

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP TECHNIQUE AND ADAPTATION

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ABSTRACT

This Study investigated democratic Leadership Techniques and Adaptation. The researcher examined democratic technique. The finding of the study indicated that democratic technique has a high negative relationship with adaptation. The study pointed that organisational culture has significant influence on autocratic leadership techniques and adaptation. The study therefore recommended that leaders and managers of firms should practice democratic and laissez –affaire techniques, and avoid autocratic technique to overcome organisational situations where necessary for the success of the firm. The organisational culture should not be too rigid rather flexible to accommodate changes arising from business environment.

Keywords: Democratic Leadership Technique, Organisation, Capability, Adaptability

INTRODUCTION

Democratic leadership, also known as participatory leadership, is a kind of leadership style in which members of the group play a more participatory part in the decision-making process. Success and people are the subjects of this leadership style (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). Style of democratic leadership encourages staff to engage in the company's decision-making process (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). The democratic leader helps the leader and the team to share decision-making. Arguments and compliments are offered critically and within the community a sense of responsibility is created. Until issuing general or specific orders through which subordinates feel free to act, the leader communicates with subordinates (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). The superior encourages the subordinates to take advantage of their initiative and continue to contribute. The leaders even offer guidance in performing the role to the subordinates. Democratic leadership characteristics typically involve: the idea which team members are able to exchange thoughts and opinions, while the leader has the final authority on decisions, group members feel more involved in the process, and creativity is promoted and rewarded. A lot of benefits come from democratic leadership. Subordinates are encouraged to post their experiences, which can result in better ideas and more innovative problem solving (Sadia & Aman, 2018). Staff will also be more engaged and dedicated to projects, making them more likely to be concerned regarding the current final outcome.

Democratic leadership style is perceived to result in better productivity of employees of agro farms. Democratic leadership performs best in conditions where employees of the organisations are informed and willing to share their experience. It is also pertinent that there is plenty of time to allow people to contribute, formulate a plan and afterwards decide on the best approach. A great example of a democratic leader is Barack Obama, former president of the United States. Anyone who knew about the U.S. elections could have come across this Obama-coined term, 'Yes we can!' Thanks to the background of the US economy at the time, it motivated a whole nation; unemployment was high and it was the result of the 2008 Lehman Crisis. This means Obama encourages his followers to realize that despite the challenges, all things are possible. In his course, he faced major obstacles that endeavoured him for many even beyond the United States' borders. He, being black, ran for an office that had been occupied for decades by white males. He had a brief experience in politics, four years to be exact, but that certainly didn't stop him from taking on the Democratic Party's renowned names. Many around the world have been motivated by his performance. We must also display this can-do attitude as a leader; believe it is possible before our followers believe it; see the triumph before someone else sees it.

Leadership style plays a vital role in today's businesses. Leadership style is the manner in which a director or boss wants to behave with his or her staff or colleagues and the manner in which they

exercise the leadership role (Xenikou, 2017). Leaders must be capable of knowing whether their leadership skills affect their followers as it supports or does not help the followers (Saleem, 2015). This may have an effect on the actions of employees to follow their leaders; followers or employees who do not have respect towards the leaders may be susceptible to disappointment, which may give rise to an employee's intention of leaving. Some researchers have concluded that styles of leadership can influence the level of job satisfaction of an employee and job satisfaction is a function of leadership style (Iqbal, 2015). It indicates that pattern or conduct of leadership has an effect on job satisfaction and the willingness and purpose of an employee to quit an organization or not. It is worth noting that the right leadership style practiced in a given point in time, regardless of low pay, could still inspire an employee to offer his / her best in the company.

Nevertheless, the challenge of leadership whether in a business organisation, community setting or government agency is the same – to make the others responsible participants. A leader has the responsibility to mobilise those under him to carry out their respective functions to achieve the objectives of the organisation. He is the catalyst required to activate human resource. To achieve this, the leader creates the condition in which mental as well as physical efforts are applied by members to achieve organisational performance.

Relationship between Democratic Leadership Technique and Adaptation

Democratic leadership approach is where a leader gets things done by consulting and allowing the employees to participate in decision making process to achieve the desired objectives of the organisation (Agu, 2005). It is observed that this form of leadership technique fosters high level employees' engagement and work place satisfaction. This leads to greater productivity since the employees are motivated in the production process through consultation and participation in the decision making for the production.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt, (2012) have defined democratic leadership as the leadership in which the decision-making is decentralized and is shared by all the subordinates. In the democratic leadership style, the potential for weak execution and poor decision-making is high. However, the democratic leadership is also known to motivate the employees to perform better, as their views and opinions are valued. Another big problem associated with democratic leadership is the assumption that everyone involved has an equal stake in the decision-making with a shared level of expertise (Rukmani, *et al.*, 2010). The study by Elenkov, (2002) indicated that the democratic leadership has a positive impact on organizational performance. The democratic leadership allows the employees to make decisions along with sharing them with the group and the manager. In this type of leadership style, praises and criticism are given objectively and a sense of responsibility is also developed among the employees (Elenkov, 2002). Bhargavi and Yaseen, (2016) also analyzed the impact of democratic leadership on organizational performance. As per their findings, democratic leadership positively affects the 5 Journal of Human Resources Management Research Ebrahim Hasan Al Khajeh (2018), Organization provides opportunities to the employees to express and implement their creative ideas and take part in the decision-making process. This leadership style also prepares future leaders and helps the organization in the long run. Choi, (2007) also stated that a democratic leader is the one who focuses on the group discussion and group participation and as a result it positively influences the performance of the followers. Therefore, the democratic leadership style can be used for improving the organizational performance as well as the efficiency. Hence, it can be stated that democratic leadership has a positive impact on the organizational performance. (Elenkov, 2002). Autocratic Leadership and Organizational Performance Autocratic leaders are classic and bossy in nature. The autocratic leaders want their subordinates to work according to them. Typically, autocratic leaders retain the decision-making rights with them (Obiwuru, *et al.*, 2011). The autocratic leaders force their followers to execute the services and strategies according to the narrow way. Iqbal, Anwar, and Haider, (2015) conducted a study to determine the impact of leadership styles on the organizational performance. The study stated that

