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The Situational Leadership Theory: Application in Educational Institutions of Pakistan

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Abstract: *There is severe competition among educational institutions in Pakistan's public and private sectors as a result of the country's more dynamic educational environment. Using a descriptive methodology, we investigated the function of situational leaders and examined how the situational leadership style is relevant in Pakistan. We have concluded that educators place a high value on situational leadership because it allows the leader to adjust to the demands of the situation or environment. Situational leaders work and apply strategies in line with the demands of the situation, and they also help create new strategies that are appropriate for the circumstance. However, the most important element of the situational leadership approach is the capacity to adjust and be flexible in a particular scenario. Leadership in a given situation ought to be more able to adapt to both internal and external environmental variables. A leader must establish this equilibrium skillfully and successfully. A leader's ability to adjust to the current situation or scenario and meet the requirements of the team or the situation, rather than their skills, is the basis of this situational leadership style. These situational leaders need to be very adaptable.*

Key Words: Leadership, Situational Leadership Theory, Leadership Styles, Contingencies Leadership Theory

Introduction

Organizations are created to achieve corporate goals (Aunga & Masare, 2017; Mekpor & Dartey-Baah, 2017). Business Organizations face competition in the current environment (Chandra, Teddy, & Priyono, 2016). The performance of organisations in Pakistan is poor and not encouraging. The main causes of poor performance include inadequate planning, constantly changing policies, and ineffective management. The absence of essential leadership qualities in business

leaders is another crucial component. The environment for business is more volatile and unstable. This study looked at how different leadership styles aligned and whether they were appropriate for Pakistani corporate organisations.

There are many different distinctive leadership approaches and each has benefits and drawbacks. The autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, democratic, transactional, bureaucratic, strategic, coaching, visionary, situational, and pacesetter are among the

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most common leadership styles. Research studies have shown that corporate success and leadership are positively associated. According to Ebrahim Hasan Al Khajeh (2018), the relationship between a leader's style and a company's performance is an interconnected management idea. They add that firms should emphasize the use of transformational and democratic leadership styles for performance and that leadership styles need to provide people with opportunities and a sense of belonging. Future research should thoroughly examine this, they have advised. The leadership role (Xu and Wang, 2008) in an organization is essential for developing a vision, and mission, deciding on and establishing goals, and designing strategies, policies, and techniques to improve corporate performance.

Monga and Coetzee (2012) argue that leadership is a main component of culture. Leadership in the context of business organisations is the capacity to encourage, inspire, and direct employees towards a common objective. Setting goals, making decisions, and motivating and influencing employees to follow are all part of leadership. A positive and productive work culture and the successful completion of objectives are both outcomes of effective leadership (Vigoda-Gadot, 2012).

The strongest leaders can change their approach to fit the circumstance and the people they are leading. The situational leadership style is the most suited for employees in a business organization. A situational leader modifies decision-making based on the circumstances and the level of experience or competence of the employees. Hersey and Blanchard (1970) developed the situational leadership theory and they believe that specific contextual elements affect a leader's capacity to lead. Flexibility, adaptability, circumstances, and situations are the main aspects of situational leadership. It also helps leaders to assess the readiness and ability of their followers (employees) and adjust their leadership style as necessary.

Situational leaders continue to perform better in various circumstances. A leader might need to adopt a more directive style and give specific directions and guidance while dealing with fresh or inexperienced employees. A leader may need to take a more remote approach and give greater autonomy when working with more skilled and experienced employees. Situational leadership has the disadvantage that it might be challenging to maintain consistency in one's leadership approach.

By examining the dynamic leadership theory, which includes the three traditional styles of democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leadership, and their relationship to team motivation in the context of Abu Dhabi's healthcare industry, Rabi, Khalid, and Khan (2017) have examined a gap in the literature. For a leader, understanding a culture is extremely crucial (Madu, 2012). Organizational characteristics and leaders are crucial to research, and leadership studies are more necessary (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018).

We worked on a novel theme and phenomenon to support the educational leaders in Pakistan. This article's goal is to evaluate three recent articles on the situational leadership style from a journal published from 2019 to 2021 and discuss how they relate to the educational sector in light of the foregoing information.

Literature Review

A leader in an organization or at work persuades subordinates to follow directions in order to accomplish a specific goal or purpose. Leadership is the achievement of objectives and goals. A leader that is successful and efficient in business is one that produces significant profits for the firm, delivers excellent performance to the organization, and develops effective workers through direction and motivation. A leader motivates employees to work hard for the organization. Successful leaders use approaches like innovation, creativity, self-respect, and trust in organizations.

