

Leadership Styles of the Professionals from the National Agricultural Research and Education System

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ABSTRACT

Leadership style impacts others in shared directions and important resource of all organizations. Due to differences in goals, training, experiences, and methodologies between various groups, differences may exist in their leadership styles, style ranges, and style adaptabilities. The Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) instruments contains twelve leadership situations in which respondents are asked to select four alternative actions-a high task/low relationship behaviour, a high task/high relationship behaviour, a high relationship/low task behaviour, and a low relationship/low task behaviour- the style at respondents felt would most closely describe their behaviour in that type of situation. The study examines the leadership styles of professionals engaged in the national agricultural research and education system which consists of ICAR and SAUs. Data from 560 professionals working in the NARES at different cadres was collected. Most of the professionals were found to be having selling style of leadership followed by telling style. From the Fisher's exact test for association, it was found that the none of the variables have any close association with their leadership style.

Keywords: LEAD instruments, Leadership styles, Professionals

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is crucial for the effective functioning of any organization. The fundamental of leadership is its persuading power on human resources, organizations' source of competitive advantage, and the resultant outcomes. (Habtamu *et al.*, 2020). Leadership style is a leader's procedure for providing direction, execution of plans, and motivating people. Leading is the plan of action of helping and motivating others to work rapidly and there are many ways to lead and every leader has her/his style. Leadership styles were investigated in 1939 by Kurt Lewin who conducted the group of investigators to perceive the different leadership styles. Leadership styles appeared early in the literature 19th century,

leadership style has been assign to research, quality management and education (Davis *et al.*, 1999). To become more successful, the leader must peruse his leadership styles (Lester, 1975). Leadership style is the most relevant style to influencing an organized group to achieve in its goals (Khan, 2015). Leadership Style apprise students and employees what they want to done and how to do it. Leadership Style is the approximately compatible adjustment of exploits that define a leader. Leadership styles affect performance, organizational effectiveness and Management (Nanjundeswara *et al.*, 2014). Leadership style having no specific styles that can be appraised as a universal style, leaders are not born thus build (Rose *et al.*, 2015). Leadership style has a direct impact on economic development to expand in the

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service sector (Muhammad *et al.*, 2016). The most leadership style builds upon readiness level of group members. In 1938 Lewin and Lippit suggested that leadership behaviour could be confidential in terms of much involvement leaders have work-related problems. Research in initiating design and discussion, and employee-focus versus work-focus leadership extended these ideas. Leadership style as a new approach for motivating and managing the employees in the organization (Iqbal *et al.*, 2015). The Leadership style is a design of simultaneously enumerate the concern for the direction and people capacity of leadership. Leadership styles that control the special aspects of employee's achievement (Teresa *et al.*, 2014). The framework of leadership styles or based on the extent of a person's concern for the direction of people. Despite evidences on the relationship between styles of leadership and work outcomes such as job performance and innovative work behaviour (Solomon, 2016), studies explored the meditational role of work engagement in the link between leadership and work outcomes were insignificant. Similarly, Hetland *et al.* (2018) in their research on transformational leadership, suggest the use of employee focus approach to enhance organisational members' commitment to addressing identified organisational complexities.

