

A Study of the Relationship between Leadership Style and Workforce Productivity in Indian Information Technology Captive Centers

A Literature Review Proposal
Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

The leadership style adopted by the managers of IT captive centers in India has a significant effect on the productivity of their employees. IT captive centers are subsidiaries of foreign companies that provide IT services to their parent organizations. Several companies rely on IT captive centers for various functions such as e-commerce, supply chain management, and customer relationship management. The productivity of the IT captive center workforce depends on the work environment created by the leaders. Different leadership styles can have different impacts on employee motivation, collaboration, communication, and satisfaction. This literature review examines the challenges and opportunities associated with various leadership styles observed in IT captive centers of retailers in India. It also explores the best practices and recommendations for improving the leadership effectiveness and employee productivity in these captive centers. Some significant issues that are discussed in this review are:

The lack of clear direction and communication from leaders, which can cause confusion and uncertainty among employees about their roles and responsibilities.

The autocratic style of leadership, which involves making decisions without consulting or involving the team members, which can lead to low employee engagement and high turnover rates.

The need for trust and transparency between leaders and employees, which can enhance the performance and loyalty of the workforce.

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CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ *Introduction*

Effective leadership is a key factor that influences the productivity of employees and helps organizations achieve their goals in the competitive and dynamic business environment. This research explores how different leadership styles affect the productivity of employees in IT captive centers in India. IT captive centers are subsidiaries of foreign companies that provide IT services to their parent organizations. The productivity of the IT captive center workforce is crucial for the operational efficiency and performance of the organizations. This research examines how different leadership styles shape the work environment, motivation, communication, and satisfaction of the employees in IT captive centers in India.

India, renowned for its burgeoning IT industry, has emerged as a significant hub for IT captive centers. These centers serve as critical support units for global product companies, providing essential technology services, software development, data analysis, and customer support. The effective management of these captive centers is essential to maximize productivity and meet the demanding expectations of the competitive retail market.

One of the major factors that affects an organization's success or failure is its leadership. The way a leader directs and motivates others to achieve organizational goals is known as their leadership style. There are various leadership styles that include democratic, transformational, bureaucratic, autocratic, charismatic, and transactional leadership styles. Both primary and secondary research have been done for this subject. A survey instrument based on a survey questionnaire was used to conduct the primary research using a quantitative methodology. Secondary research has been conducted through a review of previously published material.

This research will consider potential mediating factors such as employee engagement, job satisfaction, motivation, organizational culture, communication and feedback, teamwork and collaboration, and employee development and training. These factors can act as intermediaries between leadership style and workforce productivity relationship, shedding light on the mechanisms through which leadership influences productivity outcomes.

The investigations in this study hold significant implications for both practitioners and scholars in the areas of leadership and organizational behavior. By identifying the leadership styles and practices that positively impact workforce productivity in IT captive centers in India, organizations can make informed decisions regarding leadership development, training, and selection. This research also adds to the existing literature on how leadership influences productivity in a specific industry context.

CHAPTER TWO

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND PRODUCTIVITY

A. Leadership Styles

There are different leadership styles for the organizations and workforce but here we are going to consider three major styles to study impact on the productivity of workforce they are as follows:

➤ *Autocratic*

Decisions made by autocratic CEOs frequently lack significant involvement from their staff. They have a great deal of authority and control over the decision-making process. There may be a range of productivity effects. On the one hand, authoritarian leaders can give precise instructions and uphold rigid discipline, which may increase productivity in circumstances when tasks call for a particular and well-defined approach. This management approach, meanwhile, can also result in low staff morale, constrained inventiveness, and uninspired workers. Employee disengagement and a lack of commitment to their jobs may be present, which over time may reduce productivity.

➤ *Democratic*

Democratic leaders seek the thoughts and advice of their team members before making decisions. This manner encourages teamwork, collaboration, and open communication. Democratic leadership may have a good effect on productivity. Employees are more motivated, engaged, and devoted when they feel appreciated and have a role in decisions that affect their job. This may promote a feeling of empowerment and ownership and boost productivity. Additionally, democratic leaders frequently promote innovation and creativity, enabling staff to experiment with fresh concepts and methods that might boost output.

➤ *Laissez-Faire*

Laissez-faire leaders do not actively guide or advise their team members. They give them a lot of freedom and authority over decisions. This leadership style can have both positive and negative effects on productivity. Laissez-faire management can encourage innovation, initiative, and productivity when team members are highly skilled, self-driven, and capable of working independently. But when workers need more direction, structure, or support, a lack of it might cause them to get disoriented, lose their attention, and produce less. In addition, some team members may lose the desire to work hard or grow complacent in the absence of clear objectives or accountability.

