FACTORS AFFECTING SHARED LEADERSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF CALCUTTA ELECTRIC SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED, INDIA

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Abstract: Leadership plays a very important role in today's organizations. The business environment is such now that leadership has to be shared rather than acting as a superior handing down orders to subordinates. Organizations that nurture leaders for the future would be the ones who would be more successful in the long run. Having said that, it is difficult for organizations to change their organizational leadership styles from using the traditional leadership to shared leadership. Organizations should be smart to understand the advantages of shared leadership and gradually change their leadership structure towards shared leadership.

The main objective of this research carried out by the researcher is to evaluate if there exists a favorable environment for shared leadership to develop, grow and be part of the organizations strategy. The researcher also wants to evaluate if there exists a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The target population for this research was 800 employees of Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation, India. The sample size was 280 managers from within the organization. Quota sampling technique was used to distribute the questionnaire to the samples. Though the study did have a few limitations, the researcher believes that those limitations can be overcome though further research.

After the data was collected and analyzed the researcher concluded that there exists a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable, shared leadership and the independent variables, namely empowerment, trust, flow of information, shared purpose and collaboration and social relation. The research findings will help the organization being studied evaluate the benefits of shared leadership and also help them understand that even though the organization practices the traditional form of leadership, there exists an environment for shared leadership to evolve, develop and flourish with the organization. Leadership today is not just about titles anymore, it is more to do with the impact it creates in the environment of control.

Introduction:

Generalities Of The Study: "Behind the times is a term that can be used for the old model of leadership. Leadership is now less about title and more about impact. Welcome to leadership2.0, that focuses on using individual talents and gifts to change the world" (Sharma, 2010). Organizations today are finding it to be a painful task to get the right person for leadership roles. It perhaps is not easy to find a person who possesses all the necessary interest, capabilities and experience that are required in a leader. Thus, the best solution that companies have is to spread the role of leaders among a few people, that is to share the responsibilities of leadership. It is crucial to provide leadership responsibilities to the most qualified person rather than handing those responsibilities over to the most senior individual. This provides all those competent people in the organization an opportunity to prove their abilities in leadership. Thus, in order to allow such flattening of the organizational structure and practicing sharing of leadership it is very important to create an environment or climate where people are free to take on new assignments and where managers are not considered authorities but resources. This research also aims at finding out whether a favourable environment exists in the organization for shared leadership to develop or emerge.

A majority of the people think that different forms of shared leadership is the future of leadership and that organizations who wish to survive in this dynamic and complex environment need to create an atmosphere for shared leadership to develop, otherwise the organization would be heading towards failure. Recently, with the high increase in the number of cross and dynamic functionalities, more teams and the need for speedy and sufficient information that is relevant across contemporary organizations has forced many organizations into thinking of new leadership styles. Additionally, this complexity and degree of jobs that are performed by senior managers in the current global and dynamic business environment has made it practically impossible for an individual to handle all the responsibilities single handed. Thus, organizations have now started to share different tasks, which gives rise to the idea of shared leadership in organizations (Tripathi, 2008). Also, the traditional form of leadership is now becoming extinct.

The dependent variable in the study is shared leadership and the independent variables in the study are empowerment, trust, flow of information, shared purpose and collaboration and social relations.

In this research, the researcher has based his study on an Indian organization, Calcutta Electric State Corporation, which is headquartered in the city of Kolkata, India.

The study has a population of 800 managers who are

working in all the levels (top level, middle level and the lower level) of the organization.

Statement of Problems: For Shared leadership to be used and practiced in Indian organizations, it is important to understand and analyse the factors that help in the emergence and development of shared leadership. The factors that have been used in this research as independent variables, help evolve and grow shared leadership in organizations.

Research Objectives: The objective of this research is to primarily understand if there exists a favourable atmosphere or environment for shared leadership to develop and grow. The researcher aims to analyse the independent variables used in the study such as attitude about shared leadership, empowerment, trust, flow of information, shared purpose and collaboration and social relationship to understand if they have a significant or more than significant relationship with shared leadership in the organization. The research also aims to understand what other factors could lead to a successful implementation of shared leadership in the organization, if the independent variables used in the research are already existing in the organization.

Limitations of the Research: The researcher has identified the target population to be from the city of Kolkata, which is just one of the many cities in the country. The results of this could be one, and it could not be the same if the same study was conducted in another city in the country. By limiting the research to only one organization, the researcher is being naive to the outlook that the rest of the organizations would have towards shared leadership. This could gravely affect the findings of the study. The time period to carry out the study (i.e. from October 2013 to April 2014) also acts as a limitation to this research because similar researches carried out in different places with varying time spans could yield different results and outcomes. Since the research was conducted during the working hours, the respondents could not be totally believed to be transparent in their views which could greatly affect the outcome of the study.

For this study, the researcher chose only five variables that were highly likely to generate an environment for shared leadership. But, there could be many other variables like, motivation and support, culture, personality traits, team potency, team commitment. These are just a few other variable to name a few that could be used as variables to analyse shared leadership.

The other major limitation of the study is believed to be that the sample size for the research might not be probably covering all the managerial positions in the organization, as the researcher chose the method of convenient sampling and there is no guarantee that all the levels of managers are equally represented in the sample size.

