

The Crucial Role of Leadership in Organizations: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

What defines leadership? Executives ask this question every time they choose a new leader or train their current leaders. Organizations must understand the fundamentals of leadership before making decisions about their leadership. Leaders are not created overnight. Becoming an effective leader involves considerable time and effort to hone the necessary skills and abilities. Training is considered as a key to develop leaders, however understanding the concept of leadership is vital for leader's development. The aim of this paper is to study the in-depth context of leadership and its significance in organization effectiveness. Concept of paradigm shift has emphasized that volunteers administrator must serve as a focal point for leadership. A comprehensive review of current literature is used to develop the ground for this paper. This paper significantly contributes towards the literature of leadership by conceptualized role and effectiveness of leadership in organizations.

Keywords: Leadership, leadership attributes, organization effectiveness, metaphoric concepts.

1. Introduction

Du Brin, et al. (2006) incurred the fact that Bussau, an Australian Entrepreneur, inspired, influenced, and motivated people to achieve constructive change, means that he exerted leadership. Du Brin (1998) proposed a contention that, "To be a good leader one has to make a difference and facilitate positive changes." The common characteristic of leaders is their ability to inspire and stimulate others to achieve worthwhile goals. The people who can accomplish these important deeds practice leadership. Leadership is the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals (Chan and Maubourgne, 1992).

Bass (1989) in his theory of leadership stated that, "there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders." Moreover, three basic contentions have been suggested by the literature of the leadership development for a small number of people. As explained by the trait theory, some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. The great event theory described that a crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. However the transformational leadership theory, which is considered as the most widely accepted theory today, explained that people can choose to become leaders and they can learn leadership skills.

2. Conceptualization of Literature

2.1 Metaphoric concepts of leadership

Marc (2005) mentioned that at leadership development programs, they typically eschew answering this question with a declarative, "Leadership is..." sort of response. Their vagueness is deliberate rather than as

an obfuscator—leadership contains too many concepts and abstractions to yield a unitary definition. A few of the metaphoric concepts are found lurking within leadership (Marc, 2005).

2.1.1 A moment

Leadership is in part a moment, a chance opportunity, when someone steps forward and says, "This way, follow me." But, we find that once the moment passes the leader just as often steps back and allows others to lead. The notion of moment assumes context; there must be people to lead, a need for leadership, and someone capable of leading.

2.1.2 A journey

Leadership is not a final destination we arrive at after a period of preparation. Rather, it is a lifelong trip toward a greater degree of self-awareness and interpersonal skill. In effect, one is perpetually on the way toward *becoming* a leader, rather than *existing* as one in final form. The journey of leadership is about self-awareness and other-awareness (not at all the same thing as self-consciousness and other-consciousness). Some journeys, like those that take us from one physical place to another, are largely about *propulsion* or moving objects through space. Leadership is largely about *understanding* and *connecting*; these forces together are the energies propelling organizations forward through time.

2.1.3 A symphony

Max DePree, former Chief Executive of Herman Miller, says that the self is the instrument in the performing art of leadership. The music, though, is symphonic in nature; it consists of notes coming from many instruments. This is why one cannot lead only oneself. It is not that the piano cannot stand alone as an instrument; performance artists such as George Winston and Michael Jones beautifully elevate the solo piano as an art form. Rather, it is that organizations are by their design about more than a single instrument.

Clark (1997) elaborated through Big Dog's leadership concept of leadership that Leadership is a complex process by which a person influences others to accomplish a mission, task, or objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. A person carries out this process by applying her leadership attributes (belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills). Although your position as a manager, supervisor, leader, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this power does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the boss. Leadership makes people want to achieve high goals and objectives, while, on the other hand, bosses tell people to accomplish a task or objective.