Leadership Styles depends not only on his attitude and personal capacity, of the environment and situation in which he finds himself /herself (Liridon *et al.*, 2017). Leadership has been human effort such as politics, business, social works and academics etc. (Obiwuru *et al.*, 2011). Authoritarian leadership style was more prominent whereas participative and delegate styles were followed by women leaders (Kaur *et al.*, 2017). The leadership qualities of the immediate supervisors have a direct bearing on the productivity of the scientists in succession, which in turn determine the efficiency of technology flow and its transfer to the client system in the field (Ponnusamy *et al.*, 2014). The leadership styles of professionals working in the National Agricultural Research and Education System are deliberate in this paper. The purpose of this study is to appreciate the different leadership styles of employee performance of the organization and relates to a specific action and effect by the leader's aims and nature.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the data collected through interviews from research and academic professionals engaged in the National Agricultural Research and Education System (NARES) in India. NARES comprises of 114 research institutes under ICAR and more than 70 AUs catering to the needs of the farming community through research, education and extension. The respondents included the research and academic professionals working in different capacities viz., Scientists/Assistant Professors, Senior Scientists/Associate Professors, Principal Scientists/Professors, Head of the divisions, Project Directors/Coordinators, Zonal Directors, Deans, Assistant / Deputy Director Generals, Vice-Chancellors and other similar research management professionals. A total of 560 filled in questionnaires from different respondents were used for the study. The questionnaire used Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) instrument developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) for outlining the leadership styles, with the maturity level of the follower(s) in a particular situation.

The independent personal variables such as working position in the organization, age, gender, educational qualification, discipline group (field of specialization) and total service experience which are expected to have some bearing on the learning process were identified for inclusion in the study as factors which may affect the leadership styles. The instrument/questionnaire was scored with the help of the key and the data thus obtained for the dependent variable was coded, tabulated and analyzed using simple tabular analysis with frequencies and percentages using Microsoft Excel. The association between the dependent variable and independent variables was studied using the Fisher's Exact test. The R statistical programming language was employed for carrying out these analyses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information on the sample composition (Table 1) shows that out of 560 respondents, most of the respondents were male (89.8%), aged 40 years above (49.3%), working in ICAR research institutes (61.6%)

Table 1: Distribution of respondents among different classes of variables

Study Variable	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	503	89.8
	Female	57	10.2
Age	35 years or less	47	8.4
	35 - 40 years	237	42.3
	40 years or above	276	49.3
Organization	Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)	345	61.6
	State Agricultural University (SAU)	215	38.4
Position	Research Management Position (RMP)	58	10.4
	Principal Scientist / Professor	293	52.3
	Senior Scientist / Assoc. Professor	82	14.6
	Scientist / Assistant Professor	116	20.7
	Others	11	2.0
Educational Qualification	Post Graduate	66	11.8
	Doctorate	494	88.2
Subject discipline	Commodity Improvement	85	15.2
	Commodity Production	209	37.3
	Commodity Protection	78	13.9
	Social Sciences	85	15.2
	Basic Sciences	103	18.4

in Principal Scientist positions (52.3%), having a doctoral degree (88.2%), belonging to the commodity production stream (37.3%).

Situational Leadership Styles

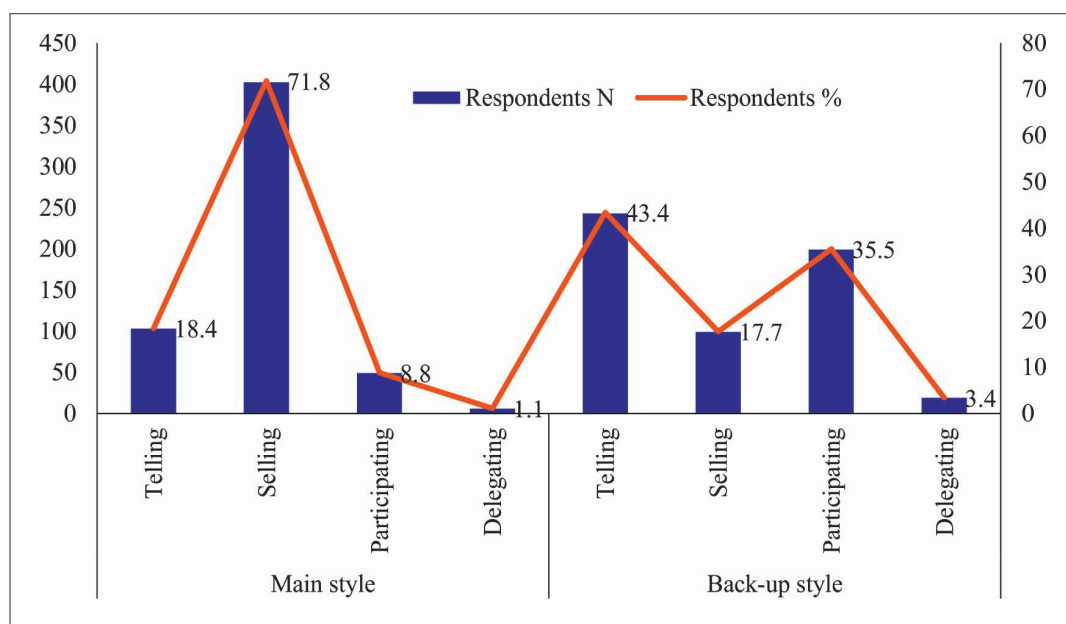
This theory is based on a curvilinear relationship between task behaviour and relationship behaviour and the maturity attempts to provide leaders with some understanding of the relationship between an effective style of leadership and the level of maturity of the follower. Thus, while all the situational variables (leader, follower(s), superior(s), associates, organization, job demands, and time) are important, the emphasis in Situational leadership theory on the behaviour of a leader with followers.

