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       NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

       STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

       OBJECTIVES

       HYPOTHESES

       RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

       RESULTS & DISCUSSION

       FINDINGS

       RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

       CONCLUSIONS

       SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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- Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

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AN EXAMINATION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES OF SENIOR AND MIDDLE LEVEL MANAGERS IN SELECTED ORGANISATIONS IN MUSCAT, SULTANATE OF OMAN

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to examine the leadership styles of senior and middle level managers employed in construction and engineering companies in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. Data was collected using the Leadership Styles Questionnaire. The findings of the study suggest that senior level managers Delegate, Facilitate, Direct and Coach whereas middle level managers Delegate, Direct, Facilitate and Coach.

KEYWORDS
Authoritarian Leadership Style, Coaching Leadership style, Delegative Leadership Style, Facilitating Leadership Style.

INTRODUCTION

The global marketplace is faced with different challenges that affect an organizations overall management and operations. Various pressures on the internal and external conditions such as the unstable world and local economies, the workforce, the customers, and even the management itself risk the success or failure of the organization. In implementing effective management of a business, regardless of what kind of management strategy is used, the person who is foremost in all the transactions of the business must be able to deal with all the potential hazards. Thus, Leadership is an important aspect of any organization.

For decades, the issue on leadership has been undertaken in various studies. In fact the study on leadership dates back to 1921 (Hughes, Ginnett&Curphy, 1999, p. 8). Leadership comprises the aptitude and ability to inspire and influence the thinking, attitudes, and behavior of other people (Adler, 1991; Bass and Stogdill, 1989; Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Kotter, 1988). Leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of other individuals in the achievement of a common task (Chemers, 1997)

Yukl (2002) defined leadership as the process of inspiring other people to comprehend and agree on what needs to be done and how to accomplish them effectively. In addition, leadership is also defined as the process of facilitating collective and individual efforts to fulfill shared objectives According to Bass (1990), leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions a and expectations of the members.

Somewhere between the broad personality trait and the specific behavior sits the leadership style. Styles reflect relatively stable patterns of response to social situations. Leadership style refers to the degree of direction that the leader provides to subordinates in attempting to influence their behavior toward the accomplishment of organizational objectives (Gibson & Marcoulides, 1995). Leadership style is the total pattern of explicit and implicit leader's action as seen by employees. The styles of leadership are the authoritarian (autocratic, directive) style (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939), permissive (delegative) style, democratic (Facilitating) style (Schriesheim, 1982; Newstrom, 1993) and Coaching (Newstrom, 2009). Through the current study, we would like to explore the leadership styles adopted by senior and middle level managers.

Senior and Middle level managers face fundamentally different task frameworks. Senior managers can independently take policy decisions; they have more of multifaceted tasks and extended periods. Within certain boundaries defined, for instance, by the organization's environment or by its board of directors, upper managers can relatively autonomously draft strategic policy decisions (Hambrick and Mason, 1984). They usually face more complex and ambiguous tasks with more extended time frames, as compared to managers on lower hierarchical levels (Sashkin, 1988).

Middle level managers on the other hand have to follow guidelines and orders from the senior level managers. Though they may have some freedom in implementing management's decisions into operational plans, this autonomy is however restricted. These differences may affect the leadership styles of senior and middle level managers.

Bruch and Walter (2007) investigated whether the occurrence of Transformational leadership behaviors varied between upper and middle managers and whether such behaviors differentially influence the job satisfaction of upper and middle managers' direct subordinates. Using the Multifactor questionnaire 5X they found that Idealized influence and inspirational motivation occurred more frequently among upper rather than middle managers, while there were no differences for intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

COACHING LEADERSHIP STYLE

A rapidly emerging metaphor for the leader is that of a coach. Coaching means the leader prepares guides and directs a "player" but does not play the game. The coaching leader selects the right player, teaches and develops subordinates, is available for problem-oriented consultation, to review resource needs and to listen to inputs from employees.

This leadership style is more likely to be exhibited by senior rather than middle level managers. As Antonakis and Atwater (2002) argued, "the role of top-level leaders is to use their vision and values to ensure that organizational resources are used to achieve the organization's intended objectives … At lower hierarchical levels, values and vision also play a role, but different instrumental leader behaviors … will contribute to organizational performance" (p. 697). In contrast to upper management, middle managers' job profile usually does not include the formulation of visionary goals (Bryman, 1992). Also, upper managers' responsibilities are usually more abstract and long-term oriented than those of middle managers (Pavett and Lau, 1983; Van der Velde et al., 1999). Thus, senior level managers are in a better position to represent the management's position in a convincing manner, can motivate them with monetary and non-monetary rewards, and instill confidence in their ability to perform, appreciate their achievements and good work and provide them with a lot of feedback on how they are doing.

