

Review of Effects of Poor Leadership Skill in Organization: Evidences

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Abstract

The purpose of this review paper is to assess effects of poor leadership. Leadership is a discipline and an art of guiding, directing, motivating, and inspiring a group or organization toward the achievement of common goals. It is about influencing others and to do so there are some important character and skill that a leader has to possess. Leadership skills are the tools, behaviors and capability that a person needs in order to be successful at motivating, persuading and directing others to buy into the vision, objective or goal. Leadership skill is a pregnant word or phrase that encompasses different skill types namely; communication skill, motivational skill, management skill, vision, setting positive examples and among others. Leadership skills are one of the most important skills that are required in the changing world to perform different roles such as achieving the goals of the organization, communicating vision, mobilizing and motivating others, planning, organizing, controlling, in developing and maintaining cooperative relationship with superiors, subordinates, peers and others and so on. Moreover, leadership skills are important in order to build and keep healthy relationship with the people in and outside of the organizations. Leaders must be equipped with the necessary leadership skills. If this is so, they can effectively execute their jobs in an extraordinary way. However, in reality problems are clearly seen with the effective performance of leaders and employees. The reason why is because of deficit of leadership skill. The reason as to why poor leadership skill might be attributed because of lack of experience, education, training and so on. Where leaders are in short of important leadership skill, there will be lots of problems which will have long and extended effect in the organization. The important leadership skills that are lacking and causing problems with the performance of the organization are related to vision, communication, motivation, management, setting good examples and among others. Lack of leadership skill has consequences of reducing performance of the leaders and also the employees by increasing employee turnover, reducing employee satisfaction, etc. which again have negative impact on the productivity of the organization. This is because leadership is backbone of an organization. It is the leader who is responsible for the effectiveness of employees. To remove constraints related with poor leadership it is better working on leadership skill development through creating conducive environments for new employee to exercise leadership, provision of appropriate training, leader undertake self-help activities and lastly positive good example setting.

Keywords: Leadership; Leaders; Leadership skill; Management skill; Vision; Communication; Example setting; Motivation

Introduction

Leadership is the most commonly found and talked but difficult to define concept. So far there have been numerous definitions given. Various scholars defined it variously. Accordingly, leadership has been defined in terms of traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships and occupation of an administrative position [1]. It describes the concepts, ideas and practices of leadership as the subject of much thought, discussion, writing, teaching and learning [2].

Therefore, leadership is defined as the discipline and art of guiding, directing, motivating, and inspiring a group or organization toward the achievement of common goals [3]. Accordingly, leadership is the ability to lead a group of people or organization from certain point or area towards a desired common outcome or goal. It is simply showing direction or way to others to achieve certain common goal. As it can be seen leadership is about motivating, inspiring, encouraging, and influencing people [4]. It is the art of influencing others so that they will follow [5]. Also defined leadership as the ability to influence other towards the accomplish of some goals which involves communicating, interacting and managing relationship with in an organization, network or social system to move towards one's highest aspirations.

Therefore, leadership is about influence. It is entirely tied with influence. Influence is the essence of leadership [1]. However, the influence is not because leaders have power or they are bosses. Noted that positive influence do not simply flow out from applying authority, title, position or regulation [4]. It is because they are people who are committed to creating a world to which people want to belong [5].

Leadership has to do with challenging the status quo, the culture, and/or changing people's lives at their core. So, if leadership is said to be about influence so how to attain this influence? One of the most important substances which are important to influence is through possessing leadership skills. In order to influence and make others to follow and contribute their input there is a requirement of leadership skill. As it is indicated by leader possesses the skill and abilities to influence others for the best [4].

Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is simply to review important leadership skills, consequences of lack of these skills and propose solutions. The methodology followed is searching different literatures and research papers on this issue and reviewing it.

