RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLE AND FOLLOWERSHIP STYLE

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Abstract: A study was conducted to measure the relationship between leadership styles and followership style (i.e. Independent thinking and Active Engagement) using 79 usable questionnaires obtained from employees who are working in Delhi NCR, showed important findings by using Pearson Correlation analysis: first, the most preferred style of leadership is Participative leadership style; second, Exemplary style of followership is most preferred followership style; third, Participative leadership is not significantly correlated with Independent & Critical thinking.

Keywords: Participative leadership; Followership style, Active engagement, Independent thinking.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Various studies describe the characteristics of leadership behavior where it emphasizes more on the type of relationship between leaders and followers in organizations (Bass, Avolio, 1991, 1993, Howell, Avolio, 1993, Schriesheim et al., 1999). The leadership has been an important topic in the organizational for many decades. The literature reveals a wide range of definitions (House and Aditya, 1997; Yun et al., 2006; Alas, Tafel, and Tuulik, 2007). Stogdill (1974) asserted that there are nearly as many definitions of leadership as there are people trying to define it. The paper identified that Participatory style was the most preferred style.

In 1939, a group of researchers led by psychologist, Kurt Lewin identified three different styles of leadership.

1) Authoritarian leaders, also known as autocratic leaders, provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done with clear division between superior and subordinates and make decisions independently.

2) Participative Leadership also known as democratic leadership, offer guidance to group members and their contributions are of a much higher quality. They encourage group members to participate, engage them in the process but they retain the final say over the decision-making process

3) Delegative (Laissez-Faire) Leadership shows little cooperation. Delegative leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members. This style can be effective in situations where group members are highly qualified having subject mastery[i].

"The participatory leadership paradigm is based on *respect* and *engagement*. It constructively focuses *energy* in every human to human *encounter*. A more advanced, more democratic and more effective model of leadership, it *harnesses* diversity, *builds* community, and creates shared responsibility for action. It deepens individual and collective learning yielding *real* development and growth." Participatory leaders are typically post conventional leaders[ii]. Their action logic uses every organizational interaction to make meaning, love for a purpose helps in transforming organizations.

Followers are encouraged to question their own way of doing things. The study of followership involves an investigation of the nature and impact of the followers and following in the leadership process. The leadership process is a term used to signify a connectionist view (Lord & Brown, 2001) that sees leadership as a dynamic system involving leaders (or leading) and followers (or following) interacting together in context (Hollander, 1992a; Lord et al., 1999; Padilla et al., 2007; Shamir, 2012; Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012).

First, a role theory approach (Katz & Kahn, 1978), sees followership as a role played by individuals occupying a formal or informal position or rank (e.g., a "subordinate" in a hierarchical "manager–subordinate" relationship; a follower in a "leader– follower" relationship).

Second, a constructionist approach (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010), views followership as a relational interaction through which leadership is co-created in combined acts of leading and following (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012; Shamir, 2012). Whereas role-based views investigate followership as a role and a set of behaviors or behavioral styles of individuals or groups, constructionist views study followership as a social process necessarily intertwined with leadership.

Researchers now widely identify that followership is an emerging concept.

 "Followers are subordinates who have less power, authority, and influence than do their superiors, and who therefore usually, but not invariably, fall into line" (Kellerman, 2008, p. 213). The majority of people, particularly in organizations, are more often followers than leaders (Kelley, 1988) but until recently, the role of the follower has not been considered an inherently valuable position.

II. OBJECTIVES

This study has four major objectives:

First, to measure most preferred style of leadership.

Second, to measure most preferred style of followership.

Third, to measure the significant relationship between preferred leadership style and the independent thinking.

