The Journal of Population Research

The Journal of
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Impact of Learned Optimism on Leadership Effectiveness with Special Reference to Service Sector

Miss. Ananya Borgohain
Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
CT College, Tinsukia (Assam)

Abstract

Research reveals that the overall performance of the workforce is possible through effective leadership. The effective leader is capable to support the workforce and motivate them to perform better. Therefore a leader who is a good communicator and can influence the people and bring confidence in them which encourages them to perform is more suitable for better performance of the organisation. Study found that influence of leadership on the monetary outcomes of the organisation. This paper aims to identify the impact of learned optimism on leadership effectiveness. The study intended to know if the optimism can be learned through leader will that impact the performance of people or not. Various researches accept that optimism helps in dealing various situations, especially uncertainties if faced by companies. The study has considered leaders from service sector organization for data collection. Correlation and regression analysis are used to study the relationship and impact of the study. The finding suggests that the learned optimism has moderately high impact on leadership effectiveness. In-fact many study shows that there are multiple other factors like leader's influence, communication and inter personal relationship of leader can stronger due to optimistic approach in leader.

Keywords: 1.Leadership, 2.Leadership Effectiveness, 3.Learned Optimism and 4.Organisation Performance.

Introduction

Being an effective leader of an organization is one of the biggest challenges for any manager in today's time, but if a manager is able to generate touch, effectiveness is highly rewarded and brings excellence in the overall performance of group and organization. Leader with strategic thought process, ineffective goal setter, influential communicator and motivator helps in developing the capabilities of employees and manages the resources of the organisation effectively to deal with the situations faced by the organisation and produces the desired result. Effective leader possesses qualities like optimistic and reliable with clear vision of organisation. In the recent time business environment has witnessed changes in various aspects which has also provided new aspects of leadership which combine the effectiveness of leadership. In today's industrial world we see tremendous changes related to technology, structure, implementation methods and processes and many more. The new found information is being replaced frequently which demands an appropriate leader and confident & balanced workforce under that leader. Having such workforce is another challenge for an organization; therefore building such workforce is required which is dependent on the leaders of the organization. Researchers have opined various attributes needed in an effective leader.

An effective leadership brings sustainability in long-term and security to current performance in short-term of the organization. This is needed because no organization can ignore the external changes and equally channelize the internal resources as per the changes taking place in external environment. This gap needs to be gauged by the leader and take sensible action towards the same and in collective manner accomplish vision and mission of the business. Thus the leaders are responsible for development of people and developing an environment in which an individual can produce best (Ghoshal et al. 2000). Thus this brings the need to know the details of the leadership processes where leader works as an influencer to various

sections, departments of the organization and this influence reciprocate the same impact which gives better results to the organization.

Therefore various organisations are trying to understand the leadership assessment outcome to provide guidance for the development of more authentic leadership which can result in effective performance of the organisation. The decisions and actions of a leader along with the emotional connect which a leader can provide to help the employee in maintaining positivity results in better outcomes. It is the responsibility of a leader to make people realize how they can face difficulties if certain manner or processes will not be followed. By doing this a leader can make them understand that it is time to change or learn. When employees will be willingly ready for change it will be helpful in the enhancement of competency of people and organisation. Therefore the style and behavior of a leader with their employees impacts the outcome produced by them, especially at the time of change implementation. Recently there are certain types of leadership development processes which help in providing experiences to the prospective leader for his future role and probable atmosphere, though the individual who wants to be an effective leader can put efforts in enhancing their knowledge, practices, and observation. The leaders can impact in various aspects of the performance of the organisation. (Yukl, 2008) explain the importance of a flexible or rigid approach of a leader in impacting the performance of the employees. The effective leader generally developed the atmosphere which is compatible and able to enhance this energy among the people instead of digging the mistakes of others. Along with this the actions and decisions on a routine basis shown by a leader have a greater impact on employees and their thought process about the leader and organisation. This type of approach by the leader helps in enhancing the performance of the organisation.

