

The Managers' Perceptions of Leadership Styles and Work Team Cohesion: Investigation with Cevital's Managers.

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Abstract:

In this research, we focus on the role of leadership on the organization of work and its role on the cohesion within the work teams, in order to answer the question related to the role of the leadership in the organization of work and in the promotion of cohesion and efficiency among the work teams.

We worked with 15 managers working in the food company CEVITAL in Bejaia through interviews and a set of questions to cover the subject. The study revealed that every manager has a management style of his own; and the team leadership is not something that remains fixed. It must be adapted to the context, to the situations, but also to the individuals.

Keywords: leadership; management style; situation, context; cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

According to Joel Kurtzman; the heart and soul of leadership is the creation of a common purpose, this occurs when a leader merges his team into a creative, dynamic, courageous and almost invincible environment; also when the values of the organization are internalized in such a way as to allow people to work relentlessly towards a specific goal.

Leadership has aroused and continues to arouse great interest in various disciplines (sociology, management, psychology...). While it is a source of debate, many researchers recognize it as an art, based as much on judgment and intuition as on predefined competencies. (Margie, 2011). Managerial and organizational skills, personal qualities, decision-making and risk-taking skills, interpersonal and communication skills. Existing research on leadership has shown that leaders influence individuals, teams, and organizational performance

(Carnevale, 2019). When the operationalization of cohesion involved more commitment to the task or group pride, decision-making improved. Good leadership can be the antidote to company problems such as workplace conflict. A leader must know how to motivate people, appreciate and value their work to make them perform better in order to achieve organizational goals. This will re-energize these subordinates by satisfying their needs such as personal success, self-esteem and all the inspirations that affect employees (Riboud, 1991). This can only be done through an effective leader who communicates well with these subordinates.

Research examining the relationship between cohesion and performance has a long history (Seashore, 1954). When the operationalization of cohesion involved more commitment to the task or group pride, decision making improved. This is consistent with research that has suggested that task cohesion is related to performance, whereas social cohesion is related to groupthink (Tziner, 1982). (Mullen, 1994) also found support for the idea that cohesion has both task and interpersonal components.

Good leadership can be the antidote to company problems such as workplace conflict. A leader must know how to motivate people, appreciate and value their work to make them perform better in order to achieve organizational goals. This will re-energize these subordinates by satisfying their needs such as personal success, self-esteem and all the inspirations that affect employees (Riboud, 1991) this can only be done through an effective leader who communicates well with these subordinates.

2. Problem Statement

With the globalization, acceleration, and complexity of the business and corporate environment, the need for leadership across all kinds of institutions is seen as critical to its ability to evolve, adapt, and remain relevant. Sound management and administration are not enough: what is needed is a cutting-edge, effective and astute leadership and a leader who inspires, motivates, communicates, and is attentive to the elements of his team, as a generator of potential and energy and an initiator of new leadership. The role of leadership remains indispensable in the promotion of all kinds of performance in general and the promotion of the cohesion of the work teams in particular, with a remarkable importance in the implementation and reinforcement of the values adopted by the company.

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The Research Question

How does the type of leadership strengthen the cohesion of the work team and create a climate leading to optimizing and maximizing results?

The aim of the Study

Our research is descriptive and analytical of the involvement of leadership styles in the growth of cohesion of work teams within CEVITAL, recognized as the pillar of the private agri-food industry in Algeria, in order to achieve the following points and purposes:

- *Define the role of managers in the development of cohesion and describe the role of leadership in stimulating group elements at the individual and collective level in optimizing the work climate, performance and bringing out the best in each individual.

- *To implement the primordial importance of leader and leadership in the maximization of the cohesion of its group.

- *To identify the opinions and the different views of the group members on their leader.

- *Explain the expectations of a leader in terms of the behaviors of the members of his group.

- *To implement the importance of the choice of leadership style on the promotion of the group spirit and thus the cohesion of the work team.

Methodology

Considering the specificity of our research topic, the most suitable technique is the semi-structured interview, in order to collect data from our study population. According to (**Madeleine, 2004**) the interview "is a scientific research procedure using a verbal communication process, to collect information, in relation to the set goal".