Middle managers may nevertheless be able to achieve certain levels of inspirational motivation by explaining the visionary aspirations defined by senior managers towards their followers, by clarifying how work unit goals relate to the such visions, and by translating strategic objectives into daily routines (Rainey

and Watson, 1996). However, while middle managers' inspirational motivation is likely to remain limited to such a smaller scale, upper managers more frequently have opportunities for the development and communication of a global, strategic vision for the entire organization or significant subunits thereof (Shamir and Howell, 1999).

FACILITATING LEADERSHIP STYLE

Intellectually stimulating leaders encourage followers to develop innovative ideas and to challenge old ways of doing things by proactively involving followers in their decision-making (Bass, 1985). Upper managers may perform such behaviors to a greater extent than middle managers, because due to their higher autonomy, they may have greater freedom to probe innovative solutions and to involve subordinates in the search for novel approaches (Shamir and Howell, 1999). In addition, with upper managers' work problems often being ill defined and complex, they may more frequently depend on direct subordinates' creativity in developing effective solutions (Waldman et al., 2004). Thus, senior level managers may have the power, the chance, and the need to exhibit facilitating leadership styles.

Middle managers may find it more difficult to approach work problems in innovative ways, as their tasks are pre-defined. Therefore, middle managers also may less often require their subordinates' creativity to arrive at effective solutions, diminishing the necessity for intellectually stimulating behaviors. Finally, middle managers may lack the authority to promote innovative processes. They "often serve as rule enforcers and protectors of the organization rather than innovators" (Rainey and Watson, 1996, p. 780). Due to their general familiarity with followers' work, middle managers may be able to stimulate followers' creativity by framing given tasks in challenging ways (Rainey and Watson, 1996). Nevertheless, such behavior is likely to be less frequent than in the case of senior managers. Accordingly, managers at higher organizational levels have been found to more frequently include subordinates in their decision-making than lower level managers (Jablin, 1987) and to give subordinates greater opportunities to critically question managerial instructions (Miles et al., 1996).

AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP STYLE

Authoritarian style (Huffman and Piggrem, 2003) of leadership states that the leader has the authority over his subordinates. Autocratic leaders centralize power and decision making in themselves. They structure the complete work situation for the employees. They give detailed instructions, specify goals and objectives and keep a check on staff to see if they are achieving the desired outcome. In order to achieve the set standards and goals, both senior and middle level managers may have to display Directive leadership style. Middle level managers being the "rule enforcers" and given their familiarity with the followers and their work, are more likely to exhibit authoritarian leadership style.

DELEGATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE

The permissive (Delegative) refers to the kind of leadership wherein the followers are permitted to be involved in the decision making process. The leader implements minimal control or manipulation on their followers. The leader delegates broad responsibilities to the staff and expects them to handle the details, to find and correct their own errors. However, the leader is still accountable for the final decision to be made.

METHOD

DATA COLLECTION & SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Data for the current study was collected from six large construction and engineering private sector companies. Managing Directors of each of these organization were requested to rate their reactions in typical situations. Thirty-six middle level managers representing all the major departments in the organization volunteered to participate in the survey. All the senior level managers were males, in the age group of 45 to 60 years and had been employed in the company for more than ten years.

Middle level managers were also predominantly male (94%), having mean age = 33 years and had been employed in the present organization for more than two years.

MEASURES

The leadership styles questionnaire was employed to gather information regarding leadership style This survey instrument is a twenty four item Likert scale questionnaire ranging from 1 (to almost no extent) to 5 (to a very great extent). A higher value represented greater use of the leadership style. It has four sub dimensions to measure directing (I check staff's work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning.), coaching (hold periodic meetings to show support for company policy and mission.), delegating (provide staff with clear responsibilities and allow them to decide how to accomplish them and facilitating (I appoint staff into task groups to action policies affecting them.) leadership style. Each sub dimension had six items. Internal reliabilities for each of the sub scales range from 0.89 to 0.81.

RESULTS

The first research question addresses to the leadership styles of the senior and middle level managers. It is observed from Table I that the respondent senior and middle level managers are using all the four leadership styles. However, they are using delegative leadership style (mean = 24.000) to greater extent as compared to the other styles.

(Facilitating = 23.3529, Coaching = 22.5883 and Directing = 22.4706).Managers at all levels ensure that information systems are timely and accurate and that information is fed directly to staff (mean = 4.4118),they recognize staffs achievement with encouragement and support(mean = 4.3529), they provide staff with clear responsibilities and allow them to decide how to accomplish them (mean = 4.2353), hold regular meetings to discuss work status (mean = 4.2353)check staffs work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning(mean = 4.1765), Provide staff with time and resources to pursue their own development objectives (mean = 4.1176) and expect staff to create their own goals and objectives and submit them in finished form(mean = 4.0588).