Dhar and Mishra (2001) factors impacting effectiveness of leadership in service sector organisation includes - the ability to facilitate, influence, accountable, capability to build the team, negotiate, reward and study also identified factor exclusively for service organisation are motivation, optimism and effective monitoring of objectives. Goffee and Jones (2007) the social capabilities of a leader which can build a strong relationship between leader and others are crucial to the organisation. The leader strongly believes that it is essential for the members of the organisation to interact with each other and best better understanding. The leader considered that employees under them are hard-working and contribute towards the achievement of the goals of the organisation and therefore the time to relax is equally important for them. In certain atmosphere leaders provide appropriate time to the members to understand processes and people to work effectively.

It is squabbled that it is significant to learn the background of achievement innovation performance due to difference in services and product (Song et al, 2009). Services are widely considered intangible and incomparable than products. Thus innovative practices related to product are irrelevant for services. Intangibility is indicated by the excessive information exchange between employees and the customer. Due to which service shows great variety of performance release which makes difficult for new services to assess before purchase (Dotzel et al., 2013). High risks are associated with service innovation as it is intricate to conclude the response of purchaser before the service is introduced to them. Looking to the scenario it is being observed continuously that heterogeneity in service is always appreciated and research related to service focus on the environment. Service are determined either through the experience or process-driven with the support of technology (Hipp and Grupp, 2005). Though the service research involves risk but the way it is contributing towards the growth of economy, it is worth taking risk.

Objective of the study
To study the impact of learned optimism on leadership effectiveness in service sector.

Literature Review

Leadership in Service Sector

Business organisation feels important to invest on leadership and are investing in developing there people to be the better leader. Developing a leadership in any organisation can be done through practices implementation of imparting knowledge and expressive training and development to the people of organisation. Leadership is the process which can be learned by experience and effective knowledge and training. Leadership is not about having the right trait but it is about giving the appropriate behaviour for a specific scenario or situation. And such behaviour can be learned through various methods. It has been realized by the industry that the kind of challenging atmosphere is there now for the industries they should be ready always with better and appropriate leadership for every scenario.

Service sector organisation has opportunities to develop the leadership by training individuals to become future leaders by providing responsibilities related to certain situations, involving continuous performance reviews and developing them for different levels of organisation. Thus it has been analyzed that leadership development is not only related to top management but it is connected with every level of the organisation. The problem in leadership development aspect is that least emphasis is given on an individual employee development for the leadership position and any such program which emphasizes individual development for example sabbatical, additional qualification, counseling, unique education certification are not considered to be helpful for leadership development (Mathan., et al, 2015). The study reveals that high task -oriented and people-oriented pattern of leadership style is required in banking sector of India. In all a leader in banking is expected to be good in dealing roles and responsibility along with the technical aspect of it and influence the people of the organisation to generate motivation and support for the accomplishment of goal (Kunnanatt, 2007).

The studies try to identify why is it important for a leader to influence their subordinate and generate willingness in his team towards the task and goals (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Various definitions of leadership describes the aspect of communication as an important factor which builds the positive relationship flanked by person in charge and his subsidiary helps in creating positive influence of leader on his subordinate which generates the environment which is supportive in nature to achieve the organisation goals. Therefore identifying the reason behind influence by leader and performance by subordinate is require. (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) prove that if relationship between leader and follower are positive then it help in developing trust between them, such aspect help in avoiding conflict and developing cooperation with better understanding between superior and follower.

(Bauman, 2013), also found that ethical leadership also help in establishment better relationship between superior and subordinate. The leader who leads by example and shows integrity through their actions tend to be trusted more by their subordinates. Certain type of behaviour develops confidence and trust in the superior which is very important for such relationship. Research based on leadership is very old and has developed variety of models for better performance of organisation. Different model proposes different ideology of leadership and therefore it is always bewildered that which leadership model is suitable for which organisation and situation. The organisation Trends are modifying and changing due to frequent changes in structure, processes system and technology it is always believed that determine meaning the right leadership for an organisation is a challenge. Though is extremely important for progress of organisation. Studies suggested that to understand such aspect about leadership and organisation should understand the culture of the organisation to determine appropriate leadership for its organisation. The leadership model once identified to be implemented in a specific organisation it becomes easy for employees to evaluate leadership and the culture of organisation to support the goals and objective of the organisation. Therefore fitness of leadership style with the type of organisation has direct impact on results of organization.