Autocratic leadership is a style where leaders make decisions and choices without consulting or informing their team members. It emphasizes the absolute power of the leaders over the followers. Transformational leadership is a style where leaders inspire their followers to share their vision and values. They also motivate their followers to raise their expectations and performance. Rothfelder et al. (2013) quoted Atwater and Bass (1994) who stated that leaders transform the values and needs of the followers. Transactional leadership is a style that relies on rewards and punishments to improve the employees' performance (Sarwar, 2013). Laissez-Faire leadership is a style where leaders avoid interfering with the work assignments or providing guidance to their employees (Limsila and Ogunlana, 2008). Democratic leadership is a style where employees have the freedom to express their views and participate in the decision-making process (Dalluay and Jalagat, 2016).

A leadership style was the style of a senior employee or officer to drive his/her subordinates in an effective and efficient way by fulfilling the objectives of the organization as well as the employees (Yuki 2007). It depended upon the philosophy, personality, and experience of the leader. According to Graham (1991), the main types of leadership that have been identified are transactional, transformational, relational, post-industrial, and servant leadership.

The papers indicate that group member satisfaction (Foels, 2000), organizational performance (Jony, 2019), and employee performance (Suprianto, 2021; Murcahyanto, 2019) are positively influenced by democratic leadership style. Jony (2019) reported that democratic leadership style had a strong positive impact on organizational performance, while autocratic leadership style had a significant negative impact. Laissez-faire leadership style did not affect organizational outcomes. Suprianto (2021) reported that employee performance was influenced by democratic leadership style, and Murcahyanto (2019) reported that lecturers' performance was significantly influenced by democratic leadership style. The papers suggest that democratic leadership style is effective in various organizational settings.

One group of studies suggests that laissez-faire leadership style negatively affects organizational performance, while democratic and transformational leadership styles positively affect it (Jony, 2019; Tufa, 2020; Koech, 2012; Jaafar, 2021). Another study shows that democratic, autocratic, and transformational leadership styles have a positive correlation with organizational performance, while charismatic, bureaucratic, and transactional leadership styles have a negative correlation (Al Khajeh, 2018). A third study examines the impact of leadership style on the performance of selected banks in Nigeria and finds that transformational and democratic leadership styles are the most effective, while other styles have mixed effects (Ojokuku et al., 2013). A fourth study identifies four leadership styles: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented, and argues that the best style depends on the task and the subordinates' personalities (Kiyak, 2020). A fifth study finds that relationship-oriented leadership styles lead to higher quality leader-member exchange relationships (Setley, 2013). A sixth study reviews literature on the role of leadership style in organizational change management and lists several leadership styles that can facilitate change (Mansaray, 2019). A seventh study meta-analyzes the gender differences in leadership style and finds that women tend to adopt a more democratic or participative style and a less autocratic or directive style than men (Eagly, 1990).

The above studies indicate that different leadership styles have varying impacts on organizations and that the optimal style depends on various factors. Successful leaders are facilitators who carefully recruit devoted and skilled employees. Research in organizational psychology and studies of organizational behavior suggest that management practices and employee motivation are key factors for organizational success or failure. The impact of different leadership philosophies on worker productivity was investigated in this study. The study found that autocratic leadership negatively affected the department's efficiency, as evidenced by high absenteeism, low morale, low job satisfaction, and turnover. On the other hand, egalitarian, transformational, and transactional leaders positively and significantly affected the employees' performance, as measured by their high morale, productivity, engagement, and commitment. The study identified four main styles: authoritarian, transformational, democratic, and transactional leadership styles. It also examined the effect of leadership styles on employee performance in the Somaliland Ministry of Education and Higher Studies. The study concluded that democratic, transactional, and transformational leadership styles had a positive relationship with employee performance, while autocratic styles had a negative relationship (Setiawan et al., 2021).

The main objective of the study was to determine whether "work alienation" mediated the effect of counterproductive behavior induced by democratic and autocratic leadership styles in organizations (Erdem, 2021). The study posed the question: "Do democratic and autocratic leadership styles have a mediating role in the perception of work alienation in counterproductive behaviors?" and attempted to answer it. The study used the quantitative research method and the relational scanning model, which is based on general scanning models, as the research model. The study collected data from four heavy machinery manufacturing companies in the Ankara OSTIM Industrial Zone using the simple random sampling method. The analysis of the data revealed that democratic leadership had a positive impact on work alienation, but no impact on counterproductive behavior. It also revealed that autocratic leadership had an impact on both work alienation and counterproductive behavior. Work alienation was found to mediate the relationship between democratic leadership and counterproductive behavior, but not the relationship between autocratic leadership and such behavior.