- *The conduct of this stage of the interview took place with CEVITAL's managers through a set of structured questions well organized in our interview guide to serve the process of data collection. Each interview with the managers took place in their offices and control room, and given the interest that the managers had

in the questions related to our subject, the managers gave us a considerable amount of time, generally from two to three hours.

*In the following, we will categorize the results according to the different themes that we could create during the data analysis.

*The words, speeches and observations collected from our Managers interviewed were subjected to content analysis to unpack and understand our study topic. The production of the analysis of discursive data was carried out following the distribution and classification of the corpus according to relevant themes in order to proceed in a second phase to the identification of common points and divergences in the points of view of our interlocutors and to allow in a later phase the interpretation and the sociological reading. In the following, we will present the relevant themes retained in our analysis:

Command Type Selection and Group Cohesion

Where we based on:

- 1- Work team motivation and leadership style.
- 2-Leadership styles and autonomy of individuals as members of the work team.
- 3-Nature of the circumstances and experiences of the respondents in relation to the choice of leadership style.
- 4- A questioning on the situational approach.

1- Work team motivation and leadership style.

In this theme, we asked questions about the necessity of a well-adapted leadership style for the promotion of the motivation of the work teams. The following are the main and most important ideas. The success of the objectives and work projects can be achieved only with fully motivated and committed teams, which is significantly related to the leadership style developed by the leader. To achieve such a metamorphosis, it is necessary to build a style of leadership based on human behavior; to adopt a way of exercising power oriented towards planning, decision, control and transmission of information (communication) between leaders and subordinates.

Therefore, we have the following words from the managers of CEVITAL; for example: the first manager said:

As a direct manager of my team I always make sure to "Master the relationships between individuals" because there is nothing more motivating than working in a harmonious and family

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atmosphere and environment, so I always try to be a commander who favors the social that is to say to make the work environment more sociable which for me is an indispensable thing for a Manager who really wants to succeed and reach the objectives. Also the sharing of all kinds of things, even the smallest things like sharing a little story, a little meal... implanting this in the heart of his team and transmitting it to his collaborators, this will reinforce the degree of motivation between the elements of my team. I also have to reinforce the motivation by recognizing the efforts made by the elements of my team, by encouraging them, I would say by asking for special bonuses for them like "talent bonuses", also value trainings, recovery days. Delivered for the people who deserve, for the motivated ones more. Or also the organization of dinners and meals between colleagues where everyone participates and contributes in this sense, in order to live moments of conviviality and sociability, which will remain believe me engraved in the memory of the members of the team.

Another manager said:

For me, the key to motivating a team is for the manager to know how to make the members of the team useful and indispensable in the life of his team in particular and the company in general, this can be done by creating tasks that meet the capabilities of each individual, and to avoid being abusive in this sense. Because it will be a destructive way of motivating the individual, if this individual does not have the skills to perform this task. The feeling that the employee is strongly involved in the realization of the tasks and objectives supported and supervised by his manager through the number of tasks that he grants him, will implant motivation in him. The realization of tasks or an objective or any project will constitute a guarantee of motivation in this particular individual and therefore positively impact the general motivation of my team.

2- team Leadership styles and autonomy of individuals as part of the work.

Giving freedom to the work team is a competitive advantage today. But the legacy of hierarchical links is deeply rooted in the DNA of many organizations. Today's management opens up spaces of freedom to its employees. For them to be effective, it is important that they take advantage of them to make the most of their skills and talents. How many companies claim to empower their teams, but at the end of the day, continue to keep a tight control on each individual's tasks! Breaking the dependence of an employee on his or her manager is a fundamental issue in order to be able to delegate missions with confidence. Managers during the interviews revealed that they had the tools and means to encourage the autonomy of their subordinates, given the importance of having a high degree of autonomy in their teams.

We have the following statements from CEVITAL managers as example, one of the managers said:

I think that autonomy is a good thing for the functioning of the team, of course, if it is granted to people who are capable of ensuring it. The approach to ensure the autonomy of the elements of my team, a great confidence within the team that will allow to strengthen all the cohesion relationships, it can be done by the deep recognition in favor of the collaborator, to better determine his personality, his limits and his needs, and to know if this autonomy will be more beneficial or will bring or will be in certain cases, with negative representations and repercussions. This is done by leaving room for the collaborator in the exercise of the tasks and to present decisions that facilitate this point, and to encourage involving them especially in the operative system where they must act.