Fourth, to measure the significant relationship between preferred leadership style and active engagement.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

We have long known that followers and followership are essential to leadership. However, despite the abundance of investigations into leadership in organizational studies (Yukl, 2012), until recently little attention has been paid to followership in leadership research (Baker, 2007; Bligh, 2011; Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera, & McGregor, 2010; Kelley, 2008; Sy, 2010). When followers have been considered, they have been considered as recipients or moderators of the leader's influence (i.e., leader-centric views, Bass, 2008) or as "constructors" of leaders and leadership (i.e., follower-centric views, Meindl, 1990; Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). The study of followers as key components of the leadership process through their enactment of followership has been largely missed in the leadership literature.

Participative leadership is defined as the degree to which leaders share the influence on decision making with their team (Somech, 2005; Vroom & Jago, 2007). The purpose of participative leadership is to share responsibility with the team to such an extent that the team members can lead themselves (Manz & Sims, 1987). Research shows that participative leadership contributes to positive team outcomes, such as team reflection and knowledge sharing (De Poel, Stoker, & Van der Zee, 2012; Kahai, Sosik, & Avolio, 1997; Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006).

We argue that participative leadership will only be effective in teams that are cohesive and where team members feel safe to express their unique insights (Tung & Chang, 2011).

Kelley (1992) acknowledged the significance of the leader and their role in the achievements of an organization. He also concluded that followers were just as important as leaders. Chaleff (2003) supported this idea in proposing a view of the follower's role that brings it into parity with that of the leader. The importance of the follower appeared to influence both the leader and the organization at large. In particular, Kelley's quantitative and qualitative research concluded that followers impact leaders to the extent that they ultimately determine not only whether a leader will be accepted, but also whether that leader will be effective in their role. Moreover, those entities that thrive do so based at least in part on how well followers follow (Kelley, 1988). In contemplating this dynamic among leaders, followers, and the organization, Chaleff proposed that leaders and followers formed an action circle, both orbiting around that organizational purpose and not centered

on the leader. Thus, leaders and followers work in a tenuous relationship while pursuing mutually agreeable organizational outcomes. However, Kelley also distinguished between followers noting that all do not share equal ability. Ultimately, it is those effective followers who are critical to the leader and ultimately for an organization's success (Kelley, 1992).

Kelley (1992) proposed a classification of various followership styles in a matrix format based on two key dimensions: engagement and critical thinking ability. He believes that different types of followers can be described in terms of two broad dimensions i.e.

1. Independent and critical thinking at one end and

2. Dependent and uncritical thinking on the other end

Based on these two dimensions, Kelley defines five basic styles of followers: the sheep, the yes people, the alienated, the pragmatics, and the star followers. Each exhibits a different degree of independent thinking and organizational engagement and differs in their motivations. The following is a basic assessment of each follower type according to Kelley (1988):

1. The sheep are passive in their thinking and engagement and are motivated by their leader rather than themselves.

2. The yes-people also allow their leader to do most of the thinking and acting for them but are generally positive and always on the leader's side.

3. In contrast, the alienated are predominantly negative but think more independently. They think for themselves but do not contribute to the positive direction of the organization.

4. The pragmatics exhibit a minimal level of independent thinking and engagement as they are more willing to exert energy and get involved when they see where the direction of the situation is headed. The pragmatics, thus, lack in demonstrating critical thinking and are motivated by maintaining the status quo.

5. Finally, the star followers also called exemplary style think for themselves, have positive energy, and are actively engaged. They agree with and challenge their leaders. Exemplary followers operate well on the two underlying dimensions of the leadership. First, they exercise independent, critical thinking, separate from the group or leader. Second, they are actively engaged, using their talents for the benefit of the organization, even when confronted with bureaucracy or other non-

contributing members. Unlike the mythic qualities attributed to leaders, exemplary followers are simply able to do their jobs and work with others in a way that adds value to the organization. It is the way in which they go about their tasks that makes them stand out from other followers.

Kelley (1992) categorized followers according to the dimensions of thinking and acting. Followers who are independent, critical thinkers consider the impact of their actions, are willing to be creative and innovative, and may offer criticism. Dependent and uncritical thinkers only do what they are told and accept the leader's thinking. The second dimension, acting, is used to determine what sense of ownership the follower demonstrates. An active follower takes initiative in decision making, while a passive follower's involvement is limited to being told what to do. Despite the fact that Kelley created five different subsets of followers with the fifth subset (pragmatists) encompassing some of the characteristics of the other four, this analysis will only use the standard four-quadrant subset.

