

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS  
IN MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
IN INDIA

ABSTRACT

VEENA SARAF

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DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE  
NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY

SHILLONG - 793014

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## ABSTRACT

### **The Problem**

In the present study, an attempt has been made to determine the leadership styles of librarians and their effectiveness in management of university libraries in India. Leadership is defined as the ability of the leader to influence and persuade his subordinates so that they willingly contribute to achieve organisational goals or objectives. Further, for purpose of this study, leadership will be studied as leader's own perception as well as subordinates perception of leader's abilities. Five leadership styles namely, authoritarian, bureaucratic, task oriented, participative and nurturant styles has been identified and tested. Effectiveness of librarians is determined in relation to his subordinates and situational factors namely, organisational climate and background factors.

### **Objectives**

The main variables to be investigated in the present study are leadership styles of librarians which are thought to be influenced by organisational climate and background variables. The main objectives of this study are:

- (a) To identify the leadership styles of librarians working in academic institutions.
- (b) How does the organisational climate affect the leadership style or behaviour of librarians?
- (c) How does the background variables effect the leadership styles?
- (d) How does the leadership style vary with respect to organisational climate.

Background variables taken into consideration are age, sex, educational qualifications, tenure in present position, tenure in present organisation, and number of other organisations worked for.

### **The Hypotheses**

The underlying assumptions are that leadership styles of librarians will not differ significantly from leadership styles of persons working in other organisations of India. Further, it is expected here that choice of a particular style is affected by background variables. Keeping in view the above assumptions, main hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

- (a) Socio-cultural considerations being the same, leadership styles of librarians working in India

will not differ significantly from leadership styles of managers working in other organisation in India.

(b) The favourable the organisational climate is, the more people oriented leadership style the leader is having. Whereas, the less favourable the organisational climate is, the authoritarian style the leader is having.

(c) Socio-economic factors, namely age, sex, qualifications, promotions, tenure in present position and tenure in present organisation, designation and number of subordinates will determine and influence the choice of leadership style.

### **Methodology**

Four types of academic institutions have been identified for the purpose of study. These are Central Universities (CU), Indian Institutes of Management (IIM), Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), and State Universities (SU). Purposive sampling of these institutions was done so that they are able to represent whole country. Besides, three institutions representing North-Eastern region were included to ascertain the difference, if any, between leadership styles among librarians working in North Eastern region

and rest of the country. In total nineteen academic institutions were selected. The sample comprised of total population of librarians. Librarians include chief librarians, deputy librarians, assistant librarians, documentation officers and professional assistants in the scale of Rs.2200-4000/- and having independent charge of a section. Altogether there were 131 persons, out of 118 (90.07%) participated in the study.

The survey questionnaire consisted of total of 152 items which are divided into four sections. Leadership style scale developed by Sinha (1980) and further tested by Hassan (1986) and Ansari (1986) was used to measure self assessment of a leader as well as assessing the immediate superior. Altogether, there were (50) fifty items which were evenly distributed among five types of leadership styles. Section I was used for self assessment whereas Section II was used for assessing immediate superior. The scale items were averaged on five point Likert type rating scale. Section III consisted of thirty statements concerning perception and observations about organisational climate. This was prepared on modified version of Litwin and Stringer's (1968) Organisational Climate Questionnaire. The Organisational Climate (OC) Questionnaire was modified by Schnake (1983) and further tested by Ansari (1990) in organisation of diffe-

rent types and sizes in Northern India. Last section consisted of twelve items on background variables. Single item measure was used for background variables having scales ranging from 1-9. However, in the final analysis, one item namely marital status was dropped as it was found that more than 90% of participants were married. Statistical techniques employed were:

- (a) factor analysis with varimax rotations,
- (b) inter-correlation among inferred variables,
- (c) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and
- (d) Stepwise multiple regression analysis. Fifty items each of Section I (self assessment) and Section II (assessing the immediate superior) and 30 (thirty) items of Organisational Climate were subjected to factor analysis with Varimax rotation separately and inferred factors were named appropriately. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and stepwise multiple regression analysis were applied to identify the relationship among the variables of self assessment, assessing immediate superior, organisational climate and background variables.