Significance of the Study: The research would help better understand shared leadership and the factors that are necessary for it to be implemented in the organization. The study will also help understand the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. There have been many studies conducted on shared leadership in the international scenario, but not much study has been conducted to understand the Indian perspective. This research would help better understand the concept of shared leadership and its factors in an Indian context and on the basis of Indian organizations, as the functioning of Indian organizations are different to that of their international counter parts, no matter how global the organization is.

In India, which is still relatively a traditional country bound by morals and values, shared leadership is still at its nascent stage with very few Indian organizations embracing it. It cannot be denied that India is one of the fastest growing and largest economies in the world and it is a huge task to keep the employees of the organizations motivated and happy.

RESEARCH Framework conceptual Framework For The Research
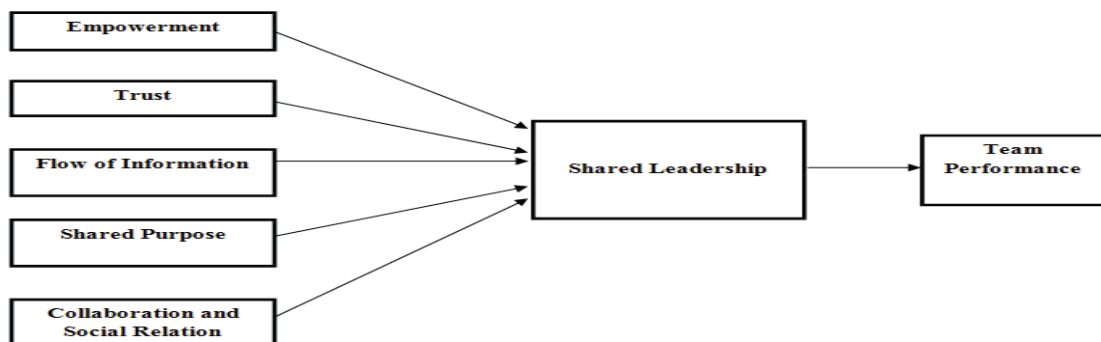
Adapted from: Bligh, Pearce and Kohles (2006), Wood (2007), Small (2007) ,Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007), Konu and Viitanen (2008).

Statistical Hypothesis:

H_10: There exists no statistical significance between empowerment and shared leadership.

H_1a: There exists a statistical significance between empowerment and shared leadership.

H_20: There exists no statistical significance between trust and shared leadership.

H_2a: There exists a statistical significance between trust and shared leadership.

H_30: There exists no statistical significance between flow of information and shared leadership.

H_3a: There exists a statistical significance between flow of information and shared leadership.

H_40: There exists no statistical significance between shared purpose and shared leadership.

H_4a: There exists a statistical significance between shared purpose and shared leadership.

H_50: There is no statistical significance between collaboration and social relation and shared leadership.

H_5a: There exists a statistical significance between collaboration and social relation and shared leadership.

Research Methodology:

Method of Research Used: Descriptive research is the method used by the researcher to carry out the study so as to present the data collected in a meaningful manner. The researcher has used the methodology of sample survey to carry out the study.

Target Population: The managerial level employees with the organization being studied is the target population, within the city of Kolkata. The target population for this study are the managerial level employees that come under the top, middle and level levels of management. As per records provided by the organization, there is a total of 800 managerial level employees in the organization as of September, 2013. Of the 800 managerial level employees, 60 individuals are top level managers, 240 employees are middle level managers and 500 are lower level managers. So that the sample is taking proportionately, the researcher will distribute the questionnaire among 21 top level managers, 84 middle level managers and 175 lower level managers.

Sample Size: The sample size for this research is 277, which was rounded off to 280.

Sampling Procedure: The respondents for the study were selected using the methodology of non probability sampling. The questionnaires were handed personally by the researcher to 280 managerial level employees in the organization in December 2013. Quota sampling was used by the researcher in order to distribute the questionnaires among the managerial level employees in the organization.

Summary Of Findings, Conclusions And Recommendations:

Summary of Hypotheses:

- H_1: The null hypothesis was rejected which means that the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between shared leadership and empowerment.
- H_2: The null hypothesis was rejected which means that the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between shared leadership and trust.
- H_3: The null hypothesis was rejected which means that the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between shared leadership and flow of information.
- H_4: The null hypothesis was rejected which means that the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between shared leadership and shared purpose.
- H_5: The null hypothesis was rejected which means that the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between shared leadership and collaboration and social relation.

Discussion and Conclusion of Research Findings: The findings of the research shows that there exists an environment for shared leadership to develop in the organization. The findings also indicate that there exists a significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable in the study.

Recommendations: Though there have been a few managers in the organization who have stated that they have experienced shared leadership, the organization as a whole still hangs onto its traditional forms of leadership. Hence, as it is clearly evident that there exists an environment for shared leadership for develop and after understanding the benefits of shared leadership, the organization should make a conscious effort to implement shared leadership and abandon the traditional form of leadership.

The organization can go out and invite or conduct sessions where from experts in the field of shared leadership or even employees or managers from other organizations where shared leadership is practiced can come and speak to the employees of the organization and give them a first handing view of the benefits of such a leadership program.

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