The leader inspires confidence in other people and moves them to perform certain actions. A leader is someone who is willing to improve things and also finds possible ways through which things can be improved. He rallies people in order to move them towards the vision and turns out the vision into a reality by making people work their best. Motivating is not enough in some cases in order to get the work done, leaders should also be empathetic and connect with people more effectively to attain success in the goal. Leaders do not have to follow the same path but they have to be creative and innovative as well in order to achieve the objective more efficiently. This will help the leaders to have a variety of perspectives on different things.

Situational leadership is the style of leadership in which the leader adapts the style of leadership which best fits the environment or the situation. This style of leadership is not based on the skills of a leader but it highly depends on the ability of a leader to adjust the current situation or scenario in order to produce better results for the organization by fulfilling the requirements of the situation or the team. Adaptability and flexibility are highly essential for these situational leaders.

The key to a situational leadership style is clear. By understanding the four leadership styles and the four maturity levels, you can analyze your team and choose the path that best suits them and the jobs you want them to do. The most popular leadership style focuses on the leader, his personality and interests. Leadership is a unique situation because it revolves around the employee or the team. Situational leadership knows the members' timing and determines their level of maturity before deciding which leadership style to adopt. It is their job to change to suit their time as opposed to their team changing to suit them.

Regardless of the type of team they lead or the goals they want to achieve, all managers want their employees to be as productive as possible. In many cases, situational leadership models lead to increased productivity. One of the reasons it increases productivity is that it energizes the team. A leader evaluates his team

and chooses the leadership style that best suits him.

Driving a square plug into a round hole is time-consuming and frustrating. By meeting employees where they are and using a leadership style that reflects their strengths and weaknesses, you will be more effective and efficient. Empathy is the act of putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Seeing the world from other people's perspective makes it easier for you to empathize with them, understand their decision-making process, and sets them up for success. Practising situational leadership may make it easier for team members to work together. Situational leaders do not set their team up for failure. Sometimes the leader evaluates the effectiveness of the group and decides which method of communication or marketing is best. In some cases, they determine that the group is competent and able to manage a specific or representative process.

Some critics also say that the status quo government is not effective. They argue that there is no time to analyze the current situation and determine the best leadership style. This idea is intuitive. However, there is another way to look at it. How much time is lost when a leader still takes leadership that does not suit his team? They are better off taking the time to consider their options and choose a leadership style that shares with their employees.

First, a strong situational leadership style has a greater influence than other leadership styles. With leaders focused on moving forward, trying to focus time on a frequently changing leadership style, there's a lot going on every day. Some leaders can experience a lot of frustration the first time they try this approach. Leaders are used to a variety of leadership situations, but the style process of organizing time is less stressful. Switching from one style to another is also less tiring.

Multiple terrain peaks include a location peak flexibility model. However, each Legion member may initially be eligible to adapt to a change of leadership. Some members of the business are interested in selling mustard, while others are ready to make different choices. Not understanding the reasons for this

leadership decision can be very frustrating. Some critics of the situational leadership model argue that it focuses more on short-term results than on long-term change. It is true that situational leadership requires focusing on the task at hand and choosing the best way to handle it. However, there is still room for long-term planning and improvement.

Researchers have also studied, explored, and connected Pakistani organisations with different leadership philosophies. Butt (2021) has investigated how the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has changed leadership styles in Pakistan (CPEC). The main goal of the study was to determine how Chinese managers affected leadership styles. According to the study's findings, some cultural traits are identical in Pakistan and China, so they won't obviously affect leadership styles. The idea of collectivism is common. Managers in Pakistan will adopt a visionary leadership style as a result of its popularity in China.

Male and female middle-level managers in Pakistani firms were investigated by Zahra, Sarwar, and Baig (2015) to assess their leadership styles. They came to the conclusion that to improve Pakistan's middle-level managers' leadership styles there is a need for training and development. Laissez-Faire Leadership in the case of females is governed by education and training. It is necessary to improve male leadership behaviour through appropriate training.

According to Abbas, Ali, and Khalid (2019), only leadership is insufficient to improve employee performance. Organizations must create a match between leadership and performance in Pakistani organisations in order to gain a competitive advantage. Employee performance is a complex phenomenon. Managers encounter many hurdles in order to improve employee performance. This process includes the control of employee motivational elements by attending to their personal and professional requirements (Wright, Moynihan, & Pandey, 2012).

