The Difference in Gender Leadership Styles and how It Can Affect Women Seeking Leadership

Positions

Name

Institutional Affiliation

Chapter 1: The Problem Statement and its Development

The Difference in Gender Leadership Styles and how It Can Affect Women Seeking

Leadership Positions

Introduction

Even though the current global workforce consists of a large number of women, very few

of them hold leadership positions either on an organizational or constitutional level. The small

number of women leaders has been linked to the difference in styles of management between

men and women. The issue of different styles of leadership between men and women has been

debated for some time, and as a result, several speculations and theories have also developed

over the matter. For instance, women are less hierarchical compared to men, that they are more

cooperative and collaborative. On the other hand, van Engen, van der Leeden & Willmsen (2001)

claim that there is no difference between female and male managers and that their leadership

styles have no differences. Pounder and Coleman (2002) have failed to come to a reasonable

conclusion on the matter, claiming that those trying to conclude whether women are better

leaders than men would be missing the point, especially because of the competition and

competing pressures that face the current business environment. Researchers generally agree that

women have little chance of occupying senior positions, especially positions that have been

consistently occupied by men. However, a few researchers agree on whether men and women

behave the same once they attain these senior posts. Such matters are normally discussed with

much focus on leadership styles, where a style is considered a stable behavioral pattern that is

exhibited by leaders. These differences in style can bring negative impacts, mainly because they

can influence how individuals perceive the issue of whether women should occupy leadership

positions in companies. Currently, women hold under 24 percent of the senior positions globally,

while 25 percent of global organizations have no women in leadership positions (Catalyst, 2018). This paper aims at investigating why women hold fewer leadership roles and how the difference in leadership styles can affect their chances of occupying such top positions. The paper will provide a description of the problem, the purpose of investigating, a review of the literature, and a description of the methodology used in the investigation.

Statement of Problem

The problem addressed is that organizations consider the leadership styles employed by men as the default style of leadership that every manager should have, and since these styles are different from that of women, it makes it difficult for them to be considered worthy to hold senior positions. Because men have held leadership roles throughout history, it has led to men defining the styles, and these styles have been widely accepted by people and organizations (Eagly & Johannsen-Schmidt, 2001). Women's leadership styles, however, are not associated with those of great leaders, and this makes it difficult for them to be acknowledged.

Significance of the Problem

The 'think manager, think male' mindset affirmed by the view that men's leadership roles are the default roles will continue to restrict more women from holding senior posts. Compared to 2017, the percentage of women holding senior positions on a global scale declined to 24 percent from 25 percent (Catalyst, 2018). Much of this is attributed to the 'glass ceiling,' which acts as an invisible barrier that prevents females from acquiring top positions. Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) affirm that leadership behavior is an important consideration because behavior determines the leader's effectiveness and chances for advancements. Mubarak (2014) also claims that the success of an organization is highly dependent on leadership style and behavior. It would, therefore, be correct to state that leadership

behavior greatly affects an organization and that behavior would be highly considered when choosing leaders. This research, therefore, tends to focus on how men and women differ in their styles of leadership and how these differences influence women's ability to hold top positions.

Gaps in the Problem

Leadership styles are regarded as vital factors when organizations choose their leaders. Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy (2014) explain that different leadership styles can affect the performance and effectiveness of an organization. Without a doubt, leadership styles are important in the business environment. The debate is over whether the past leadership styles that were considered to be most effective can still be relevant in today's business environment. In the past, leaders based their power and authority on their access to military, political or economic power (Sedlmayr, 2017). The traditional or autocratic leadership style considers leaders as being in control of the solution-making process. Despite the research that associate great leaders with such traits and authority, many of these studies have failed to acknowledge the changes in the business environment. The contemporary views on leadership call for a reduction in the hierarchy and require leaders to be more in the role of teachers and coaches. Also because the contemporary world has been faced with competition and most importantly, innovation. Therefore, the styles of leadership that have been mostly associated with men's styles are not equally effective in the contemporary world. This paper tends to focus on men's and women's leadership styles as it relates to the leadership behaviors that are in line with the contemporary world that is filled with technological changes and competitive pressures.

Theoretical Framework

The study of how leadership styles vary concerning gender roles has led to the development of several theoretical models. Focusing on the theme of transformational and

transactional leadership, Eagly and Carli (2007) define transformational leaders as those who establish themselves as role models by gaining the confidence and trust of their employees. Transformational leaders easily make the right changes in the company's model. In comparison, Eagly and Carli (2007) define transactional leaders as those that view job performances as a series of transactions that need to be disciplined or rewarded. Bass (1985) adds that transformational leadership is superior to transactional leadership. While Rosener (1990) builds on the argument by stating that female leaders are more transformational than male leaders. Given the importance of the models in comparing female and male leadership characteristics, Eagly and Carli's definitions will be used in the article.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to conduct a meta-analysis of ten peer-reviewed journals retrieved from online databases such as Emerald and American Psychological Association. These journals will compare men's and women's transformational and transactional leadership styles.

