



THE ROLE OF SUPERVISOR AND LEADER IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine how an individual's leadership style directly influences their ability to effectively supervise their employees. It further continues to look into various views as to whether or not leaders are born to lead, or if it is a skill that can be developed and enhanced over a period of time by individuals who have the drive and desire to be successful in leadership roles. This paper discusses the importance of leadership skills and how improving one's leadership abilities will lead to improved personal and organizational performance.

It has also focused on the impact of communication, collaboration, treatment and leadership on staff development. In this survey it is revealed that, the present generation giving more concentration for collaboration while taking major decision in the organization as well as equal treatment. Based on these industry professionals should recognise the need for leadership education and training. Employees see leadership training as a perk and are willing to invest personal, unpaid time to participate in leadership classes just to improve their efficiency in their current job.

Key Words: *Leadership, supervision, staff and development.*

Introduction

Supervision and leadership is a key factor to the success of any business that has employees. Often, people have not learned how to supervise and lead in an effective manner because they just learned from experience versus having training and skill development in supervision. Every organization wants to achieve higher levels of staff development, particularly in knowledge- and skill-enhancement areas, such as strategic planning, campaign development and implementation, grant writing, employment engagement programmes etc. The question of whether an organization wants more competent and committed leaders is always answered in the positive direction. The needs for staff development typically occurs at all organizational levels, from managers and administrators to supervisors and line staff. The need for staff development is often noticeable from an innovative thinking and resistance to adopt and

implement the most efficient and effective solutions to managerial, supervisory, and operational demands. Organizations must be able to provide an environment in which future and current leaders learn how to effectively lead and carry out the missions of their companies.

There are two types of individuals in this world; individuals who choose to lead, and individuals who choose to follow. Not everyone has the skill level, knowledge, or even the desire to become a leader, but individuals who have the aspiration, willingness to overcome obstacles, and enthusiasm may prove to be capable of becoming an effective leader without having the 'natural born' instinct. In order to be effective in a supervisory capacity, it is important for individuals to develop and put into practice various skills and abilities that will help to enhance their ability to be successful in leadership roles.

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Review of Literature

Northouse (2007) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual impacts a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p.75). This process is executed by encouraging others to achieve goals, and provides direction to organizations in a manner that makes it more consistent and rational. Leadership is a specialized set of skills and abilities that are available to all of us. Good leaders are made not born. Greer & Plunkett (2000) points out that "leadership is an art that can be acquired and developed by anyone with the motivation to do so." (p. 157). Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Jago, 1982).

The everchanging nature of today's workplace highlights the need for effective leadership. "Leaders have to construction activities that enhance productivity at a time when jobs are becoming increasingly multifaceted and both national and international competitions are becoming more intense. All of this makes training for leadership and people skills even more important"(Goldstein & Ford, 2002:305).

There are two unique categories of behaviors that leaders may exhibit: originating structure behaviors, and consideration behaviours (Boje, 2000). Individuals displaying initiating structure behaviors typically try to provide structure to employees' work habits. In doing so, this type of leader places emphasis on the output/quality of work and sets high performance standards or goals. They generally set schedules and time frames for work to be accomplished, assign specific tasks to certain employees, and provide information and guidance on how they wish for the tasks to be performed. Supervisors demonstrating these characteristics have high expectations when it comes to employee performance and encourage them to perform up to or above their maximal level of potential. Individuals who display consideration behaviors typically provide assistance to employees and focus on mutual trust and respect in relationships. Individuals that possess these characteristics

generally encourage employees to participate in decisions that affect their jobs and allow employees to perform their jobs at a level at which they feel comfortable. They have very little difficulty complimenting employees in the presence of others; rewarding employees for good work performance, and make sincere efforts to resolve conflict among employees in an effort to maintain a pleasant working environment.

Background of Problem

Leaders and supervisors establish a vision for the future of their organizations and resources with that vision using a variety of techniques. Because organizations identify that leadership is the basis for the success or failure of the enterprise. Leadership development training programs are successful only to the extent that participants change their behaviour and that success is dependent on the styles of leadership, the participating individual, or the design of the training program.