2.2 Attributes of a leader

If you are a leader that can be trusted, then the people around you will learn to respect you. To be a good leader, there are things that you must be, know, and do. These fall under the Leadership Framework (Clark, 1997). Clark (2000) defines 10 attributes of a leader which are:

1. *BE a professional*: Be loyal to the organization, perform selfless service, and take personal responsibility.
2. *BE a professional who possess good character traits*: Honesty, competence, candor, commitment, integrity, courage, straightforward, imagination.
3. *KNOW the four factors of leadership* - follower, leader, communication, and situation.
4. *KNOW yourself*: strengths and weakness of your character, knowledge, and skills.
5. *KNOW human nature*: Human needs and emotions, and how people respond to stress.
6. *KNOW your job*: be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks.
7. *KNOW your organization*: where to go for help, its climate and culture, who the unofficial leaders are.
8. *DO provide direction*: goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning.
9. *DO implement*: communicating, coordinating, supervising, evaluating.
10. *DO motivate*: develop moral and esprit in the organization, train, coach, counsel.

2.3 The process of great leadership

The road to great leadership explained by James and Barry (1987) common to successful leaders. They proposed five components of the process of leadership. First is, *challenge the practice*, find a route that you believe needs to be improved the most. Second, *inspire a shared vision*, share your vision in simple words that can be understood by your followers. Third, *enable others to act*, give them the tools and methods to solve the problem. Fourth, *model the way*, when the process gets tough, get your hands dirty. Fifth is, *encourage the hearts*, share the glory with your followers' heart; keep the pains in your heart.

2.4 Leadership as a partnership

All important current thrust in understanding leadership is to regard it as a long-term relationship or partnership, between leaders and group members. According to Block (1993) in a partnership the leader and the group members are connected in such a way that the power between them is approximately balanced. Block (1993) also describes partnership as the opposite of parenting in which one person – the parent – takes the responsibility for the welfare of the other – the child. Partnership occurs when control shifts from the leader to the group member in a move away from authoritarianism and toward shared decision making. Four aspects are necessary for a valid partnership to exist. First, exchange of purpose, second, a right to say no, third, joint accountability and the fourth is absolute honesty.

Block's conception of leadership as a partnership is an ideal to strive toward empowerment and team building. Looking at leadership as a partnership is important also because it is linked to an optimistic view of group members referred to as stewardship theory. This theory depicts group members (or followers) as being collectivists, Pro-organizational, and trustworthy (Davis et al., 1997).

2.5 Imperatives of leader

Adgur (1984) elaborated and asked what specific demands does a leadership position make of you in today's organization? There are several—and all are of critical importance to success. Four most significant imperatives of leadership are:

2.5.1 Emotional maturity

You have a healthy view of yourself, accepting your capabilities and limitations. You hold up well under adversity. You can handle lack of appreciation and the censure of superiors, peers, and subordinates. You can live with your failures. Emotional maturity is what makes you dependable and largely predictable.

2.5.2 Independence

You are inner-directed and self-ruled. You don't always agree with stock answers or established policy. You question the status quo. You don't knuckle under to arm twisting or unreasonable demands.

2.5.3 Realism

Your approach is not speculative or sentimental. You are sensible, practical, and reasonable. You tend to think with your head, not with your heart.

2.5.4 Courage

You're willing to take calculated risks—to chance failure, to face trouble, to risk your next bonus or promotion, to put your reputation on the line. You don't fear taking the unpopular position, but you're not impulsive or imprudent.

3. Changing Concepts of Leadership and Leadership Development

In the early twentieth century it was assumed that people became leaders by virtue of their personal characteristics. This so-called "trait" approach saw numerous studies attempting to isolate the qualities displayed by good leaders. Factors including intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, level of energy, activity, and "masculinity" were all cited as key traits, yet none of these were sufficient in distinguishing leaders from followers. Because of the emphasis on largely innate or relatively unchangeable personality characteristics, the trait approach has limited application to management and leadership development, placing the emphasis more on recruitment and selection processes (Bolden, 2004).

As the usefulness of a trait approach was called into question, new models of leadership began to emerge in the mid-20th Century. The first of these were behavioral or 'style' theories of leadership. In this case, it was considered not so much the innate characteristics of the leader, but how he/she behaved, that is

important. Behavioral models presented varying styles of leadership from directive to participative, person-centered to task-centered, proposing that where the leader has both high concern for people and production they will be most effective.

During the late 20th century interest arose in the abilities of leaders to bring about transformational change within organizations. This approach places an emphasis on the leaders' ability to develop and communicate an inspiring vision and motivate followers through a sense of shared purpose that transcends individual concerns such as pay and position. Transformational leadership reinforces the notion of the leader as change agent and would call primarily for the development of communication and interpersonal skills.