Another manager said:

Autonomy is to help an individual to free himself from dependence on his hierarchy for me this must be done to the extent of not breaking certain limits because sometimes a poorly chosen decision without consultation can lead to errors that will cause the interruption of production process. I see that the positive side of the autonomy will allow us to have responsible people motivated is fully engaged in the functioning of the team

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and well prepared to join a development of the cohesion within his team; and therefore to widen his operating system and fields of intervention, after having confirmed some successful autonomy intervention and to record them therefore as tasks involved in the field of intervention of the person will increase the self-confidence of collaborator towards his manager, and also to increase his motivation.

3- Nature of the circumstances and experiences lived by the respondents in relation to the choice of command style.

This theme was designed to find out if the experiences and circumstances of managers during their professional career have led to the adaptation and choice of a particular style of leadership.

Any person in a professional activity with a command function: or a manager in charge of leading a team wishes to improve the cohesion of his team. In this trajectory, every manager has his own management style. Whether he is a follower of participative or more authoritarian methods, his style is built on his personality as well as on the identity of the company and its values. The answers provided on this theme by our interviewees tell us about the CEVITAL context, where managers strongly emphasize the importance of adapting their leadership style to situations, events and professional requirements. Knowing that the managers confirmed that they have always and on several occasions and events been in the need and vitality to change their style of leadership in order to adapt well to the conjunctures and given different contexts; the managers with almost absolute totality have related multiple experiences and events that have prompted them to change their style of leadership in order to be well situated towards the reality in front and to lead and manage the situations well,

the team members with their different natures with the aim of keeping an eye on the global performance of the team and promoting cohesion and relationships and feelings of belonging among each of the elements of the team, The managers have therefore strongly confirmed that the need to adapt their style of command have shown a huge flexibility in order to guarantee a better climate of cohesion where the adapted style will allow a real lever of optimization of the performances in the trajectory of security, efficiency, discipline,

motivation, autonomy of the members of the team, and in the end guarantee a promotion in the cohesion of the work team.

WE have important declarations from the managers as example one of the managers said:

Before I became a line manager, I was a machine operator, in the first years of my promotion to this position of line manager was of course accompanied by (I will say a discontent by some elements) who think that they are more experienced and deserve the position so this feeling in the following period caused them to behave sometimes even refusing to work. Therefore, a good way to respond to this situation was to remind them of the internal regulations and to sanction this kind of offence according to the law; but the situation has radically improved and now I could confirm that being severe at the beginning because of the demands of the moment followed by a creation and rearrangement of the relations by actions that strengthen the trust between the chief and his subordinates today the majority of the questions which are technical, relational or other find its answer directly in the perimeter of our team.

We can also take as example the words of a second manager who said:

One of the experiences that a shift supervisor can have as the first person in charge of his or her team is the occurrence of a work-related accident on one of his or her team members. A valuable decision in my opinion was to suspend the individual bonuses for people who leave in a work accident. Even at first sight it is not logical but believe me it has aroused people to take maximum safety and vigilance before doing any action, it is statistically proven that the number of accidents is remarkably reduced right after this decision to suspend the bonuses.

4- The Situational Approach of Leadership and Its Importance in The Cohesion of Work Teams

To be a vector of efficiency and success, management must constantly adapt. This is called situational leadership. There is no good or bad style. It is all a question of circumstances, situations and personalities involved.

The objective of any manager is to develop the skills and autonomy of his troops in order to obtain the greatest possible efficiency in the success of his mission. It is essential for the leader to be adaptable and

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flexible. Because if he has a whole panel of tools on which he can rely to carry out his missions, to always stick to the same methods without taking the time to assess the situation and the employees involved would be pure madness.

The interviewed managers agree on the importance for the commander to have particular personality traits that will make him a good manager of his team, however, on the question of charisma, the vast majority of managers have confirmed that despite this character very appreciated in a professional environment, but it will not be enough to equip a team to achieve the goals and succeed especially in the trajectory of promoting group cohesion, for this we have the supporting statements delivered by managers.