Rehman, Rahman, Zahid and Asif (2018) highlight the need for academia, policymakers, and the intelligentsia to develop a mix of

autocratic and democratic leadership styles that may be used in the private banks of Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. The results of the study inform policymakers and other important stakeholders that a flexible and upbeat leadership style boosts worker productivity. The study suggests boosting the proportion of women in leadership positions to boost employee productivity and enhance business culture. Productivity is an important aspect of organizational performance (Zakaria et al., 2017).

Ahmad, Batool and Abdullah (2023) investigated a new leadership style—servant leadership—in Pakistani educational institutions and recommended that school principals adopt it because it would be more advantageous for them to comfort and ease the school staff, which might improve the institutional performance.

Research Methodology

This study combines a survey of the literature with descriptive qualitative research. The main sources of information for this study's literature evaluations were the outcomes of numerous studies on leadership and the situational leadership theory. To investigate how situational leadership style is relevant in the educational sector, the author chose three journal articles. Google Scholar was used to searching for research papers on situational leadership styles that were published between 2019 and 2021 as part of the review. We make use of phrases like "leadership skills," "situational leadership theory," and "situational leadership style."

Analysis and Results

The findings and conclusions of the three research articles on situational leadership in educational institutions have been analyzed, and the similarities and differences between the results have been discussed.

A general overview of situational leadership in educational institutions was provided in the first paper by Maisyaroh, Imron, Burhanuddin, Juharyanto, Satria and

Puspitaningtyas (2019). The use of situational leadership theory by a leader, especially in the context of educational intuitions, places an emphasis on the capacity to act in accordance with constructive behavioural guidelines and based on the results of a combination of abilities in various circumstances. Using situational leadership techniques in educational institutions to boost teacher performance.

According to the first study of Maisyaroh et al. (2019), successful leadership philosophies, such as situational leadership, should be more adaptable to both internal and external environmental factors. The continuum model, contingency model, life cycle model, and path-goal theory are examples of situational leadership models that were discussed in the study. There are numerous options for different situations in education. A leader must successfully and efficiently establish this balance. For instance, organizational structure, vision, duties, norms, policies, the personality of the leader, the personality of the subordinates, the personality between leaders, the economic and political environment, and so forth. A situational leader's approach must be flexible. Working in accordance with an institution's vision and purpose is the responsibility of a good and consistently bright leader. The leader is expected to effectively plan, coordinate, manage, and perform in the institute's best interest.

In the second research study, Tabrizi and Redeout (2019) studied situational leadership, organizational structure, and leadership delegation as they analyzed educational leadership at the high school level. They examined the two cases of Iran and Canada to ascertain the application of situational leadership styles. Situational leadership offers advice on how to develop into a successful leader in a variety of settings and businesses. This leadership approach can offer a useful and effective framework in Iran, a multicultural, multilingual, and multinational country, as well as in its provinces, which do not share the same demographic, economic, or educational circumstances.

The organizations goal should be in line with the leadership approach and the situation. There is potential for growth in Canada. Iran and Canada were used as two examples. The results showed that both had weaknesses in their application of situational leadership. Both possessed a clear hierarchy. It will be used to demonstrate the importance of situational leadership in an educational setting by highlighting the inconsistencies present in these instances, which involve both the organization and leadership, as well as what is required for a more effective system.

We chose the third study by Ayaz, Atta, Salaha-Ud-Din, & Khan (2021), which compared public and private schools in Pakistan and examined the situational leadership of school heads with respect to a coaching style. The study's findings indicate that secondary teachers in public and private institutions have very different coaching philosophies. When compared to the public sector, they discovered that private school leaders exhibit more consistent behaviour. The academic calendar is more heavily focused on by private school principals in order to accomplish learning objectives than by public school principals.

Conclusion

We have come to the conclusion that situational leadership is highly valued by educators because it enables the leader to adapt to the demands of the circumstance or environment. Situational leaders work and employ strategies in accordance with the requirements of the moment and also assist in the development of new techniques to suit the situation.

However, the ability to adapt and be flexible in a given circumstance is the most crucial component of the situational leadership approach. Situational leadership should be more adaptable to both internal and external environmental factors. This balance must be created by a leader smoothly and effectively. For instance, organizational structure, goals, responsibilities, standards, and policies, as well as the personality of the leader, that of the

followers, the personality of the leaders themselves, the political and economic environment, and so forth. This situational style of leadership is not founded on a leader's abilities, but rather on their capacity to adapt

to the current situation or scenario in order to better serve the organization by meeting the needs of the team or the situation. These situational leaders must be extremely flexible and adaptable.

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