Based on the model shown below in Fig. 1, five specific followership styles emanated from this grid as a result of the specific combinations contained in the mix, including: alienated, passive, conformist, pragmatic, and exemplary followers (Kelley). Table 1 Kelley (1988) proposes four crucial characteristics that distinguish effective from ineffective followers. One of the characteristics is the followers' ability to determine own goals within a large context and to decide on the role to perform at a particular time to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals. A followers' demonstration of unique commitment to the organization and to a purpose beyond personal level, differentiates good from bad followers. Exemplary followers share all the attributes of effective followers.

III. HYPOTHESIS

Ho: there is no significant relationship between preferred leadership style and independent and critical thinking.

Ho: there is no significant relationship between preferred leadership style and active engagement.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study allowed the researchers to integrate the leadership research literature, interview, pilot study and the actual survey as a main procedure to collect data. The use of such methods may gather accurate, less biased and high quality data (Cresswell, 1998, Sekaran,

2000). In the first step of data collection, interviews were conducted with two experienced employees, i.e. one HR manager and one Supervisor. This interview enhanced the understanding of the researchers on the nature of Autocratic, Delegative and Participative leadership, independent thinking & active engagement characteristics of followership. The information gathered from the interviews was used to develop the content of leadership questionnaires for a pilot study and followership style questionnaire was used which was adapted from *The Power of Followership,* Robert E. Kelley, 1992. Subsequently, the pilot study was done by discussing pilot questionnaires with the participants. Feedbacks from the participants were used to verify the content and format of survey questionnaire for an actual study.

The survey questionnaires have two sections as shown in Table 1. These items were measured using a 7-item scale ranging from "Rarely" (0) to "Almost Always" (7).

Table 1

VARIABLE	SOURCES
Leadership Style	www.sagepub.com/northouseintro2e/.../questionnaires/....pdf
Followership style (Independent & Critical thinking)	Adapted from *The Power of Followership,* Robert E. Kelley, 1992.

Unit of analysis and sample

The targeted population for this study is 79 employees who are working in Delhi NCR region. In the first step of data collection procedure, the researchers met the HR Department to get their opinions about the rules for distributing survey questionnaires in its organization. Considering the organizational rules, a random sampling was used to determine the number of sample size based on the period of study and constraints towards budget. Post that, non-probability - a convenient sampling was chosen to distribute survey questionnaires as the situation did not allow the researchers to choose respondents randomly. As such, 100 survey questionnaires were distributed to the employees who are willing to answer the questionnaires. Out of a total of 100 questionnaires, 79 usable questionnaires were returned to the researchers, yielding 79 per cent response rate. The number of this sample exceeds the minimum sample of 30 participants as required by probability sampling technique, showing that it may be analyzed using inferential statistics

(Sekaran, 2000). The survey questionnaires were answered by participants voluntarily based on their consents.

Data analysis

A statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 21.0 was used to analyze the questionnaire data.

Firstly, exploratory factor analysis was used to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement scales (Hair et al., 1998).

Secondly, Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were conducted to determine the collinear problem, further confirm the validity and reliability of constructs and thus test research hypotheses (Tabachnick et al., 2001, Yaacob, 2008).