For the senior level managers, providing staff with clear responsibilities and allowing them to decide how to accomplish them co related significantly (r= 0.699**, p = 0.002) with recognizing staffs achievement with encouragement and support. Checking staffs work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning co related significantly with

Discussing any organizational policy changes with staff prior to taking action (r = 0. 614**, p = 0.009), emphasizing the importance of quality but allowing staff to establish the control standards (r = 0.607**, p = 0.010). Providing staff with time and resources to pursue their own development objectives co related significantly with discussing any organizational policy changes with staff prior to taking action (r =0.814**, p = 0.000).

For the middle level managers, Ensuring that information systems are timely and accurate and that information is fed directly to staff co related significantly (r = 0.634**, p = 0.006) with making sure that staff are aware of and understand all company policies and procedures, recognizing staffs achievement with encouragement and support(r = 0.637**, p=0.006).Recognizing staff's achievement with encouragement and support co related significantly with appointing staff into task groups to action policies affecting them (r = 0.611**, p = 0.009) and providing staff with clear responsibility and allowing them to decide how to accomplish them (r = 0.699**, p = 0.002).

Checking staffs work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning co related significantly (r = 0.665**, p = 0.004) setting own performance standards for each aspect of the staffs job, explain the benefits of achieving the work goals (r = 0.644**, p = 0.005).

CONCLUSION

We thus conclude that both senior and middle level managers are using Delegative leadership style. Senior level managers, given the influence and autonomy, which they enjoy, delegate clear responsibilities down the line and at the same time give their subordinates the freedom to decide how to achieve the set

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targets. Through their positional power, they emphasize on the importance of quality standards, however the control standards are established by the staff. They discuss organizations policy changes with the staff prior to implementing them. They provide staff with time and resources to pursue their own developmental objectives and recognize staffs achievement with encouragement and support.

Middle level managers, ensure that information systems are timely and accurate and that information is fed directly to staff, they set performance standards for each aspect of the job and explain the benefits of achieving goals. Like senior level managers, they too check staffs work on a regular basis and recognize staffs achievement with encouragement and support.

Senior level managers Delegate, Facilitate, Direct and Coach whereas middle level managers Delegate, Direct, Facilitate and Coach.

DELEGATING LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Mean
Provides staff with clear responsibilities and allows them to decide how to accomplish them	4.2353
Explains the benefits of achieving the work goals to the staff	3.9412
Meets with staff regularly to discuss their needs	3.7059
Emphasizes the importance of quality but allows staff to establish control standards	3.6471
Expects staff to create their own goals and objectives and submit them in finished form	4.0588
Ensures that information systems are timely and accurate and that information is fed directly to staff.	4.4118
Total	24.000

FACILITATING LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Mean
Appoints staff into task groups to action policies affecting them.	3.9412
Discuss any organizational or policy changes with staff prior to taking action.	4.3592
Avoids making judgments or premature evaluation of ideas or suggestions.	3.7059
Rotates the role of team briefer among the staff.	3.4118
Provides staff with the time and resources to pursue their own developmental objectives.	4.1176
Avoids evaluating problems and concerns as they are discussed.	3.8253
Total	23.3529

COACHING LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Mean
Holds periodic meetings to show support for company policy and mission.	3.5294
Recognizes staff's achievements with encouragement and support.	3.7647
Meets with staff regularly to discuss their needs.	3.8824
Explains the benefits of achieving their work goals to staff.	3.7647
Holds regular meetings to discuss work status.	4.2353
Focuses on opportunities and not problems.	3.4118
Total	22.5883

DIRECTING LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Mean
Checks staff's work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning.	4.1765
Makes sure staff is aware of, and understand, all company policies and procedures.	3.9412
Demonstrates each task involved in doing the job.	3.5882
Sets down performance standards for each aspect of my staff's job.	3.4706
Has staff report back to me after completing each step of their work.	3.7059
Tries to assign work in small, easily controlled units.	3.5882
Total	22.4706

ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES

	1	2	3	4
1. Facilitating	(0.87)			
2. Coaching	0.666**	(0.89)		
3. Delegating	0.718**	0.819**	(0.81)	
4. Directing	0.550**	0.433*	0.345	(0.88)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

LEADERSHIP STYLES: MEAN

	Facilitating	Coaching	Delegating	Directing
Senior Manager	24.9333	23.8667	25.4667	24.2000
Middle Manager	21.9465	21.7336	23.3571	22.4706

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Looking forward an appropriate consideration.

With sincere regards

Thanking you profoundly

Academically yours

Sd/-

Co-ordinator

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

In this age of Commerce, Economics, Computer, I.T. & Management and cut throat competition, a group of intellectuals felt the need to have some platform, where young and budding managers and academicians could express their views and discuss the problems among their peers. This journal was conceived with this noble intention in view. This journal has been introduced to give an opportunity for expressing refined and innovative ideas in this field. It is our humble endeavour to provide a springboard to the upcoming specialists and give a chance to know about the latest in the sphere of research and knowledge. We have taken a small step and we hope that with the active co-operation of like-minded scholars, we shall be able to serve the society with our humble efforts.

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