on McGregor's famous Theory X and Theory Y assumptions about people.

Description of Theory X: This Theory is based on papa knows best. In other words, a manager has thorough knowledge and excludes workers from decision making process. A manager has authority to take decisions; the workers should follow whatever decisions are taken by the manager.

Assumptions

- Workers dislike to work by themselves.
- Workers are not ready to accept responsibility
- Workers prefer to be directed by others
- Workers are unambitious
- Workers by nature resist changes
- Workers lack creativity and fail to solve organizational problems
- Strict control over employees is necessary to achieve organizational problems

- Authority is not delegated to the employees
- Autocratic leadership is followed

Description of Theory Y: Theory Y is opposite to Theory X.

So Theory X is considered as traditional theory and Theory Y is considered as modern theory.

Assumptions

- Workers are ready to accept responsibility
- Workers are directed by themselves
- Workers are ambitious
- Workers are ready to cope with changes
- Workers are creative
- Workers exercise self control and self direction to achieve organizational objectives.
- Authority is delegated to the employees
- Democratic leadership is followed

D] Likert's four styles

Likert develops four styles of leadership to capture the management culture of an organisation:

a. Exploitative authoritative- As an exploitative authoritarian, the leader uses sanctions, communication is downward, superiors and subordinates are psychologically distant, and the decisions are generally made at the top of the organization.

b. Benevolent authoritarian- Here the leader uses rewards to encourage performance, upward communication is permitted but to the extent the boss wants, subservience to boss is widespread, and there is some delegation in decision making, through major decisions are made by the people at the top of hierarchy.

c. Consultative- Here the leader uses rewards, communication is two-way although upward, communication is cautious and limited, some involvement is sought from employees, and as in the benevolent authoritarian style, subordinates are involved in decision making in a limited way.

d. Participative- The leader disperses economic rewards and makes full use of group participation and involvement in setting performance standards and improving methods and procedures. Subordinates and superiors are psychologically close, and group decision making is widespread in the organisation. There is a tendency among a number of individuals to belong to more than workgroup in order to promote intergroup links and understanding.

E] Entrepreneurial leadership styles

Based on both their personality characteristics, and the circumstances of operating business, many entrepreneurs use a similar leadership style. The most notable features of this style are

- Impatience and brusqueness towards employees because the entrepreneur is always busy
- A heavy task orientation combined with a very direct approach to giving instructions to employees.
- A charismatic personality that inspires others to want to do business with him or her despite the impatience.
- A much stronger interest in dealing with customers than employees.
- A strong dislike for bureaucratic rules and regulations
- Anxiety to consolidate business gains as quickly as possible

IV. CONCLUSION

Leaders have adopted various styles when they lead others in the organization. Some are using democratic, people or relationship centered approach and others prefer autocratic, production centered method in order to achieve a similar goal, which is organizational effectiveness. The choice of a style is contingent on diverse factors such as personality traits of leaders, followers' acceptance of the leaders, their readiness, task complexity and the norms and values embraced by the organizational members. Therefore, leaders must possess special ability to diagnose the organizational environment, accurately identify the contingent factors and subsequently make a sound decision in leading the organization towards success.

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