➤ *Leadership Styles Selected for This Study*

The rationale for selecting the autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles in this study is elaborated as follows:

Firstly, the chosen autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles represent a range of authority exerted within the spectrum of leadership styles. The autocratic leadership style demonstrates maximum control over group members, with the leader holding peak levels of authority. In this style, subordinates have limited opportunities to contribute their opinions, as their input is disregarded, making them followers. On the other hand, the laissez-faire leadership style exerts minimal or no authority over group members, providing them with complete freedom. The democratic leadership style falls between these two extremes, balancing authority with freedom for group members. This study finds it intriguing to explore these three leadership styles due to their varying degrees of authority and the potential impact on workforce productivity.

Another reason for selecting these three leadership styles is their alignment with sociological theories on group psychology. According to these theories, group members tend to adopt certain characteristics of the group unconsciously. Considering India's democratic nature as a country, it can be postulated that individuals in India are likely to exhibit democratic traits to some extent. Thus, the democratic leadership style is hypothesized to be more prevalent among individuals in India. Consequently, this study incorporates the democratic leadership style to investigate its effects on workforce productivity.

Furthermore, extensive research has already been conducted on many other leadership styles, particularly transformational and transactional leadership, by various scholars across different studies worldwide. Given the existing knowledge on these styles, they were not included in this study to avoid redundancy and to focus on exploring the impact of the selected three leadership styles.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the questionnaires required for measuring all the different leadership styles are prohibitively expensive and beyond the financial means of the researcher. Consequently, this study limits its scope to the selected three leadership styles due to cost constraints associated with accessing comprehensive assessment tools for the remaining styles.

By choosing these specific leadership styles, this research aims to gain valuable insights into their effects on workforce productivity within the context of IT captive centers in India.

B. Rewards & Recognition on Workforce

Several studies suggest that reward and recognition programs can positively affect employee retention. Togher (2016) argues that remuneration packages and defined career paths are the most crucial factors of a reward strategy for retaining employees. Riak (2022) emphasizes that keeping good workers is vital for any organization and that organizations need innovative reward systems that meet employees' needs. Kwenin (2013) shows that when organizations' reward systems are adequate, they not only create fairness but also enhance retention. Ali (2009) establishes a positive relationship between reward and employee satisfaction. These papers indicate that reward and recognition programs, especially those that are perceived as fair and address employees' needs, can positively influence employee retention as well as their alignment with the organization mission and vision.

C. Organization Performance

Different leadership styles can have different effects on employee and organizational development, according to various papers. Oreg (2011) shows that transformational leadership behaviors reduce employees' intentions to resist organizational change, while dispositional resistance to change increases them. Nuraeni (2022) examines literature that focuses on variables that can enhance leadership style, teamwork, employee competence, and recruitment process for organizational development. Kiyak (2020) distinguishes different leadership styles that are appropriate for different tasks and subordinates, such as directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership. Mansaray (2019) reviews literature that indicates leadership is a crucial factor for successful change in any organization, and different leadership styles can facilitate change management processes.

Cherian et al. (2020a) find that democratic leadership and transformational leadership positively and significantly affect organizational performance in UAE-based organizations. Lenita Waty (n.d.) argues that organizational culture and leadership style are important elements that influence employee performance. Karacsony (2021) investigates the relationship between leadership style and organizational performance by quantitative analysis of 376 participants in Hungary. He also finds that leadership style explains 29% of the variance in organizational performance.

D. Organizational Culture

The excerpt examines how employee performance is affected by organizational culture and how the culture of the organization can be shaped by management. The study references two sources: Kumari and Singh (2018) and Narayana (2017). Kumari and Singh (2018) state that management should familiarize employees with the norms, values, and objectives of the organization, which are essential for comprehending the organizational culture. They also recommend that management should maintain a learning environment in the organization and that a proper comprehension of organizational culture should result in enhanced employee performance.

Narayana (2017) uses a literature review methodology to investigate the link between organizational culture and employee performance. He highlights the significant role of owners and top management in creating the organizational culture through their assumptions, shared visions, and behaviors. He also asserts that the organizational culture develops through the interaction between the management's beliefs and employees' experiences.