Objectives of The Study

- It is to examine how an individual's leadership style directly influences their ability to effectively supervise their employees.
- To understand the impact of communication, collaboration, interaction, treatment of employees on staff development.

Research Methodology

The validity of any research is basically dependent on the systematic method of data collection and analysis. Primary data was used for the present study. The primary data was collected from 87 sample respondents from Mangalore City. For collecting the first-hand information from the respondents, 100 of them were chosen by convenience sampling method. Questionnaire was the tool used to collect the primary data from the selected sample respondents. For this purpose, a well-structured questionnaire was framed with the help of research expert. Field survey method was employed to collect the primary data from the selected sample respondents.



Concept Clarification

Staff development, by definition, follows from understandings and actions by leaders within an organization. An organization's leadership development strategy largely determines the extent and effectiveness of its staff development. In the final analysis, staff development and leadership development are synonymous.

Many people believe it only applies to people who administer the productivity and development of entry-level workers; however, supervision is the activity carried out by supervisors to manage the productivity and progress of employees who report directly to the supervisors. The term 'supervisor' typically refers to one's immediate superior in the workplace, that is, the person to whom you report directly to in an organization. For example, a top manager would generally supervise an employee who is a middle manager, a middle manager would supervise a first-line manager and a first-line manager would supervise a worker. Supervisors typically are responsible for their direct employees' progress and productivity in the organization.

Leadership and its Impact on Supervision

The manner in which an individual leads has a direct influence on how that person may operate in a supervisory capacity. All leaders have the potential to be good supervisors; however, not all supervisors are guaranteed to be effective as leaders. There are a variety of factors that influence an individual's decision to follow a leader. In most situations, people have the desire to be directed by those that they respect and those who have a comprehensible sense of direction. Respect is not something that is immediately given to persons in leadership roles. Individuals who have a sense of ethics in many instances have a greater opportunity to gain and maintain a level of respect from their followers. Leaders who are clear, concise, and capable of conveying a strong future vision will ultimately achieve a great sense of direction.

Role of Supervision and Leadership in Staff Development

The manner in which leaders supervise/ manage their employees plays an important part in their professional growth. It is not only their responsibility to lead employees, it is also important for supervisors to serve as mentors and coaches in an effort to enhance employee performance and development. As a mentor, supervisors are looked upon as role models who are responsible for guiding employees toward the achievement of their professional goals. Mentors in most cases display more experience, skills, or knowledge than employees that they are attempting to mentor. Coaches, on the other hand, are responsible for educating and directing employees through support and advice. It facilitates multiplicity by giving employees the opportunity to bring about outcomes in a manner that works best for them, and provides opportunity for the emergence of essential competency issues.

The supervisor has several roles to play, but providing information and support to facilitate the staff development is what is most important. There are a few basic roles for a supervisor in developing employees. They include, Coaching employees to help them determine what they need for development, Providing both positive and corrective feedback, Offering organizational insight, information, and advice, Guiding the planning through goal setting and checking back over time, Allotting time and money for development experiences, Ensuring opportunities for applications of new learning, It is very helpful for an employee to get an honest assessment of their work, as well as access to others who may be able to provide information or coach the employee.

Results and Analysis

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of demographic factors



	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	58	66.67
	Female	29	33.33
Age (Years)	25-29	18	20.68
	30-35	22	25.29
	36-40	31	35.63
	41-45	12	13.79
	Above 46	05	05.74
Education	PUC	22	25.28
	UG	49	56.32
	PG	16	18.39
Designation	Clerk	14	16.09
	Special Assistant	42	48.27
	Officer	22	25.28
	Manager	09	10.34
Income	10000 -20000	16	18.39
	20000 -30000	34	39.08
	30000 -40000	26	29.88
	Above 40000	11	12.64
Service	Less than 5 years	22	25.28
	5-10	18	20.06
	10-15	27	31.03
	15-20	11	12.64
	Above 20	09	10.34