Leadership Skills

Adair [6] states that leadership skills have now been universally recognized as a key ingredient in management. So, what is leadership skill? According to skills are generally understood as abilities acquired by training or experience. Skills are the capability to perform a

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certain job in an effective way [1,2]. Leadership skills are the tools, behaviors and capability that a person needs in order to be successful at motivating, persuading and directing others to buy into the vision, objective or goal. Adair [7] states the three main function of leadership namely; achieving the task, developing the individual and building and maintaining the team. The leaders have to possess skills in providing those functions in different situation.

Opinions differ with regard to leadership skill categorization. Different authors did the categorization of skills in different ways. Dilts [5] put basic leadership skills that are needed to address each of the key elements which make up the problem space as self-skill, relationship skill, strategic thinking skill and system thinking skill. Bass [2] categorized key leadership skill as conceptual skill, human skill and technical skill. According to the author the conceptual skill helps to see a big picture. It is a leader's skill to manage strategically, achieve results, shape culture lead ethically and establish trust. Yukl [1] also categorized in the same way and identified the technical skills are primarily concerned with ideas and concepts.

As indicated by Bass social skills consists of a range of skills that have long been associated with both management and leadership which include the ability to motivating others, communicate, resolve conflict and so on. Though it seems different ways of categorizing included in each are almost similar skills [2]. Thus, leadership skill is a pregnant word or phrase that encompasses different skill types namely; communication skill, motivational skill, management skill, vision, setting positive examples and the like.

Importance of Leadership Skills

Leadership skills matters in making difference. Skills play key role in that it helps the leaders to influence others in achievement of organizational goals. Yukl [1] suggests a requirement of higher level of skill for the success of the leaders in the 21st century. The reason the writer forwarded is that of increasing rate of change in the external environment of organization and the many new challenges facing leaders. We are living in a highly changing world. Leaders in every generation believe their challenges are greater than the ones of the previous generation [3]. Today's work environment is characterized by much higher levels of turbulence, uncertainty, fluctuation and global competition. In order to cope up with these situations and attain organizational achievement, skill remains crucial. Dilts [5] indicates that leadership skills are one of the most important skills that are required in the changing world.

There are roles that the leaders are responsible to perform. The roles could be achieving the goals of the organization, communicating vision, mobilizing and motivating others, planning, organizing, controlling and so on. Leadership skills are vital for effective performance of these leadership roles. It helps the leader to move the organizations forward.

Moreover, leadership skills are important in developing and maintaining cooperative relationship with superiors, subordinates, peers and others [1]. Leaders need to possess leadership skill in order to build and keep healthy relationship with the people in and outside of the organizations. These all will add to the productivity and success of the organizations.

Characteristics of Poor Leadership

Qualities of the leaders are essential in the high productivity of the organization. Leaders must be equipped with the necessary leadership skills. If this is so, they can effectively execute their jobs in

an extraordinary way. However, in reality problems are clearly seen with the performance of leaders. The reason why is because of deficit of leadership skill. Why poor leadership skill might be attributed because of lack of experience, education, training and so on. Where leaders are in short of important leadership skill, there will be lots of problems which will have long and extended effect in the organization. The important leadership skills that are lacking and causing problems with the performance of the organization are related to vision, communication, motivation, management, setting good examples and among others which will be discussed below. Of course it is not an exhaustive list. For the sake of this paper more emphasis were given to these important ones.

Lack of vision

Vision is an important ingredient for leaders. It is future oriented and seeing big picture of the future and clearly indicates where the organization is heading and what needs to be accomplished to get there. According to Wadhwa and Parimoo [8] vision is like a road map which shows the route the organization aims to take. Without vision it is impossible to think of leadership. If there is vision of the future it is possible to create that future since vision has the power to create the future as state as vision invents the future. However, in most cases people those who have got the title of leader lacks vision in their inside part (heart) [9]. There might be vision written on paper. This kind of vision is not coming from inside. It is simply outwardly. If it is not from inside the heart, it doesn't have power. This kind can be equivalently considered as lack of vision. As it is indicated by Kouzes and Posner [9] vision live in people and shared to the employee of organizations via effective communication [8-11].