V. FINDINGS

Participant characteristics

1-Majority of respondents were male (98 per cent),

2-Leaders' experience varies between 4 to 40 years

3-Reportees i.e. followers' experience varies between 1 year to 22 years

4- 31% of the Respondent worked more than 10years

Validity and reliability analyses for measurement scales

Table II shows the results of validity and reliability analyses for measurement scale. The original survey questionnaires consisted of 32 items, which related to 3 variables: autocratic (4 items), delegative (4 items), participative leadership (4 items), Independent and critical thinking (10 items), active engagement (10 items). A factor analysis with the varimax rotation was first done for 5 variables with 32 items. After that, Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin Test (KMO), which is a measure of sampling adequacy, was conducted for each variable and the results indicated that it was acceptable. Relying on Hair et al. (1998) and Nunally and Bernstein's (1994) guidelines, these statistical analyses showed that:

(1) value of the factor analysis for all items that represent each research variable was 0.3 and more, an indication that the items met the acceptable standard of validity analysis,

(2) all research variables exceeded the acceptable standard of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's value of 0.5, and were significant in Bartlett's test of sphericity,

(3) all research variables had eigenvalues larger than 1,

(4) items for each research variable exceeded factor loadings of 0.50 (Hair et al., 1998), and

(5) all research variables exceeded the acceptable standard of reliability analysis of 0.70 (Nunally, Bernstein, 1994) ie. cronbach's alpha value.

These statistical analyses confirmed that measurement scales used in this study have met the acceptable standard of validity and reliability analyses as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

MEASURE	ITEM	FACTOR LOADING	KMO	Bartlett's test of sphericity	Eigen Value
PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP (preferred leadership style by respondent)	3	.581-.684	.660	P=.001	1.87
FOLLOWERSHIP STYLE (Independent & Critical Thinking and Active engagement)	20	.578-.889	.516	P=.000	3.5

Analysis of constructs

Table III shows the result of Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. The mean numbers for the variables are from 3.7 to 5.05. The correlation coefficients for the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., participative leadership) and the dependent variable (i.e., independent thinking and active engagement) were less than 0.50, indicating the data were not affected by serious collinear problem (Hair et al., 1998). The measurement scales that had validity and reliability were used to test research hypotheses.

TABLE 3 : Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson correlation analysis	1	2	3
Participative Style	5.05	1.01	Participative Style	1		
Independent thinking	3.75	1.35	Independent thinking	.276	1	
Active engagement	4.23	1.18	Active engagement	.121	.457	1

Note: Significant at *p<0.05 Reliability estimation are shown diagonally (value 1)

Outcomes of testing hypothesis

As described in Table III, the results of Pearson correlation analysis showed following important findings:

First, majority 77% of the respondent acted as participatory leaders.

Second, 68% of followers acted with Exemplary style of Followership

Third, Participative Leadership style is not positively and significantly correlated with independent thinking (r=0.27, p>0.05), therefore Ho was supported.

Fourth, Participative Leadership is not positively and significantly correlated with active engagement (r=0.12, p>0.05), therefore Ho was supported.

VI. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

With respect to the robustness of the research methodology, the measurement scales used in this study had exceeded an acceptable standard of validity and reliability analyses. This situation could lead to the production of accurate and reliable findings.

Regarding practical contributions, the findings of this study can be used as a guideline to improve leadership behavior in the dynamic organizations. Based on exemplary follower style, uses both independent & critical thinking skills and active participation skills. They bring up new ideas with correct information, having vision, creating relationships with other groups. Exemplary followers operate well on the two underlying dimensions i.e First, they exercise independent, critical thinking, separate from the group or leader. Second, they are actively engaged, using their talents for the benefit of the organization. Exemplary followers simply do their jobs and work with others in a way that adds value to the organization and their tasks are that makes them stand out from other followers. They possess a number of skills and value that are both learnable and doable by them. Participative style of leader involves the employees in the decision-making, although the process for the final decision may vary from leader to leader.

As Exemplary follower characteristics is Entrepreneurial in approach and spirit with a focus on taking risk to accomplish results and doing what's necessary to get things done and they are more independent and active in their approach.

VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The current research and practice within the organizational leadership models needs to consider dependent thinking and passive engagement with other leadership style including participative leadership style based on industry. This study further suggests that the ability

of the leaders to properly observed for positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (e.g. performance, customer satisfaction, etc.). Finally, in depth qualitative study is advised, especially when focusing on specific variables. The importance of the issues needs to be further discussed in future researches.

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