Whilst we may notice a shift in thinking over time many of the assumptions and implications of transformational leadership are not dissimilar to the earlier trait and behavioral models. They reinforce the notion of the individual leader, influencing and motivating followers and their ability to transcend organizational and situational constraints.

British government policy has consistently promoted the importance of management capability, provoking employers to take management development seriously; declining public-funding has encouraged universities to seek alternative income streams; whilst various supply-side pressure groups have promoted public awareness that business education is valuable.

From an employer perspective the imperative to enhance management and leadership capability arises from the changing nature of work, especially the need to cope with increased competition and continuous upheavals in their organizations, demanding increased intellectual flexibility and alertness as well as relevant skills, abilities, knowledge and self-awareness. Thus, individuals and organizations are actively seeking competitive advantage by investing in a range of training, education and development activities. The focus of training is the employee's present job; the focus of education is the employee's future job; and, the focus of development is the organization.

There has been a shift from traditional formal programs towards more flexible, experiential initiatives, whilst also recognizing that there are a number of other trends (Bolden et al., 2003). HR and Line manager preferences for management development methods in European companies includes; internal skills programs, external courses, seminars and conferences, mentoring/coaching, formal qualifications, in-company job-rotation, external assignments, placements and/or second-ments, and E-learning.

In all countries in the study there was a relatively low preference for on-the-job development (such as job rotation and assignments) and a strikingly low uptake of E-learning given the current interest in this form of delivery. Within the UK there is a higher than average use of qualifications-based development, despite the relatively low rating of this with regards to "what makes an effective manager".

Coaching is particularly popular with organizations and managers but its extension to large numbers of individuals is limited by cost and the availability of high quality coaches. Meanwhile, 360 degree feedback, like many approaches, is found to be most powerful when integrated within a comprehensive development program.

The effectiveness of any development approach will be strongly influenced by the participants' past experience, personal character and preferred learning style. Other key factors include the organizational context, need for buy-in from participants, and the ethos of learning within the organization.

Leadership development serves many purposes beyond simply developing talent. Executive education can be an effective retention strategy that helps drive the motivation, enthusiasm and commitment of participants; it can serve as a reward; and can also help in team-building and engendering a sense of shared purpose.

4. How Leadership Affects an Organization's Effectiveness

An assumption underlying the study of leadership is that leaders affect organizational performance. Leaders, through their actions and personal influence bring about change. People who control organizations – the highest level executives – make the same assumption. A frequent antidote to major organizational problems is to replace the leader, in the hope that the newly appointed leader will reverse performance problems, for example; 'the Leader in Action.' Paul Anderson was brought in at a time when BHP was not

doing well and with a range of will-thought-out strategies brought about effective change (Du Brin et al., 2006).

4.1 Organizational effectiveness

About the determinants of organizational effectiveness; perhaps the best known treatment of the subject is provided by Katz and Kahan (1978). After nothing how complicated the subject is Katz and Kahn (1978) define organizational effectiveness ideographically, in terms of how efficiently and organizational converts its resource inputs into outputs. This definition is internally consistent, but ignores the fact that organizations are in competition with one another. However, organizational effectiveness is an organic part of any discussion of leadership when leadership is seen as a collective phenomenon, a resource for the performance and survival of a collectivity. In our view, organizational effectiveness can be conceptualized in terms of five components:

4.1.1 Talented personnel

Other things being equal, a more talented team will outperform a less talented team; talented personnel are identified by good selection methods, and recruited by good leadership.

4.1.2 Motivated personnel

People who are willing to perform to their limits of their ability are highly motivated personnel. Other things being equal, a motivated team will outperform a demoralized team. The level of motivation in a team or organization is directly related to the performance of management (Harter et. al. 2002).

4.1.3. Talented management team

Where talent is defined in terms of the domain model and incompetence is defined in terms of the taxonomy.

4.1.4. An effective strategy for outperforming the competition

Here is where many organizations have problems. An effective trend is that the business managers do not enjoy research, otherwise they would be in the research business and people who enjoy research don't talk frequently with business managers. As a result, business strategy is often developed on an adhoc basis by top management team (think about the strategy that is in place at your place of employment and how it was developed).