E. Employee Development and Training

The study discusses how employee development and training programs affect employee retention and organization growth. The text cites five sources: Kumari (2022), Manzoor (2022), Sharma (2020), Bhakuni (2023), and Tapasya Patil and Dr. Ajit Singh Patel (n.d.). Kumari (2022) shows that training and development have a significant relationship with employee retention. Manzoor (2022) shows that training and development programs increase employee intentions to stay, especially when the organization has a strong employee retention system. Sharma (2020) shows that continuous training and development practices lead to job satisfaction, which helps in employee retention. Bhakuni (2023) shows that training and development play a crucial role in the growth and development of the organization, resulting in high productivity and profitability. Tapasya Patil and Dr. Ajit Singh Patel (n.d.) examine the impact of training and development on employee retention in the manufacturing industry and find that training is an important factor to enhance organizational performance and retain employees.

Elsafy and Oraby (2022) review the literature on the relationship between employee training and employee retention and find that training and development, job performance, job satisfaction, and effective communication have a positive impact on employee retention. They conduct a field study using a questionnaire method to collect data from employees working in the private sector in Egypt and use a hierarchical multiple regression analysis to test their hypotheses. These sources suggest that employee development and training programs are effective strategies for improving employee retention and organization growth.

F. Communication and Feedback

The papers suggest that communication and feedback can improve employee performance in an organization. Rai (2013) found that interpersonal communication and quality of working life mediate the relationship between 360° feedback and performance of employees. Rony (2020) states that active constructive feedback is very vital in improving individual performance. Atambo (2016) found that effective communication, including downward, upward, and lateral communication, can enhance employee performance. A.M. (2023) found that effective communication stimulates decision-making processes and encourages effective communication among employees. Overall, these papers suggest that communication and feedback are important factors in improving employee performance in an organization.

G. IT captive centers

These papers do not directly address the research question of the impact of leadership on IT captive centers. Instead, they focus on various aspects of leadership and supply chain management. The study discusses the impact of different types of leadership on pricing, profits, quality, innovation, and competition in various contexts. The excerpt references four sources: Fang (2017), Liao (2019), Chang (2015), and Wang (2018). Fang (2017) investigates the effect of channel leadership and echelon dominance on pricing and profits in a two-tier collaborative channel. Liao (2019) examines a retailer's store-brand quality-positioning problem under different sourcing structures and types of price leadership. Chang (2015) explores the relative effectiveness of transformational-charismatic and transactional leadership on product and process innovations in China, and the contingent role of knowledge acquisition capability. Wang (2018) analyzes the impact of leadership strategy in rebate competition on supply chain members and rebate decision in a horizontal competition between two manufacturers selling substitutable products through a common retailer. These sources suggest that different types of leadership can have varying effects on various aspects of business performance and decision making.

H. Productivity

The text examines how leadership styles affect productivity in various industries. The text cites four sources: Balbuena (2020), Olayisade (2021), Purwanto (2020), and Madanchian (2021). Balbuena (2020) shows that leadership behaviors that focus on both productivity and people are strongly related to higher organizational productivity in Philippine higher education institutions. Olayisade (2021) shows that different leadership styles have different effects on employee productivity in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, with autocratic leadership being the most common style. Purwanto (2020) shows that transformational leadership and corporate culture have positive and significant effects on work performance in service companies in Indonesia, both directly and indirectly through mediating innovative work behavior. Madanchian (2021) also emphasizes the importance of transformational leadership in enhancing organizational performance.

These sources indicate that leadership styles are crucial for determining productivity and performance in various industries. The text also considers three major styles that are autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles and their impact on productivity.

The study states the aim of the study as follows: to investigate and explore the relationships of autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles on productivity. The text defines the research problem as follows: how do autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles affect productivity?

CHAPTER THREE

SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review reveals that there are various types of leadership styles, such as autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. The literature review also suggests that there is no single best approach to leadership style that can support the growth of both the organization and the employees. The literature review identifies the following aspects as the factors that influence the effectiveness of leadership styles:

- Rewards and Recognition for the employees
- Organization Performance
- Organization Culture
- Development and training of employees
- Communication and feedback system

These factors affect the productivity of the organization and the workforce. The literature review indicates that organizations often create competitive scenarios to motivate the workforce and align their development with the organizational goals. In this context, leadership styles play a vital role in deciding and implementing the above-mentioned factors to achieve the desired productivity and to cultivate the workforce.

This study aims to explore the impact of leadership style on workforce productivity in IT captive centers in India. By examining different leadership styles and their potential mediating factors, this research intends to provide useful insights and practical recommendations for organizations that seek to optimize their productivity levels in this dynamic sector.

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