The above table gives frequency and percentage of demographics of the respondents. From the total sample size of 87, 66.67% were male and 33.33% were female. The majority of the respondents (35.63%) belong to age group of 36-40 years, 25.29% belong to the age group of 30-35, and 20.68% belongs to 25-30. Education wise majority of the respondents have UG (56.32%) and PU (25.28%) and 18.39% are with PG qualification. Majorities (48.27%) are special assistants, 25.28% are officers, 16.09% are clerks, and 10.34% managers, respectively. Majority (39.08%) of the respondents were in the income group of 20,000-30,000. In case of service, majority (31.03 %) of the respondents had 10 to 15 years of experience

Leadership Styles and Techniques

It is the responsibility of the individual supervisor/leaders to find the most appropriate style or combination of styles that works best for them. Even though one may find comfort in a specific style, as a supervisor they must demonstrate the ability to change their approach based on the situation as well as display openness to utilizing

Table 2: Employee Treatment by the supervisor/leaders

Particulars	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My supervisor/leader is open and approachable	08	15	54	23
My supervisor/leader asks for my input on decisions that affect my work	09	17	46	28
My supervisor/leader provides me adequate direction in order for me to know what is expected of me.	06	14	44	36
My supervisor/ leader listens to my concerns	21	36	40	03
My supervisor/leader treats me with respect	11	19	51	19

Table3: Employee Communication with supervisors/leaders

Particulars	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My supervisor/leader keeps me informed of what is occurring throughout the organization	14	12	46	28
Because of my Supervisor/leader, I have a clear understanding of the role and mission of the organization	21	24	34	21
My supervisor/leader has a vision for the organization and has effectively communicated that vision/	08	23	39	30
I understand the importance of my position in achieving the organization's goals.	06	11	61	22

Table 4: Collaboration in management decisions

Particulars	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am able to participate in setting the goals for my department.	24	21	30	25
Every employee can contribute in discussions about setting goals for the organization	19	26	39	16
Employee opinion considered prior to decisions being made that affect me	28	22	31	19
I feel that I am valued by the organization and my supervisor	31	28	26	15

various other techniques.

In the autocratic leadership style, the leader is usually highly efficient and exercises strong command and control over decision-making, in democratic style; the leader typically delegates responsibilities, seeks input from, and shares authority with followers. They generally attempt



to avoid conflict, and are naturally concerned with creating an atmosphere that fosters warm, open, interpersonal relationships and in free rein style, the supervisor rejects control and allows the employees to have authority over decision making and group processes with minimal direction. After considering all, majority (62.25%) of the employees opined that democratic style of leadership influences much for their ability to effectively supervise their employees.

Recommendation and Conclusion

The ability to lead is an important element in effective supervision. As a supervisor, it is vital to be able to convince your employees to follow your lead. People generally are more likely to be influenced by those that they have high level of regard for. Employees see leadership training as assistance and are willing to invest personal, unpaid time to participate in leadership classes just to improve their efficiency in their current job. A leader who consciously analyzes the time spent on each relationship will be able to identify any new items/ actions in those relationships that are needed to achieve a desired performance. The successful supervisor will also respect every employee's learning curve. It takes time for anyone to learn new skills and be able to apply them well; this does not happen overnight. Building this development

time into the application of a new skill set will make the employee more successful. Taken all together, the information presented describes a more positive and strength based approach to supervision. From this perspective, supervision has less to do with teaching and evaluation and more to do with establishing an environment which encourages individual growth and development.

Being a leader is not something that can be taught, it is a never ending learning process that is improved upon over time, and with experience. It is available to any individual who wants to be successful in leadership roles. The supervisor/leaders must be willing to work with their employees in an effort to drive the organizational mission by leading, mentoring, coaching, and persuading others to remain significant team members in an effort to obtain and maintain desired outcomes. As administrators in the field of human services, it is imperative to realize that our decisions may not always be the best or most effective decisions. In order for a supervisor to be effective as a leader, they must first have a will to learn, be open-minded, and prepared to accept new challenges. Good leaders have the capability to think outside of the box, display a sense of commitment, and do not have difficulty recognizing and accepting their mistakes

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