Research Questions

The general aim of this study is to identify whether women's leadership styles differ from men and whether this difference acts as an advantage or a disadvantage for them when competing for senior posts alongside men. However, since previous research focuses on traditional leadership styles, this research will have a contemporary view of leadership by focusing on transactional and transformational leadership. Since women are regarded as having transformational characteristics of leadership, which is also regarded as the superior, then this study aims at answering the following questions;

1. Is transformational leadership more superior that transactional leadership?

2. What makes women have transformational characteristics of leadership and how are these characteristics associated with gender?

3. Are women better leaders than men because of the transformational characteristics?

Summary

Leadership behavior is a significant determinant of a company's performance. Traditional organizational models depended highly on the autocratic leadership style, which was closely linked to men's leadership characteristics. However, the changing business environment has given room for new organizational models as well as models of leadership. Companies that are open to these new models have given women a chance in senior positions regardless of the difference in their styles of leadership. However, some companies still believe that top positions should be occupied by men. Therefore, despite the changes, women still face difficulties in occupying senior positions. Various researchers have concluded that men and women do not differ in their styles of leadership while some researchers argue that women are transformational while men are transactional. Based on the extensive research data from peer-reviewed journals comparing the leadership styles of men and women, this research aims at conducting a meta-analysis of these journals and articles to establish whether women's leadership styles vary significantly from men's styles. Analyzing the information from the journal will also lead to the conclusion of whether the difference in leadership styles serves as an advantage or disadvantage for women when competing against men for senior posts. The meta-analysis will be on journals that compare transactional and transformational leadership styles of men and women.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

A number of researchers have identified women as making a significant impact on the global economy by participating in business ownership and organizations. More so, researchers have also noted that the role of women in leadership positions is bound to increase late into the twenty-first century (Davidhizar &Cramer, 2000). Because of the heightened demand for women into the workforce, researchers have been intrigued by the leadership styles of women. Within the research also lies a huge body of opinion stating how contemporary leadership should be more focused on adapting to relationships and teamwork. Women are well known to incorporate the traits of a contemporary leader (Colwill &Townsend, 1999). Because of this, it would seem that the common perception is that management is male-dominated. However, much has been left out concerning the current leadership roles and the importance of women's leadership styles in today's business environment. Against this background, this section looks at the earlier studies on leadership behaviors of women and men, together with contemporary research. The section will also discuss the styles based on the social role theory of leadership styles of both men and women.

Earlier Research

Extensive amounts of research concerning men and women's styles of leadership can be retrieved from studies carried out before 1990. These researches mostly compared the task-oriented style and interpersonal-oriented leadership style. The interpersonal-oriented style is focused on establishing social relationships by tending to the welfare and morale of others, whereas, task-oriented is more inclined to completing tasks by consolidating activities that are relevant to the task. Bales (1950) was the first to introduce the distinction between the task-

oriented and interpersonal style, and after that, the style was developed by other researchers from The Ohio State University. Few studies, however, compared leaders who behave autocratically and discourage staff from taking part in decision making, or democratic leaders who allow their staff to take part in decision-making. This leadership term, which was formerly defined as democratic versus autocratic leadership, followed earlier forms of experimental studies. Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted research to determine whether men and women differed regarding autocratic versus democratic styles of leadership. The research was based on a meta-analysis of 162 studies, which were available and which compared the styles in men and women. The synthesis of the research analyzed studies from the period of 1961-1987, and the researchers found that much of the research was gender stereotypes, more specifically in the lab experiments, since they used student subjects. In assessment studies, the researchers investigated leadership styles of individuals who were not chosen for occupancy in senior positions. In the studies, women showed more interpersonal and democratic leadership styles as compared to men, and men showed more autocratic and task-oriented style as compared to women (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). The difference in sex was limited in organizational research, which assessed the leadership styles of managers. As a result, the only difference that was demonstrated between male and female managers was a women's ability to adopt a less autocratic and more democratic style as compared to men (Eargly & Johnson, 1999). However, in tendencies to incorporate interpersonally oriented and task oriented styles, both female and male leaders failed to reveal much difference. A study by Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) involved a meta-analysis of the assessments of male and female managers whose styles were quoted experimentally. Results from the study also showed similarity to that of studies conducted between 1987 and 2000 (van Engen, 2001). Studies in this period show that individuals reacted more negatively to women

who adopted a directive and autocratic style of leadership (Eagly, Johannsen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003).