Poor communication skill

According to Tehreem et al. [10] leadership requires efficient communication skill. Luthra and Dahiya [12] states that good communication skill helps better understanding and beliefs among people and inspires people the principles and values which the leader wants to inculcate in them. Managers and leaders are spending majority of their time in communicating. It is said that without communication there is no leadership [4]. According to Wadhwa and Parimoo [7] leaders must be effective communicator so that, the leaders can be good at getting their messages across to people and best at drawing the most out of people. One important issue they must communicate is vision. Having a vision is one important aspect of leadership. Having a vision and not communicating it is no more than without vision. The vision has to be passed to other or shared in order to do what it is meant to do by effectively communicating. Bass [2] excellently put that one of the responsibility of a leader is creating commitment to the vision of the organization which could not be possible without communicating it. Unless it is communicated, others will not get chance to hear and see it. However, if it properly communicated every concerned body come to know and understand, remember and share it [13-17].

According to Bass [2] and Lussier and Achua [18] leadership is about building relationship. So, communication is the base for leaders to build relationship [18]. Poor communication skill breaks down relationship and destroys everything. So, it will result in the loss of a lot of man power which could otherwise contribute to the improvement of organizations.

Lack of management skill

Leaders need to share qualities of managers. Leadership requires both management and leadership skills set in equal frequency. According

to Seyedinejat et al. [19] to implement management functions such as planning, organizing, execution and controlling, managerial skills are required. These management skills are technical skill, social skill and conceptual skill. Leaders need to have these management skills. In most cases leaders fails to have these skill. When leaders are poor in management skill they are poor in planning, organizing, execution and controlling.

Poor example setting

One of the most important and powerful way leaders' influences others is through setting good examples. Leaders are setting examples for their followers so that the followers will emulate their footsteps. Renowned scientist, Albert Einstein, is quoted of his saying that 'setting an example is not a major way of influencing others rather it is the only way. This statement by Einstein excellently captures what leadership is all about setting an example. Moreover, Klann [4] put that setting a positive leadership example is the highest form of leadership. Thus, nothing is more powerful than exemplary life of the leader. It causes big impact or influence on the followers.

It is not far from understanding that more than anyone else leaders are watched by a lots of people. Leaders are on the elevated areas. They are easily seen by lots of people. Therefore, there life, talks and deeds or actions makes impact on the life and deeds of others. The impacts could be positive or negative depending on their behavior. Setting an example is about becoming a role model to others. Kouzes and Posner [9] put setting an example as it is all about execution and action. Setting example is about being the first to do something that everyone should value. Leaders go first by setting examples [9]. Leaders should live an exemplary life that causes positive impact. Leaders must walk the talk. That means there has to be consistency between the words and deeds of the leaders [9]. There has to be a match between talks and walks of the leader. As it is always said "deeds speaks more loudly than talks". Leaders' deeds are more important than words. To get better results leaders must practice what they are saying. Otherwise the leaders cannot influence the others to achieve for the common goals of the organization.

Instead, in most cases what can be practically seen now days commonly are empty words that have not practically implemented. That is words that cannot be implemented by the leaders are communicated. A lot of promises that are not kept. Much talk and little walk is the characteristics of some leaders. Inconsistency between the talks and the walks of the leaders is evident. Lack of exemplary life is very evident which has huge negative impact on the followers. Due to this the leader in position lacks the influencing power. The impact of the leader on the achievement of organizational goal is minimal.

Poor motivational skill

Motivation skill is one of the most important leadership skills that have long been recognized as essential for the leadership function [2]. Leadership is about motivating people. Motivational skill is important in motivating and mobilizing people. According to Adair [7] motivational skill is vital to get the best or the highest from people, achieve results through team and individuals, maintain consistent high performance, inspiring one self and others into action. With regard to human motivation Kouzes and Posner [9] indicated two types of motivation namely; intrinsic and extrinsic. It answers why people do something. Is it because they are forced to do by external factor or from inside? Are they doing to please others or to please themselves? To motivate other, leaders must be motivated themselves and so must come from inside [7]. If the workers are easily motivated to do

something they can produces superior results. But if the leaders are failed to motivate themselves, they cannot motivate others. This is one constraint of the leaders of the day in some cases. Leader who are in position are poor in motivating others in order that they can contribute most. Because of this there is low contribution of the followers. Low input by others.