autocratic leadership is also known as the authoritarian leadership style. The autocratic leaders are less creative and only promote one-sided conversation. This severely affects the motivation and satisfaction level of the employees. The autocratic leadership style is however, known to be effective in the short term. Autocratic leadership restricts the workplace socialization and communication which is cordial for effective organizational performance. The autocratic leadership also leads to organizational conflicts which negatively affect the overall performance (Iqbal, *et al.*, 2015). Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) suggested that the autocratic leadership style has a positive impact on the organizational performance. This leadership style is more suitable when the projects are to be completed within provided deadlines (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). Igbaekemen and Odivwri, (2015) also conducted a study on the impact of leadership styles on the performance of the organizations. The author stated that an autocratic leader is the one who determines the activities, techniques and policies to the employees and expects the employees to follow the same. In addition, such leaders do not have much faith on their followers.

Development of leadership identity and self-regulation as in goal orientation were integral to leadership development (Rohr, 2016). Researchers suggested individuals interested in leadership growth should proactively identify and create opportunities, owning the process of succession into leadership positions. Mentoring was a tool for identifying future leaders and for helping others to divert careers to alternate 25 paths if not suitable for the new responsibilities of leadership positions (Belmonte, Seaman & Bent, 2017). Mentoring strategy involved formal and informal career growth opportunities; identification of potential leaders and mentors; articulation of the desired leadership traits; development of a plan including available resources and strategies with an experienced leader to champion the effort.

The concept of adaptive cycles originates in ecological systems thinking, where they represent different stages (growth, conservation, collapse, reorganization) through which systems might pass in response to changing environments and internal dynamics (Holling *et al.*, 2002). Farming systems differ from ecological systems in their production purpose and their deliberate attempts to control their environment and to escape environmentally induced disruption. For instance, when farming systems face potentially disruptive challenges, risk management may be utilized to ensure that the system remains in or swiftly returns to status quo (conservation). However, shocks and stresses may also induce the adoption of new practices (reorganization) or lead to the breakdown and abandonment of an agricultural system (collapse). Such changes may be limited to field plots, but may extend to a whole farm or region.

In farming systems, influences on system change, cycles, stages and impacts are less systematic and automatic. Farming system might not go through all stages of the adaptive cycle (Van Apeldoorn *et al.*, 2011). Yet, indications of some influences, stages and impacts can be distinguished. For instance, the agricultural commodity price spikes in 2008 and 2011/12, accompanied by substantial fluctuations in energy and fertilizer prices, led to increasing concerns that agricultural production practices might no longer keep pace with demand (von Witzke, 2008). Price spikes induced farmers and other actors along the supply chain to reorganize their price risk management (Assefa *et al.*, 2017), e.g. towards upstream and downstream integration along the chain. Another example of system change relates to the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 that facilitated migration of new EU citizens as seasonal and permanent workers to old EU member states. In the Baltic countries, for example, this led to structural deficits of skilled farm labour (Hazans & Philips, 2010).

In response, labour markets in the new member states reorganized by adjusting hiring standards and increasing wages, thereby attracting non-EU workers from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Uzbekistan. At farm level, major changes are often linked to intergenerational transfer in family farms, or to management or shareholder turnover in corporate farms. Both succession in family farms and skillful management of corporate farms are constrained by perceptions of farming as a relatively low income occupation with long working hours, remote locations, reduced social life and often high financial challenges (Huber *et al.*, 2015). Especially at the point of generational and

ownership transfer, decisions are made whether to continue and how to adapt the organization of the farm to changing needs and abilities. The consequences of eventual discontinuation for the farm, the people affected and the farming system depend on factors such as alternative job opportunities and whether others take over the farm operation or its functions.

CONCLUSION

The analyses, interpretations and findings revealed that democratic and laissez – faire leadership technique have a strong positive relationship with innovation, adaptation and capability of agro firms in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the interpretation of the analyses, summary of findings and the conclusion, the following suggestions are offered to help the leaders, manager, supervisors and the society on the relevance of this study;

1. The leaders should adopt democratic leadership technique as the finding revealed that there is moderate positive significant relationship on innovation of agro firms in Rivers State.
2. The leaders should adopt democratic leadership technique as the finding proved that there is positive significant relationship on adaptation of agro firms in Rivers State.
3. The leaders should adopt democratic leadership technique as the finding proved that there is high significant relationship between on capability of agro firms in Rivers State.

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