

Module: BMIH5004 Management and Organisational Behaviour

AS1: Academic Essay

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1. Introduction

Management is certainly one of the biggest factors that determine success or failure of any organization. The objective of this assignment is to critically review different types of leadership and leadership theories that have been established and to discuss about the implementation of the theories in organisation. Management is a vital component in the process of changing people, organizational culture and accomplishing organizational goals and aims. From an evaluation of the various leadership theories, we will be able to see how leaders may influence the performance of their teams, support the decision-making process, and foster change (Mullins & Dosser, 2013).

It is therefore very clear that leadership forms a central role in management. A leader is also required to lead people, establish or share goals and objectives that are worthy or achievable and in the process ensure that people work in the best way possible. Leadership as opposed to the role of management, which is more of directing and coordinating involves helping others succeed. While on one hand management maintains order and consistency, leadership on the other hand is about creating change, creativity and learning when facing difficulties (Armstrong, 2021). While leadership is essential for success in any organization, it is more or less on the people side motivating them through inspiration, whereas management more or less cares about the processes and systems. This distinction raises important questions: Are all managers leaders? Are all leaders managers? Leadership and management can be two intertwined or separate roles, but while a manager can be a leader, not all managers can deliver the leadership that can change the organization for the better (Mullins, 2019).

Hence, the purpose of this essay is to review the various leadership theories and models presented in the class and where possible relate them to practice. Thus, it is the intention of the essay to shed light on how various leadership behaviors can be managed and applied in various organisational settings. From this review, we are therefore able to capture a comprehensive meaning of leadership, its impact on organizational success, decision making, and other teams.

2. The Meaning of Leadership

Leadership can be defined as charged with or exhibiting a capacity to lead others to a desired end or exhibit commanding control and direction of. A definition gives leadership as a “formal relationship whereby one person in a given capacity is able to influence others. This influence can

motivate people toward the achievement of common goals towards the advancement of an organization.

One of the most important questions concerning leadership studies involves the question as to the extent to which leaders are endowed or created. Leadership according to some people is an inborn attribute, some people are born with qualities such as charisma, confidence and the ability to make decisions. Some people state that leadership is developed with experience, education and training (Raelin, 2016). On the other hand, the contemporary leadership theorists argue that though one may possess inherent tendencies, which make him/her a leader, leadership can be learnt and mastered. Such qualities are normally developed through leadership development programs within organizations as they have it impressed in the organizations that anyone aspiring to be a leader and has the passion for it can actually make it.

3. Leadership Theories and Models

Leadership theories and models provide a structured way to analyze leadership styles and their impact on organizational success. Below are several key theories and models:

3.1 Lewin's Leadership Model

Autocratic Leadership: In this style of leadership, decisions are made by a leader and not conditioned by members or subordinates. For instance, Napoleon Bonaparte where power and control were esteemed. One major weakness associated with this approach is that it leads to hasty decision-making and snuffs out employee motivation because the organization does not have confidence in the workforce (Armstrong, 2021).

Democratic Leadership: This style is characterized by involvement, delegating and consulting of others during decision making process. This means that it motivates and encourages the team members through the decision processes thus creating an ownership. This approach is often used in working organizations that support teamwork and creativity scholars (Arnold, 2020).

Laissez-faire Leadership: In this type of management, leaders offer little direction and follow the direction of employees to the latter's discretion. Although this style fosters innovation to an extent, it lacks focus and structure, and, most important, it is not answerable to anyone (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2019).

3.2 McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y

Theory X: This theory presupposes that employees are, in fact, rather lazy and will require constant oversight. The Theory X leaders think that their employees need constant supervision to work and, therefore, most of them are autocratic (Boddy, 2017).

Theory Y: On the other hand, Theory Y posits that people are self-motivated, and can take responsibility. Managers who have this approach to customer participation ensure they provide opportunities for professional development and enhance the organisational culture.

3.3 The Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid

This model evaluates leadership based on two dimensions: for concern of people and concern of production.

Team Management (High People/High Production): A working culture that effectively addresses the two goals of the employees and the company to ensure a high level of productivity is achieved.

Impoverished Management (Low People/Low Production): A 'laissez-faire' leadership with scant regard for workers or output efficiency, which most of the time yields unsatisfactory outcomes.

3.4 Adair's ACL model of Action Centred Leadership

John Adair's model emphasizes the need to balance three core elements of leadership: task, team, and individual. Outcomes are traditionally characterized by three objectives: getting the job done, welding the team, and growing the person, which means that all three areas must be equally valued for organizational growth (Raelin, 2016).

3.5 Great Man Theory

This historical theory assumes that leaders are gifted from birth because of their ability to perform their leadership roles successfully. Examples include Winston Churchill and Alexander the Great and other leaders in the same noble category. Even though it has been considered an outdated theory in the modern leadership research stream, this theory has significant symbolic value regarding charismatic leadership (Arnold, 2020).