Effect of Poor Leadership Skills in Organization

As it is already stated in previous section it is obvious and agreeable that leadership skills are important for the effectiveness of an organization. Leadership is about the art of influencing others. If this is so it could be possible through leadership skills. Without the skills it is impossible for the leaders to influence others. As explained by Tehreem et al. [10] poor leadership has an effect on the life style of people by causing lack of direction and loses of purpose. The lack of skills results in a problem with the performance of leaders in general. Leadership skills are so important for the success of the leader. Femi [11] describes that poor communication affects employee performance. Poor leadership skill has consequences of reducing performance of the leaders because leaders can't maintain high performing people which again have negative impact on the productivity of the organization [10]. This is because leadership is backbone of an organization. It is the leader who is responsible for the effectiveness of employees. Poor leadership has negative effect on employee satisfaction too, which in turn negatively affects employee productivity. Tehreem et al. [10] further explained that poor leadership causes disbelief of the leader and any decision the leaders make.

Experiences show that as a result of lack of skills in leaders organizations could lose efforts of individual workers which could otherwise be contributed for the betterment of the organizations. The organizations could not obtain most out of the workers. This is a loss or cost for the organizations. One of the important consequences of poor communication skill is failure to meet goals of an organization. Luthra and Dahiya [12] states that communication and leadership are interrelated to one another and in the absence of good communication skills, the leaders fail to achieve the goals and principles set by organizations which further make the leader ineffective. Odine [13] also added the problem of poor communication as bringing lower efficiency and affect morale of the employee.

Tehreem et al. [10] states the importance of communication skill and describes that practical communication skill provides the leaders authority, belief from people and clarity of direction to people. The negative effect of poor communication skill is breaks down relationships between workers in organizations which results in lack of synergy means lack of working together for the common goals of organizations. This will further go and cause higher turnover of human resource. The organization loss skilled workers on which the organization has already made huge investment. A range of costs are incurred associated with replacing an experienced employee such as costs of finding a new person and replacing, covering position when vacant and other related management costs. That means organizations are forced to recruit new employees or experts where the organization is forced to undertake some sort of investment on training to acquaint the new employees to the working environment and increase their skill which is a costly operation. It doesn't end at this point. It will extend and go beyond this. Poor communication skill can also results in reduction of customer satisfaction and finally lost customer. The existences of the organizations are basically based on the customers. If a certain organization is losing the customers, the organization cannot stay competent and it will result in the loss of its market share and

reduction of overall revenue of organization. The organization will be out of the game. This will be a great loss for the organizations.

According to Tehreem et al. [10] leaders share information and listens to people who contradicts to his/her view points. The authors added that poor communication skill results in lack of focus, decreased efficiency and member yield.

Lack of vision in leaders results in lack of focus in the organization. The organization will stay for long without any significant change. It will remain stagnant without any sign of further improvement. From experience it is easy to see that in some cases organizations could also move back ward. This is because the organization lacks a powerful tool which makes organizations to move forward, that is vision. Un-communicated vision can also be considered as lack of vision. As already stated vision must be shared among the members of the organization so that all members will have equal understanding about it. According to Wadhwa and Parimoo [8] shared vision energizes the employee through connecting them to the purpose of the organization so that each individual worker contributes to the big picture of the organization. If the leader is failed in communicating, the workers of the organization will be ignorant of the future destiny of the organization. The workers don't take charge of their role. They cannot implement the vision of the organization. That means the workers are not mobilized to contribute their part and move the organization forward [2].