4.1.5. Set of monitoring systems

It will allow senior leadership to keep track of the talent level of the staff, the motivational level of the staff, the performance of the management group and the effectiveness of the business strategy.

4.2 Determining what makes "Effective Leadership"

In comparing various leadership styles in many cultures, academic studies have examined the patterns in which leadership emerges and then fades, other ways in which it maintains its effectiveness, sometimes by natural succession according to established rules and sometimes by the imposition of brute force (Covey, 2003).

The simplest way to measure the effectiveness of leadership involves evaluating the size of the following that the leader can muster. By this standard Adolph Hitler became a very effective leader for a period - even if through delusional promises and coercive techniques. However, this approach may measure power rather than leadership. To measure leadership more specifically one may assess the extent of influence on the followers that is the amount of leading. Within an organizational context this means financially valuing productivity. Effective leaders generate higher productivity, lower costs, and more opportunities than ineffective leaders. Effective leaders create results attain goal, realize vision and other objectives more quickly and at a higher level of quality than ineffective leaders.

Burns (1996) introduced a normative element an effective Burnsian leader will unite followers in a shared vision that will improve an organization and society at large. Burns (1979) calls leadership that delivers "true" value, integrity and trust in transformational leadership. He distinguishes such leadership from "more" transactional leadership that builds power by doing whatever will get more followers. But problems arise in quantifying the transformational quality of leadership – evaluation of the quality seems more

difficult to quantify than merely counting the followers that the straw man of transactional leadership Burns (1978) has set as a primary standard for effectiveness. Thus transformational leadership requires an evaluation of quality, independent of the market demand that exhibits in the number of followers.

Current assessments of transformational and transactional leadership commonly make use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Bass (1990). It measures five dimensions of transformational leadership which includes “idealized influence attributions”, “idealized influence behaviors”, “inspirational motivation”, “individualized consideration” and “intellectual stimulation”. Moreover, the three dimensions of transactional leadership measured by the MLQ cover “contingent reward”, “management by exception (active)” and “management by exception (passive)”.

The functional leadership model conceives leadership as a set of behaviors that helps a group perform a task, reach their goal or perform their function. In this model, effective leaders encourage functional behaviors and discourage dysfunctional ones.

In the path goal model of leadership developed jointly by Martin Evans and Robert House in 1971 and revised in 1996 and based on the “Expectancy theory of Motivation” a leader has the function of clearing the path toward the goal(s) of the group by meeting the needs of subordinates.

Some commentators use the metaphor of an orchestral conductor to describe the quality of the leadership process. An effective leader resembles an orchestra conductor in some ways. He/she has to somehow get a group of potentially diverse and talented people many of whom have strong personalities – to work together toward a common output will the conductor harness and blend all the gifts his or her players possess? Will the players accept the degree of creative expression they have? Will the audience enjoy the sound they make? The conductor may have a clear determining influence on all of these questions.

Pitcher (1994) has challenged the bifurcation into leaders and managers. She used a factor analysis technique on data collected over 8 years, and concluded that three types of leaders exist, each with very different psychological profiles. She characterized one group as imaginative, inspiring, visionary, entrepreneurial, intuitive, daring, and emotional, and calls them “artists” in a second grouping she places “craftsman” as well balanced, steady, reasonable, sensible, predictable, and trustworthy. Finally she identifies “technocratic” as cerebral, detail-oriented, fastidious, uncompromising, and hard-headed. She speculates that no one profile offers a preferred leadership style. She claims that if we want to build, we should find an “ARTIST LEADER”. If we want to solidify our position we should find “craftsman leader”; and if we have an ugly job that needs to get done (like downsizing), we should find a “technocratic leader”. Pitcher (1994) also observed that a balanced leader exhibiting all three sets of traits which occurs extremely rarely.

5. Paradigm Shift from ‘Management to Leadership’

Xavier (2004) has researched out that a paradigm is a set of beliefs that are used to set boundaries and focus problem solving. A paradigm shift occurs whenever a new analytical framework changes the understanding of the way a system operates. The paradigm shift occurs within the family system, political system, man management, health care, information technology, human resource management, marketing, retailing and management education.