In fact, CEVITAL's managers choose their leadership styles according to the situation and context in which they work, or they adapt their leadership styles according to the knowledge and motivation of their subordinates, with the aim of reinforcing the union and the bonds of collaboration, and thus favoring the climate of obtaining and optimizing the results and achieving the objectives.

For example, one of the *managers of CEVITAL* says:

For me a Manager must always vary his management style. To be more optimal and succeed in the quest for the best performance. First, it is necessary to know and to know the situations of each of the elements of his team according to their situation and of the period, the social situation, and emotional of the employee... He continues his speech: "It is necessary to adapt, It is necessary to adapt to better guarantee this climate of cohesion between the members of the group is the remainder of his team in order to avoid any kinds of frustration and useless demoralization. Thus, it is important to adapt one's style to the skills, knowledge, experience, motivation of each individual in my team and according to the tasks and responsibilities that have been entrusted to him. Therefore, I see that it is vital to adapt to situations quickly and permanently in order to follow the path that leads to the targeted objectives. Because doing all this in the right place and at the right time and even the project that fits best, will give better results, compared to the opposite

case if we put everything in another context but does not fit well with the requirements and data.

We have the words of another manager who emphasizes and states:

In this sense in the situations that require a restricted time and a restricted time to rent to specific tasks and when I do not have enough time to wait, I take directly the control without wasting time so I demand in the first place that my recommendations due to insufficient time. Also in moments and situations that present one or more dangers; He stays a few seconds trying to find an example because according to him, he has experienced many situations in this sense.

He continues with an example:

"One day we were handling equipment worth a lot of money at a height of 15m. At the beginning I trusted and let the staff act in their own way; then I noticed that the situation is about to lead to danger, both for the staff and for the equipment; at that moment everything became red, he says; I took directly the orders that secured the staff and the equipment considering my deep experience in this task; I want to confirm that I am situational although in the great majority of time I am to a tendency to adapt a democratic style; but in the particular cases as in the examples that we quoted before I adapt to the different situations by the style of command that I see more that it is for the security of personnel, equipments and the achievement of the objectives in the deadlines and especially of course to promote the cohesion of the members of my team.

The Results

The results allow us to confirm the hypothesis, that managers choose and use leadership styles well adapted to the situations and context requirements for a better optimization of team functioning in general and a greater possible cohesion in particular. Secondly, the results also allow us to confirm in this part, that the means and styles used and the way of acting of the managers in different professional situations, thus their capacity of adaptation and their leadership style without being judged as sufficient to promote the cohesion within their work teams.

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CEVITAL managers confirmed the importance of choosing the best style that adapts effectively to different situations and contexts in order to promote cohesion within their work teams.

A manager commented on this point: "It is essential for a commander to be able to choose an appropriate style of leadership, depending on the situation...".

**Another manager confirms again*

"...the principle of synergy implies the integration of all the skills with all the differences that we have in the work team...this experience has shown considerably the importance of uniting the skills through flexible and visionary leadership";

**A line manager said "...the elements involved have increased their efficiency considerably...; that I should say that it must go through the real decision of leader to bring out first of all the best of all the elements of his team by a style the most adequate to estimate therefore a development of the cohesion in his team".*

**Another manager states: "...in most cases I adapt my attitude according to the experiences and the data of the moment and the work contract. I admit that my style of command is only in order to achieve the objectives in the best time and to ensure the best cohesion in my team"; also this vision is reinforced by the words of one of the managers who confirms in his turn: "it is quite obvious that the manager must be effective in the choice of style of command corresponding to a situation, especially the most particular ones..."*

CONCLUSION

After having carried out all the interviews with CEVITAL managers who were very collaborative with regard to our subject, the questions or even the themes related to all that is leadership management and styles of command gain their importance from the fact that these questions must be treated according to the dualities and confrontations; commanders/commanded; the manager/managed; and responsible/subordinate; From this appears the need to see the subject reality from the other side or through the second component of the dualities mentioned before (commanded, managed and subordinated) and not only through the managers who may see different subject realities compared to those of the subordinates; hence a quantitative subject survey conducted on the non-managerial

collaborators will deeply reinforce the first qualitative survey in terms of our final research results.

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