

Influence of Age and Experience on Leadership Styles

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Abstract - The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of age and experience on the leadership styles of the managers, in the three selected banks of Kashmir division viz J&K Bank, SBI and HDFC. The study focuses on two leadership styles, namely transformational and transactional leadership styles. The study reveals that the transformational leadership style is the dominant leadership style among managers of all age and experience groups. Furthermore, the study reveals that the age and experience have no significant influence on leadership styles, although with the increase in age and experience transformational leadership style is exhibited more by the managers.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Age, Experience, Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an influence process that enables managers to get their people to do willingly what must be done, do well what ought to be done (Cribbin, 1981). A review of the leadership literature reveals an evolving series of theories from “Great Man” and “Trait” theories to “Transformational” leadership. While earlier theories focused upon the characteristics and behaviours of leaders, later theories began to consider the role of followers and the situational nature of leadership. In the early years leadership was associated with individual skills, characteristics and personal qualities of the leader (Nivala and Hujala, 2002). However, the modern view of leadership proclaims that leadership is not an isolated activity endowed in a single person, but rather a variety of factors contribute to effective leadership. Researchers over time have made attempts to determine the relationship between leadership and various demographic factors as age, gender, experience, educational background etc. Even though most of the researches find significant correlations between leadership and the aforementioned demographic factors, yet others contradict this view.

The studies of Kanter (1977), Herbert and Yost (1979), Eagly (1987), Thompson (2000) and many more have investigated the influence of the leader’s gender on the leadership behavior. But, since very limited researches could be found that study the influence of age and experience on leadership style, the current study has thus chosen these demographic factors in order to investigate their influence on the leadership styles.

It is generally perceived that the old people are not able to do certain tasks at the efficiency of the younger people because of their physical weaknesses. But at certain tasks the older people can do better than youngsters (Belal *et al.*, 2010). This is because of the experience they possess which they acquire during the course of their working career. Consequently, they are perceived to give better advices and take better decisions. Many studies on the influence of age and experience on the leadership style of the individuals claim that the differences in age and experience affect the leadership behavior as well. Since, leadership is about understanding the followers better in order to achieve the desired task, so the elder people are supposed to be better leaders than the younger ones. This is because of the reason that with the growing age and experience, people are able to understand their followers better and thus can deal with them in a more positive way (Mirani *et al.*, 2003). Since, no study could be found that focuses on the influence of age and experience on leadership in the organizations of Kashmir division, the current study thus aims to investigate the influence of the two factors on the leadership styles of managers in the three major banks of Kashmir division.

II. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The current study examines the influence of age and experience on leadership styles in the three select banks of Kashmir. The leadership styles chosen for the study include transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style. The study attempts to compare the leadership styles across the age and experience of the managers in order to inspect whether the difference in age and experience causes the difference in leadership styles as well. The study thus makes an attempt to comprehend and examine the importance of age and experience vis-à-vis leadership styles in the select banks.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2010) and the individual who leads a group of people towards a common goal is known as the leader (Andrew, 2009). A leader influences his followers to achieve the specified objectives (Sheikh, 2001). Literature review of leadership reveals an evolving series of theories from “Great Man” and “Trait” theories to “Transformational” leadership. Different theories of leadership classify

leadership in different ways. While earlier theories tend to focus upon the characteristics and behaviours of successful leaders, later theories began to consider the role of followers and the situational nature of leadership. A recent view of leadership says that leadership is not an isolated activity endowed in a single person, but rather that a variety of people contribute to effective leadership. Each leadership style has its own merits and demerits. None can be applied universally in all circumstances. Bass (1990) asserts that the leader has to choose his/her leadership style depending on the situation and the followers in order to be effective.

Leadership styles may vary vis-à-vis the various demographic factors of the leader and the followers as well. Various studies have investigated the influence of various demographics like age, gender, culture, educational background, and experience on leadership. The current study has chosen two demographic factors viz age and experience in order to study their influence on leadership styles of managers in the select organizations of Kashmir division. It is a common perception that the age and experience play important roles in leadership behaviors. However from the literature, it was found that some researches find a significant correlation between age and leadership, whereas others find a zero correlation. Similarly some studies find strong relationship between experience and leadership styles whileas others find a little or no relationship. However, very few researches could be found that negate these relationships.