Leadership Effectiveness
Charan (2006) the significance of values and traditions in organization have critical role to put forth with owner's and board members of the company. The values prevailing in the company are the outcomes of the accepted norms and rules by the leaders in the organization and they slowly but surely shape the tradition to be pursued by everyone. Effective leaders are concerned for people and try to pacify the need and requirements of their people. Culture includes high degree of emotional aspects to it as values, belief and thoughts are strongly associated to it. The research outcomes above delineate that knowing and identifying different aspects of effective leadership is extremely indispensable. These results are very beneficial to the organizations improvement and development. (Kousez and Posner, 2007) identified practices for effective leadership. These practices are- 'Model the way' which means the leader should able to guide the path for the subordinate so that they know how to move further and supports them to reach the destination, next a leader should able to 'Inspire a shared vision' to his team, a leader who can 'challenge the process' and implement best process for the organization to do so leader should able to 'encourage other to act' on new processes and finally 'encourage' continuously to employee of the organization. These practices of leader will enhance the value to the people of the organization and also add value to the organization. Any such practices of leaders which add value to people and organization is effective leadership. It is suggested that effective leadership involves intelligence, competencies and motivational skills of a leader. Effectiveness of leadership is dependent on achievement of shared goals and methods used to measure the productivity of the organization. Generally it is been observed that for effective leadership is related to formulation of vision and determining goals through vision and revolving those vision into actuality (Jonathan, 2007). The study delineates that the reason of poor performance is employees have not higher level of self efficacy or they are not optimistic to perform their task, this is in relation with sales employees of the organisation, Dixon and Schertzer (2005). It has been proven that sales performance has enhanced because of optimistic approach implemented by leader and higher degree of self efficacy in employees due to optimistic behaviour of leaders.

Learned Optimism
Seligman (1990) describe optimism as adjustment of thought process in a positive manner related to different situations. It is a thought process which consider positive outcome or specific outcome which will not lead to errors if efforts are involved. Studies have tries to transform the pessimistic thought process of helpless student into optimistic aspect. The researcher describes the process of how such behaviour can be brought in an individual as suggested by Martin Seligman. By applying principles given by Seligman extreme negative outcome were asked to be perceived by the student, further the understanding of optimism has been explained. The students were expected to record the negative experiences along with the related outcomes of these experiences. Further the students were being trained to deal with those negative thoughts and develop positive beliefs about their capability to give desired results. Hernandez and Carrillo (2009) it has been observed that if people have a tendency to perceive that whatever happened currently with them good or bad will have some positive impact of it in future does not get into depression easily.
It is studied that optimism in academics involve perception, feeling and behavioral dimensions which influence the capability of the parents, teachers and students to be trustworthy towards students understanding and performance. Optimism develops the environment where people develop trust which enhances the positivity in the environment and with the combined efforts of parents, teachers and students they can constructively enhance the academic performance of today. The positive approach strengthens the internal atmosphere and enhances the satisfaction of employees and higher degree of moral among employees. Ashraf et al. (2012), the contemporary perspective of human resources emphasize on utilising the human resource of an organisation as an asset for an organisation. This perspective help in utilising Human Resource as competitive advantage for the organisation because when investment on human resource is done the employees are committed to the organisation and they best performance which enhances the productivity

of organisation. The research shows that optimism, engagement with employees and goal clarity can generate committed workforce.

Norman et al. (2010) explain the importance of optimism and limpidness on the perception of followers about their superior. Study says if the follower perceive positive thought process about the superior then they generally tend to agree and accept the perspective of their superior regarding any situation and provide a higher degree of support in task implementation to their superiors. Cameron et al. (2011) the outcome related to positive policies in the organisation as a very strong pragmatic impact on the behaviour of people and overall improvement of the organisation. It has been tested that if f constructive practices are implemented by the organisation it has a very buoyant impact on the people who are part of an organisation. It enhances their satisfaction level and they themselves develop the tendency to contribute rather than conflict. The study mentions that positive thought process and feelings influence the performance of individual in the job.