The definitive leadership style research comes from Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, which they expressed in their Situational Leadership Model. The Hersey-Blanchard model addresses the key to

practical leadership development: the attributes and styles of the followers. Not everyone is on the same intellectual, maturity, compliance, or motivational level. Different people are motivated by different things, and this must be taken into account if one is to be a great leader. The Situational Leadership model addresses four types of leadership styles, based on the follower i.e. Telling, Selling, Participating and Delegating.

The leadership styles of professionals working in the National Agricultural Research and Education System of employee performance and relates to a specific action and effect by the leader's aims and nature. Figure 1 reflects the frequencies of different leadership styles as main/back-up styles. It is evident from that the dominant main style of leadership was the 'selling' style (71.8%) followed by 'telling' style (18.4%). In this context, selling is viewed as trying to persuade on tasks and this still require much of the leader's time, but the focus now also includes developing a relationship with the employee. Build

Figure 1: Leadership styles among respondents



upon the trust that has begun to develop and the encouragement that has been demonstrated. The leader spent more time listening & offering advice, scheduling the follower for additional training if the situation required it.

The most common back-up style was 'Telling' style (43.4%) closely followed by 'participating' style (35.5%). The fact that the group was more oriented toward telling may be attributed to the type of training received by the group. In solving problems, scientists generally seek precise answers; they follow specific procedures which focus on following instructions. Thus, it can be concluded that the methodology to solve problems used by scientists would make them directional in their approach. The Fisher's Exact Test was performed to check if there is an association between

the leadership styles and personal variables. The results of the Fisher's exact test are given in Table 2. It is conspicuous from the table that none of the leadership styles, either main style or back-up style, had association with the personal variables. The results suggest that the leadership style is influenced by other personal and environmental variables other than those considered in this study.

CONCLUSION

Leadership is essentially establishing an emotional connection between a leader and their followers, rather than a transaction. Hence, a person aspiring to be a leader needs to understand emotions better than logic. It was shown that the latter in each of the pairs need management and expression of emotions. Most of the professionals were found to be having selling style of leadership followed by telling style as their main style. From the Fisher's exact test for association, it was found that the none of the personal variables such organization, age, gender, education qualification, subject discipline, experience and position have any association with their leadership style. The differences between managing and leading, motivating and inspiring, goals and visions, passion and interests need to be explored.

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Table 2: Fisher's Exact Test for association between leadership style and variables

Variables	p-value	
	Main style	Back-up style
Organization	0.525	0.693
Gender	0.455	0.390
Education Qualification	0.630	0.448
Subject discipline	0.839	0.623
Age category	0.498	0.675
Experience	0.438	0.058
Position	0.849	0.597

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