Contemporary Research

As researchers shifted their focus on learning contemporary leadership styles in the 1990s, further opportunities opened up on the investigation of leadership behaviors of women and men. The new research focused on the effectiveness of leaders depending on their capabilities to inspire their subordinates and nurture their capability to positively contribute to the company (Bass, 1998). Bass (1998) described this form of leadership as transformational. He explains that transformational leadership is about presenting oneself as the role model by obtaining the confidence and trust of followers. These leaders focus on the future goals of the organization and come up with plans to achieve these goals. Other researchers such as Conger and Kanungo (1998), also studied the qualities of transformational leaders, but under the name of charismatic leadership. Many investigators, including Avolio (1999) contrasted transactional leaders to transformational leaders who established exchange relationships between them and their subordinates to appeal to their self-interests. Transactional leadership involves managing by clearly stating the staff responsibilities and the rewards they will receive if they complete their tasks, as well as the punishment they will face for not completing the tasks. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is the method that is commonly employed to measure transactional and transformational leadership (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999). Despite the various versions of MLQ, the most common version is MLQ-5X (Avolio and Bass, 2002).

Social Role Theory of Leadership

Eagly and Karau (2002) also use the social role theory approach of leadership to frame their expectations about male and female styles of leadership. By putting more emphasis on

leadership roles and gender roles, social theorists argue that leaders occupy the roles stated by their unique positions in a hierarchy, and their gender roles dictate their simultaneous functioning. To some extent, gender roles can influence leaders in such a way that female and male leaders can act differently when they occupy the same leadership position. Gutek (2001) also contributes to this argument by stating that gender roles can spill over to the companies. Ridgeway (2001) explains that gender creates an implicit background identity in the business environment. The notion that gender determines the style of leadership has proven to be a non-unanimous view in leadership studies. In his research, Powell (1990) reveals that female and male leaders show similar amounts of the people-oriented and task-oriented behavior of leadership. Also, the meta-analysis of 45 studies of transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles showed that women were more transformational and that all aspects on which women exceeded men related to positive effect in leadership (Eagly, Johannsen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). Similar to Eagly et al. (2003), others that conducted a meta-analysis, relied on research studies that employed the MLQ. Because of the effectiveness of the MLQ, this study will also perform a meta-analysis of the studies that were conducted through the MLQ method, and those whose questionnaires were filled by the leaders themselves.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

A large number of researchers have tried to determine the relationship between gender role and leadership style. Research conducted before the 1990s compared the leadership styles regarding task-oriented leadership versus interpersonal-oriented leadership. However, research conducted based on this approach did not show a significant amount of difference between men and women leadership styles. Contemporary studies opened doors to research on new leadership styles with much focus on transformational and transactional models of leadership. The MLQ

was commonly used to conduct research distinguishing the leadership styles of men and women. Based on MLQs efficiency, this study will focus on the meta-analysis of studies that employed the MLQ method.

Proposed Methodology

The research will involve a meta-analysis of the researches that compare the transactional and transformational styles of leadership for both men and women while employing the MLQ method. The study will depend on online databases such as the ABI/INFORM Global and the American Psychological Association. Articles on these sites will be retrieved by typing in the words 'transactional,' and 'transformational' and the relevant studies will date from 1985 to the present. The articles will be retrieved only if the title and abstract suggest that the researchers might have studied both male and female leaders using the MLQ method. For an article to be included, it must have sufficient data, which would be useful in calculating at least one effect size that would be relevant to the meta-analysis. The variables that would be coded from each article include:

- The source of the article

- The year of publication

- The percentage of men among authors

- The type of organization

- Whether the title refers to gender or sex.

The calculation of combined effect size will be done using Rosenthal and Rubin's (1986) formula. The effect sizes will be calculated with the help of a computer program that computes based on mean and standard deviations for eight of the studies.

Timeline

TARGET DATE	TASK	DATE COMPLETED
January 2nd to 10th, 2019	• Select committee members • Topic approval form	
January 14th, 2019	• Meet up with committee members	
January 15th to 19th, 2019	• Set up collection of data	
January 21st to February 2nd, 2019	• Collect data	
February 12th to 15th, 2019	Analyze data	
February 25th to March 7th, 2019	• Write chapter 3 (methodology) and chapter 4	

	(results)	
February 8th, 2019	• Meet with committee members	
March 9th to 16th, 2019	• Edit and revise • Sign up for presentation	
March 18th to 23rd, 2019	• Prep presentation (PowerPoint) and practice	
March 26th to 28th, 2019	• Presentation • Project approval form	

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