Optimism and Leadership Effectiveness

Lewis. B (2000) explain that in and work organisation to be successful the people around us with more of pessimistic thought process is dangerous for any organisation. People with optimistic card process bring the quality of being accurate in the situation and they do best in role which demand more of creativity, generating revenues, enhancing public image and also sales. Spendelow and Jose (2010) the paper explain the thought process with the individual who believe that negative incidences will not be encountered by them and therefore the tendency to seek assistance from others please very low. This tendency is generally found with young people. They consider themselves self-sufficient to tackle any scenario. So being optimistic is good but considering that negative incidence cannot be associated anytime in future is extremely hypothetical thought process with an individual. This study tells that people with certain thought process tend to practice this in their day-to-day life which becomes a strong habit of them. DeGeest and Schmidt (2011) there are various aspects in the organisations which require a certain amount of employees to be identified from the end of organisation for leadership position. Various tools are being used for such evaluation and decision. It has been identified that one of the critical factors required in today's time in a leader is having a positive perspective towards future and different situations. Remeikiene et al. (2011) identified that the people who want to be an entrepreneur requires certain kind of psychological strength to take decisions related to the start of a new venture and how do they continue their venture in future. It has been observed that positive thought process is a strong aspect to initiate the decision of business into practicality. One can have extraordinary idea of business in their mind but they could never be able to implement it unless they are convinced about the idea and have an optimistic approach towards such action. Volmer (2012) emphasise a very unique and interesting element which is almost faced by every individual and organisation. The study shows that the subordinates thought process about perceived mood of a superior and its impact on the performance. The study tried to compare if the leader's mood is more positive than its impact on the outcomes given by the teams. It has been found that the mood of leader has a greater impact on the performance given by the followers therefore positive mood of a superior shows a great degree of positive results produced by the subordinates. Wong and Zhang (2014) identify the when doing any analysis the approach of the chief executive officer are generally more positive towards the outcome where as the analyst perceive the outcome on the basis of the fact which are available with them. The organisations with uncertainties and with low analytical data, faces challenges in predicting the outcomes to make decisions. Generally we perceive plan is generally in favour of the organisation that has an optimistic leader of a company and the same is being positively interpreted by the investors of the organisation. Magnano et al. (2015) it is very difficult to take decision in current scenario because of dynamic environment may be internal or external. In such a dynamic atmosphere optimism to make decisions in a leader is one of the strongest requirements. The empirical research shows that optimistic style in a leader impacts the efficiency of decision making. Optimistic leaders have higher degree of agreeableness and even with different obstacles

they carry the capability to plan and implement the actions and provide results to the organisation. Having a committed workforce is one of the challenges faced by the service industry in the current scenario, if employees are happy and satisfied the transfer the joy and happiness to the customers as well, therefore having a committed workforce is one of the Asset for any service sector organisation when current business scenario.

For organization effectiveness equilibrium between optimism and pessimism is required to be understood by the leaders of the organization. So that according to the need of organization one can evaluate the people before hiring based on their requirement related to positivity and vise versa. Further there are ways to improve the optimism in people.

Research Methodology
The current study has used descriptive research plan. Descriptive probe intend was involved to accomplish the objectives. According to the objective of study, leadership effectiveness was considered as dependent variable and learned optimism was considered as independent variables. The probe is about, primarily the individual relationship is observed between independent variables on dependent variable. That is the individual relationship between leadership effectiveness and learned optimism was observed through correlation. After finding strong and moderate correlation between these variables the impact of independent variables is also being empirically tested on dependent variable through regression analysis.

✓ Sample size -

Location	Size of sample
Pune and Mumbai	680

✓ Sampling method: Simple random sampling as part of probability design of sampling with objective categorization to circumvent biasness.

✓ Techniques incorporated for data analysis – Correlation and regression analysis is done to understand the impact of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

Analysis and Result

Correlation for sub-variables of Learned Optimism and sub-variables of Leadership effectiveness-

	Identifying Pessimism	Target Psychological Thought	Reinforcement and Practice	Permanent Change
Visionary	.73	.68	.65	.61
Managing Uncertainty	.76	.74	.65	.62
Communication Skills	.66	.58	.54	.56
Support to Subordinates	.76	.57	.59	.60
Provide desired outcomes	.62	.66	.71	.74