Cagle (1988) regards age as one of the main factors that determines the leadership style. Mirani *et al.*, (2003) argue that age significantly influences leadership. Furthermore, the studies of (Rasor, 1995; Payden, 1997; Belal *et al.*, 2010) show prominent differences in leadership style due to age. Titus Oshagbemi (2004) claims that the younger and older managers adopt different leadership styles; older managers favor more participation in comparison with younger managers.

Kearney (2008) states that when the leaders and followers are of similar age, the feeling of distrust can arise as to why one has been chosen as a leader and not the other. Older leaders give the impression that they have more experience and thus their followers accept them as leaders more easily (Kearney 2008). The researcher further suggests that transactional styles of leadership style is more appropriate for young leaders whileas transformational leadership is more suited for older and experienced leaders. This is because with an older leader, the team may be more open to a leader's transformational behaviors as the team members may be more accepting of the leader's special status. Furthermore, the researchers believe that experience might play an important role in leadership behaviors.

Trompenaars (1993) states that leadership styles differ from culture to culture and country to country depending upon life patterns, beliefs and value system and experience of the people.

Ahiazu (1989) asserts that in many cultures it is believed that people get wiser due to more exposure and experience. For example in African culture, experience is considered as a priority for leadership positions in different organizations. The studies of Cagle (1988) Katozai, (2005) and Van Vugt (2006) also believe that experience has a significant influence on leadership. Contrary to the above studies, few researches cancel out the influence of age and experience on leadership. Gronn (1986) argues that leadership style is rooted in the condition of workplace and less dependent upon personality attributes like age and experience. The studies of Gilbert *et al.*, (1990), Vecchio, 1993, Zacher *et al.*, 2011) also endorse the fact that age does not significantly influence the leadership styles of managers.

IV. HYPOTHESES

Following hypotheses are proposed for the study:

H_1 : There is no significant difference in leadership styles vis-à-vis the age of managers.

H_2 : There is no significant difference in leadership styles vis-à-vis the experience of managers.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Explanatory research design was followed for the present study. The target population for the study constituted the managerial personnel of the three major banks of Kashmir division: JK Bank, SBI, and HDFC. The total population for the study constituted 905 managers out of which a representative random sample of 100 managers was selected for the purpose of primary data collection. The sample size of 100 was calculated with the help of online sample calculator with confidence level 95% and confidence interval (margin of error) of 5.

The primary data was collected from the respondents from the selected organizations with the help of a structured questionnaire. Leadership styles were measured using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Form 5x-short) developed by Bass and Avolio (1995). The secondary data was collected from various books, journals, and other print and electronic publications.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The difference in leadership styles vis-à-vis the age and experience of managers banks was analyzed to see whether the leadership styles adopted by the managers varied significantly with respect to their ages and experiences. First the descriptive were calculated for all the five age groups regarding their leadership styles. It was found that the age group "35-40" scored highest on transformational leadership style and the age group "Below 35" scored lowest on transformational leadership. Contrarily, the age group "Below 35" scored highest on transactional leadership style while as the age group 46-50 scored lowest on transactional leadership style. Table I gives the details:

TABLE I AGE WISE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP STYLES

Age		TRF	TRNS
Below 35	Mean	3.9170	3.8765
	N	17	17
	Std. Deviation	.41441	.36662
35-40	Mean	4.2353	3.6214
	N	14	14
	Std. Deviation	.48944	.83590
41-45	Mean	4.1218	3.5286
	N	14	14
	Std. Deviation	.28207	.33381
46-50	Mean	3.8569	3.4733
	N	30	30
	Std. Deviation	.54390	.50714
Above 50	Mean	4.1035	3.6600
	N	25	25
	Std. Deviation	.46264	.68496

Source: Data compilation by the scholar for the present study. Note: TRF= Transformational leadership Style, TRNS= Transactional Leadership Style

Next, in order to check whether the difference in mean scores was significant or not, one way ANOVA was applied, which gave the following results.

It was found that the leadership styles did not vary significantly with respect to the age of managers with p value of .070 and .472 in transformational and transactional leadership styles respectively. Hence, enough evidence could not be found to reject the hypothesis H1 which says "There is no significant difference in leadership styles vis-à-vis the age of managers. Next, the Descriptive were calculated for all the five experience groups regarding their leadership styles. It was found that the managers having 5-10 years of experience scored highest on transformational leadership style while as managers having less than 5 years of experience scored lowest on transformational leadership style.