The effect of poor motivation can be understood by getting insight from study findings of positive relation of motivation and employee performance. Richard [14] found that motivation enhances employee performance. Njambi [15] also found that positive association of motivation and increased productivity. This in turn indicates that lack of motivation reduces performance of the employee. If the workers are not motivated in terms of opportunity for improvement, salary, appreciation for the work done, promotion and among others, the employee can't contribute to the organization with all their efforts and potentials which negatively affect the organizations.

Proposed Solutions

Leadership is identifiable set of skills and abilities that are available to all of us [2]. According to Kolzow [16] the ability to lead is a collection of skills which can be learned and improved. Successful leaders are learners. Developing leadership skill is one of mechanisms which must be exercised to come out of inadequate leadership skill. Leadership skill can be developed. Leaders must develop their skills. In order to increase influence, leaders need to develop their leadership skills [4]. Leadership skills can be learned [16]. All that is required is open mind to learn, patience with self during learning these skills and commitment to put what is learned in to practice. According to Adair [7] in an organization there has to be a policy of developing leadership potential particularly of newly appointed leader. One important way to develop leadership is getting opportunity to leads [17]. Organizations must create conducive environment that encourages leaders at all levels to exercise leadership starting from early stages as much as possible so that the new employee will be empowered and creative and acquire new experiences. Other mechanism used to develop leadership skill is through provision of training [1,7]. Organization has to train their worker in order that their skill of doing things will increase which contributes to the productivity of the organizations. The other way of leadership skill development which is mentioned by the same authors is that of self-help activities. Individual workers has to undertake some efforts to improve their leadership skill self-help activities such as reading, analyzing and following the example of good leaders and by critically assessing,

monitoring and improving their own performance. There is a need to train employees in order to improve their communication skill. This helps the employees to better influence others that in turn lead to better performance of the employee and the organization.

The fourth most important means to develop leaders is through becoming good example. Positive examples not only influence others but also develop leadership capacity of others [4]. Therefore, setting good example has dual purposes. For one thing, it leads others through its influencing power. The other purpose is that, it develops others to become a leader. Positive leadership examples have multiplying effect on others. As it is put by the author, this is because of the habit of imitating other behavior which is ingrained in human nature. This is leadership development by examples.

Conclusion

Leadership is the art of influencing others in order that others will follow. This is not effective through applying authority, power and regulation but through possessing leadership skills. Leadership skills matters in making difference. Skills play key role in that it helps the leaders to influence others in achievement of organizational goals. Because of increasing rate of change in the external environment of organization and the many new challenges facing leaders there is a requirement of higher level of skill for the success of the leaders in the 21st century. The most important skills that are required and make leaders to execute roles in an extraordinary way are communication skill, motivation skill, vision, setting good example, management skill and the like. Leaders need to be equipped with all these skills in order to be successful.

Leadership skills are so important for the success of the leader. Lack of any one or more of these skills in leader results in loss of organizational performance and productivity through causing employee turnover, reduction of customer satisfaction and loss of customers and lose of overall revenue. Poor leadership skill means a lot of things to the organizations. Poor leadership due to lack of leadership skills costs an organization in losing its skilled workers and customers. The workers will not contribute to their maximum potential to the success of the organizations. That means there is loss of efforts of individual workers. The relationships of the leader with the staff in the organization deteriorate which will be damaging and have negative consequences on the success of the leader. The organizations might count years without any further improvement and in some cases go back ward.

How organization come out of these problems brought about because of poor leadership skill is simply through creating somewhat good working environment for new employees to assume leadership role as early as possible and training arranged by the organizations to improve the skill of the leaders. Because leadership skill could be learned and developed through training what is important is open mind to learn, patience and implementing what is learnt. The other important issue that must be considered in developing leadership skill is personal effort such as reading, assessing, monitoring and evaluation of self-performance. Moreover, leadership skill can be developed through following good examples set by others. Examples' setting is a powerful tool to influence others and to develop leadership capacity in others.

Competing Interests

Author declares that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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