Interpretation-

Observation in correlations analysis provided by table-6 shows overall moderate to strong positive correlation between learned optimism and leadership effectiveness. In the given table the correlation between sub-variables of learned optimism and leadership effectiveness shows moderate and strong correlation. The analysis shows 'visionary and target psychological thought' (r=0.68); 'visionary and reinforcement and practice (r=0.65); 'visionary and permanent change' (r=0.61); managing uncertainty and reinforcement and practice (r=0.65); 'managing uncertainty and permanent change' (r=0.62); 'communication skills and identify pessimism (r=0.66); 'communication skills and target psychological thought' (r=0.58); 'communication skills and reinforcement & practice (r=0.54); 'communication skills and permanent change' (r=0.56); 'support to subordinate and psychological thought'(r=0.57); 'support to subordinate and reinforcement and practice (r=0.59); support to subordinate and permanent change (r=0.60); 'provide desired outcomes and identifying pessimism' (r=0.62); and 'provide desired outcomes and target psychological thoughts' (r=0.66) are moderately correlated. The all other sub-variables are having value of 'r' is close to 0.75. Thus we can construe that effectiveness of leadership and learned optimism has moderate association.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.668[a]	.600	.589	.76651

a. Predictors: (Constant), LO

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.972	.161		24.673	.000
	LO	.306	.128	.051	2.400	.031

a. Dependent Variable: LE

Interpretation

The above analysis demonstrate the R square value to be 0.600 which is 60 percent which means the regression model the independent variables LO accounts 60 percent of the independent variable LE. Further the overall regression model is significant because p value is 0.031 which is less than alpha 0.05. In the above table the adjusted R square value is 0.589, which indicates the percentage of the variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable. In this case we can interpret that 60 percent of variance of leadership effectiveness can be explained by learned optimism.

Findings and Conclusion

Moderate effective relationship is observed in effectiveness through leadership and learned-optimism. The defined outcomes show that optimism is related to emotional and behavioural aspects which influence the trust factor of the employees and the trust of subordinates is established stronger on the superior because of his optimistic approach. The reason behind this is an optimistic leader is not what is motivated if he faces difficult situations. Optimistic leader has the ability to see the different aspects of a situation rather than difficulties in a situation, this way he is in a position to provide unique perspective of challenges to his followers. This aspect provides unique thought process to be developed with the followers about the challenging situation. This is a great influence which is created in the mind of followers about their leader. The optimistic leader is in a position to create a more cooperative environment in the organisation, due to the approach he follows of looking towards the solution not pinpointing problems and mistakes of others. Certain category of leader has a tendency to accept mistakes but equally efficient in guiding self and others to rectify the mistakes. This leader has the capability of creating strong relationships with subordinates. The leader who has the capability to manage difficulties is most trusted by his subordinates and when the followers face difficulties and problems they have the confidence that their leader can guide them. Further this thought process of followers enhances the self efficacy in them. They understand that how they are expected to perform the task and if they will face any problems they can rely on their leader to guide them the action which will lead to achievement of goals. The study outlines moderately-high correlation between learned optimism and effectiveness through leader. The literature review clearly states the function of positive perspective with effectiveness of decision maker in companies. There is very limited literature available which delineates the relationship between learned optimism and leadership effectiveness based on secondary data. But there are continuous studies which show the strong relationship between positive perspective and efficiency of decision maker. The concept of learned optimism is comparatively new in the field of academia. This concept is derived from the work of Martin seligman who was working on the concept of self helplessness. In his book he has mentioned the ways through which optimism can be learned by an individual or it can be learnt buy external influences of other people. This study tries to understand on the ground that if optimism is connected to leadership effectiveness, can leader's develop optimism in self and their followers, and if they are capable to do so how it is going to impact the effectiveness of leaders? There are certain literatures which support that with the help of learned optimism the performance of subordinates can be enhanced up to great extent. Further the results delineates that there is correspondence observed among learned optimism and effectiveness of leadership. It has been understood through the literature that leaders are the change agent who can impact the thought process and confidence of employees by effective organisational environment and policies. Optimistic leader has the confidence to come up with the solution of aspects to create an impact on the subordinate in a manner to push them towards successful outcomes. The effective and optimistic leader understands that they need multiple qualities to create certain environment in the organisation and they have to play different roles in different situations.

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