The shifts are so rapid that, Chan (1994) recommends that there is today no ringing model anywhere in the world that has worked completely well. Scientist and historian Kuhn’s (1970) paradigm-shift hypothesis has become influential beyond the worlds of pure science and academia. Business leaders today are routinely admonished to shift their paradigm or be left behind. The paradigm shifting is seen as the key to innovation or the pathway to progress.

5.1 Personnel to Human Resource Management

From the time men were clubbed with materials, machines and money, the management theorists have come a long way in recognizing the potential of people. This is evident from the shift from personnel to human resource management (Khan and Khan, 2012). Even the highly automated factory will require human intervention of the highest order.

5.2 Control - Empowerment - Liberation

In terms of getting the best out of people, behavioral scientists put forward a number of theories of motivation. McGregor's theory Y and Herzberg's two factor theory is the most notable among them. Then the emphasis shifted from motivating people to empowering people. Tongren (1994) suggests that organizations today are undergoing a substantial paradigm shift and replacing control techniques such as authorization, approval, and review with empowerment, trust, and accountability. The latest concept is liberation of employees by giving them enough autonomy and a share in the business.

5.3 Manager to leader

Executives, managers, supervisors and employees now face simultaneous challenges: borderless competition, new alliances, outsourcing, diversity, total quality demands and technology evolution. Many organizations that have stayed ahead of their competitors by making only linear, incremental changes suddenly discover that they have slipped behind or are headed in the wrong direction. Therefore we need more of leaders with vision and foresight to manage today's organizations. Hyden (1994) proposes that there are too many managers and not enough leaders. The paradigm shift taking place today is from management to leadership. The core competencies of a leader are creating more leaders, empowerment, communication, vision, patience, and strategic thinking.

5.4 Changing the Paradigm

Merrill (1995) findings articulated the need to combine inspiring leadership with effective management for highly effective volunteer program development. This language reflects what is being discussed and written about by a wide range of experts in both the public and private sector. Workplace and generational changes call into question, reliance on management techniques that grew out of industrial era and hierarchical structures. Today's employees and volunteers want to be part of the decision-making process, engaged in the planning and evaluation of programs and projects. They look for leadership rather than management (Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

Wheatley (1997) suggested that, "Most of us were raised in a culture that told us that the way to manage for excellence was to tell people exactly what they had to do and make sure they did it. We learned to play master designer, assuming we could engineer people into perfect performance. But you can't direct people into perfection: you can only engage them enough so they want to do perfect work."

There is increasing awareness that shared leadership, (i.e., leaders at all level - policy making, executive and middle management) is the most effective model for encouraging and facilitating high impact volunteer involvement within organizations. It is no longer sufficient for a volunteer administrator simply to have the management skills for organizing and operating a volunteer program. Today's volunteer administrators must serve as a focal point for the leadership of the volunteer program (Merrill, 1995).

Conclusion

The study of leadership has gained momentum in the past 20 years. The development of leadership theory has paralleled that of organizational theory. The current organizational revolution and the ascendancy of the post-bureaucratic organization are associated with new directions in leadership thinking. We shall consider how the models of transactional and transformational leadership that have emerged as a result of Burns' ideas may both explain the old organizational paradigm and reinforce the new organizational paradigm for the 21st Century.

Next, since behavior has numerous meanings, possibly we can substitute performance for behavior. Performance can be measured provided the organization has accurate and complete expectations, valid assessments that do not penalize the contributors along with a well-communicated strategic plan. Through clearly articulated goals with consistent leadership and management, contributors have the opportunity to improve their performance thereby achieving measurable results.

Attitudes of performance appear then, to better describe the desired outcomes and expectations that we have as employers, educators or even parents. As we all are contributors, by focusing on attitudes early in our performance experiences, we have the means to improve ourselves, our businesses and more importantly our communities.

The management functions become dispersed throughout the organization. The volunteer administrator assumes a greater role in training and working with paid staff, as well as volunteers, to accomplish

organizational goals. There is less focus on managing volunteers and greater emphasis on creating and communicating the shared vision and values. As leaders, volunteer administrators facilitate relationships and support systems that allow volunteers to make significant contributions to the organization's mission. This change in role necessitates a new look at the competencies required for leadership.

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