On the other hand, managers having less than 5 years scored highest on transactional leadership style and while as managers having 11-15 years of experience scored lowest on transactional leadership style. Table III gives the details:

TABLE II AGE WISE COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP STYLES OF MANAGERS

Leadership Styles		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
TRF	Between Groups	1.947	4	.487	2.244	.070
	Within Groups	20.612	95	.217		
	Total	22.560	99			
TRNS	Between Groups	1.179	4	.295	.891	.472
	Within Groups	31.401	95	.331		
	Total	32.580	99			

Source: Data compilation by the scholar for the present study
Note: TRF= Transformational leadership Style, TRNS= Transactional Leadership Style

TABLE III EXPERIENCE WISE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP STYLES

Experience		TRF	TRNS
Less than 5 years	Mean	3.8147	3.8125
	N	9	9
	Std. Deviation	.40497	.37572
5-10 years	Mean	4.1838	3.8000
	N	16	16
	Std. Deviation	.41532	.33166
11-15 years	Mean	4.0924	3.3929
	N	14	14
	Std. Deviation	.44663	.81568
16-20 years	Mean	3.8824	3.4000
	N	20	20
	Std. Deviation	.45183	.42797
More than 20 years	Mean	4.0588	3.6415
	N	41	41
	Std. Deviation	.52564	.61032

Source: Data compilation by the scholar for the present study
Note: TRF= Transformational leadership Style, TRNS= Transactional Leadership Style

Next, one way ANOVA was applied so as to verify whether the difference in mean scores was significant or not, which

gave the following results.

TABLE IV EXPERIENCE WISE COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP STYLES OF MANAGERS

Leadership Styles		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TRF	Between Groups	1.578	4	.394	1.786	.138
	Within Groups	20.982	95	.221		
	Total	22.560	99			
TRNS	Between Groups	2.554	4	.638	2.020	.098
	Within Groups	30.026	95	.316		
	Total	32.580	99			

Source: Data compilation by the scholar for the present study

Note: TRF= Transformational leadership Style, TRNS= Transactional Leadership Style

The difference was found to be insignificant with p value of .138 and .098 in transformational and transactional leadership styles respectively. It specifies that the leadership styles did not vary significantly with respect to the experience of managers. So enough evidence could not be found to reject the hypothesis H2, "There is no significant difference in leadership styles vis-à-vis the experience of managers.

VII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based upon the above analysis and interpretation of data, the study comes out with following findings

1. Transformational leadership style was found to be the dominant leadership style of managers irrespective of their ages and experiences.
2. The young managers were found to score lower on transformational leadership style compared to the elder managers. Among all the age groups, managers falling in the age group of 35-40 years were found to score highest on transformational leadership style and the managers having below 30 years of age were found to score lowest on transformational leadership style.
3. As far as transactional leadership style is concerned, young managers were found to score more than the elder ones. Managers having below 30 years of age were found to score highest on transactional leadership style and the managers in the age group of 46-50 years were found to score lowest on transactional leadership style.
4. Likewise the managers with more experience were found to be more transformational than the managers with less experience. Managers having 5-10 years of experience were found to be most transformational whereas the managers having below five years of experience were found to be least transformational.
5. Just as the young managers were found to score higher on transactional leadership style, similarly, the managers with less experience were found to score more on transactional leadership style than the managers with more experience. The managers having less than 5 years of experience were found to score highest on transactional leadership styles and the

managers having 11-15 years of experience were found to score lowest on transactional leadership styles.

6. Although the mean scores varied among the managers of all age and experience groups, however, with further examination, the differences in the leadership styles across all age and experience groups were found to differ insignificantly. It implies that age and experience do not considerably influence the leadership styles.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study attempted to examine the influence of age and experience on leadership styles. The study comes up with the conception that the age and experience have no considerable influence on the leadership styles of managers. The mean scores imply that the managers start with adopting almost equivalent amount of transactional and transformational leadership styles but in their middle ages move mostly towards transformational leadership style. Similarly, the managers with less experience start off with adopting equivalent amount of transactional and transformational leadership styles but with time move mostly towards transformational leadership style. Furthermore, the study found out that transformational leadership style was most preferred leadership style among all age and experience groups. In the contemporary business setup transformational leadership styles is gaining more importance and acceptance. Managers of all ages and experiences are seen interested in adopting more of transformational leadership style as this style is believed to be positively influencing organisational performance (Obiwuru *et al.*, 2011; Islam *et al.*, 2012; Ravazadeh and Ravazadeh 2013; Skarholt *et al.*, 2015).

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