3.6 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership focuses on reward and punishment in order to influence motivation among the employees. The terminal leaders depend on authority and control where they reward the team for accomplishment and punish them for inefficiency making it appropriate but less flexible style of leadership.

4. Comparative Analysis

The analysis of different leadership types reveals the advantages and disadvantages of each type. Lewin's model reveals the particular strengths and weaknesses of autocratic leadership: the first is great in emergency situations, as it allows to make decisions quickly; the second is rather a drawback, as it does not allow the team members to contribute (Raelin, 2011). On the other hand, democratic leadership introduces cooperation and embraces the contributions of the employees making the motivation of the employees better. However, this increases the degree of inclusiveness which might cause problems such as delays in decision making especially in organizations with rapidly investing environments (Rollinson et al., 2008). Free rein approach, as seen in motivating creativity and self-organizing, can be counterproductive when the personnel are not purposeful or when the leader pays less attention.

On comparing Theory X and Theory Y the differences in perception about the employees are clearly understandable. Theory X supposes that employees are naturally unambitious, resistant to work, and that only control can make them work; therefore, it implies an autocratic style of management. On the other hand, there is Theory Y that assumes workers will work willingly, and are able to assume responsibilities. This fundamental different in assumptions has major implications for how leaders interact with their subordinates and in turn how the performance of the subordinates is determined (Boddy, 2017).

Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid offers an appreciation of people and an appreciation of things. Adair's Model of Action-Centred Leadership on the other hand is centered on equally achieving the tasks, developing the team, and developing the individual. Although the Managerial Grid divides leaders according to the degree of concern with people and products, Adair's model is one that insists on the centrality of all three and that people should not neglect one aspect and focus on the other.

Still, the Great Man Theory that would like to imply that leaders are born with specific traits that would enable them to be great leaders whereas on the other hand we have transactional leadership which entails using the reward power and punishment power to influence the behaviour of employees. While the Great Man Theory shift the attention to specific characteristics of the leader, Transactional Leadership employs the outcomes of the performance processes. Although it is criticised for irrelevance to the current organisational situation the second is still useful where there is a focus on clear performance measurement and structured rewards. Each of the theories offers an understanding of leadership but their applicability to current leadership practices differs greatly.

5. Leadership in Practice

The use of the leadership theories in real-life practices shows the importance of such theories. For example, in a crisis situation the autocratic leadership style will work best. One such example is the Great Depression when former U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt spearheaded decision-making to that shaped recovery programs. While democratic leadership excels in conditions that presuppose cooperation and search for effective solutions (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2007). Google is a perfect example of a company that pursues the policy of highly encouraging employees' participation and cooperation in matters of sharing ideas and working on projects. Not only does this approach bring out people's creativity but also improves team cohesiveness thus increasing people's job satisfaction (Rollinson et al., 2008).

Laissez-faire leadership can be used in organizations in which employees need freedom to be more creative, say in the creative fields. For instance, large organisations such as Pixar are willing to let creative departments develop ideas at their own pace, with minimal supervision, which would produce incredible work (Raelin, 2011). However, this style requires discipline and responsibility in individuals and the members of the team in order not to be unmanageable.

This paper aims to investigate the role of leadership in the achievement of organizational objectives. Leadership management greatly determines the behavior of people in that team in the way that they work and in how they relate to one another. Theory Y principles of organizational culture are practices that produce a productive environment that embraces the employees. As a result of these, levels of engagement and consequently the productivity increases that have a positive impact on the organization. Corporate leadership has been observed to improve morale,

reduce staff turnover, and even improve on overall performance for organisations with good leadership hence its importance in the organisation.

6. Conclusion

Based on this analysis, this essay has considered and discussed several of the major leadership models and theories that are prevalent today, namely; Lewin's leadership styles which are autocratic, democratic and Laissez faire; McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y; Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid; Adair's Action-Centred Leadership; The Great Man Theory; and finally Transactional Leadership. Both of these frameworks provide useful information for understanding the ways leadership can be enacted in organizational settings and has a marked impact on team processes and performance.

Looking at all the styles discussed I think that the most suitable leadership style in today's workplace is democratic leadership. This approach not only creates effective work environment that facilitates teamwork and creativity, but also brings positive effects to its employees increasing motivation and job satisfaction. Since communication is considered highly effective when multiple points of view and group decision-making processes prevail, democratic leadership corresponds to modern organizational requirements.

Hoping to the future, leadership is getting changed according to new complexities like remote work and diversification of teams. Managers are now forced to balance on these complexities by modifying their behaviors, being more sensitive to diversity and communication anticipating virtual platform environment. The need for highly versatile, understanding and relational leadership will only escalate as organisations remain to grow and change.

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