## Findings

In leadership styles of self assessment, four meaningful factors were retained. These factors are task oriented, participative, nurturant and bureaucratic styles. Mean scores suggest that task oriented is highly endorsed followed closely by participative and nurturant styles. Bureaucratic style is least endorsed. Task oriented, participative and nurturant styles are having positive correlation among each other. Thus, suggesting that they can be grouped into one broad group.

Four meaningful and interpretable factors retained in assessing your immediate superior are Nurturant – participative, task oriented, bureaucratic and authoritarian. Mean scores suggest that Nurturant-participative are highly endorsed followed by task oriented, bureaucratic and authoritarian styles in that order. These results show consistency with already available results of various studies conducted in India (Hassan, 1986; Verma, 1986; Ansari, 1990). Therefore, it can be concluded that leadership styles of librarians do not differ significantly from leadership styles of other managers working in India.

Inter correlations between leadership styles of self assessment and assessed by subordinates indicate that librarians report themselves to be highly task oriented,

participative and having nurturant behaviour whereas subordinates report that boss is also authoritarian. Non-emergence of authoritarian style in self reporting is effect of social desirability. Social desirability is a tendency to give responses which are socially desirable and acceptable (Edwards, 1957). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to ascertain types of leadership styles practised in various institutions. Results show that Indian Institutes of Technology and Central Universities are high on task oriented, participative, nurturant and nurturant-participative and low on bureaucratic and authoritarian styles. State universities and universities of North East are high on bureaucratic and authoritarian styles and low on task oriented and participative styles. Results show consistency in self reporting and reporting by subordinates except in Indian Institutes of Management.

Results show that librarians highly endorse task oriented, participative and nurturant styles when self reporting but they are shown high on bureaucratic style followed by task and authoritarian style when endorsed by subordinates. Deputy librarians rank themselves high on bureaucratic style, whereas they are shown high on nurturant-participative style by subordinates.

Four factors retained in organisational climate after factor analysis are structure, reward and warmth, interpersonal relations and working conditions. Mean scores suggest that structure ranks highest followed by interpersonal relations, reward and warmth and working conditions respectively. ANOVA was computed in order to ascertain organisational climate of various institutions. Results show that Central Universities and Indian Institutes of Technology rank highest on three factors whereas State Universities and Universities North East rank lowest in all factors. Indian Institutes of Management falls in middle. Higher the rank, favourable the organisational climate is. Therefore, it is concluded that Central Universities and Indian Institutes of Technology are having favourable climate and State Universities and Universities of North East are having unfavourable climate. It is earlier reported that Central Universities and Indian Institutes of Technology are high on task oriented, participative, nurturant and nurturant-participative styles & low on bureaucratic and authoritarian styles. Therefore, it is concluded that the favourable the organisational climate is, the more people oriented leadership style the leader is having, whereas the less favourable the organisational climate is, the more authoritarian style the leader is having. High intercorrelations between leadership styles and organisational climate factors suggest strong

relationship between the two. Strongest organisational climate factor is structure which is related with all leadership style except authoritarian style. Therefore, it is concluded that structured organisational climate leads to leadership effectiveness i.e., organisations where goals, standards, policies are clearly defined and understood and where good performance is fairly recognised are favourable situations and leads to effectiveness.

Analysis of background variables show that majority of them (55.90%) are middle aged (>46) and majority of them (93.40%) joined profession below the age of 30. Half of them are having master's degree but very less 5% of them are having higher degrees. Higher degree holders are working in Central Universities or Indian Institutes of Technology. 50% respondent report more than 40 subordinates reporting directly to them – an indication of centralisation of power. Everybody gets promoted at least once. Promotions are related with number of organisations worked for. The higher the number of organisations worked for, the more promotions the persons has got. This indicates the mobility makes the person more experienced and thus move high in the ranks. Intercorrelations show that except academic qualifications and tenure in present organisations, all background variables are related with leadership styles.

Stepwise multiple regression analysis shows that task oriented style of self reporting is influenced by structure and interpersonnel relations and negatively by reward and warmth. Nurturant style is positively influenced by structure and number of subordinates and negatively by joining age and designation. Bureaucratic style shows no influence of background variables. In leadership styles of subordinate reporting, nurturant-participative style is positively influenced by reward and warmth and negatively by number of subordinates; tenure in present position and number of promotions. Task oriented style is positively influenced by reward and warmth and negatively by tenure in present position. Bureaucratic style is positively influenced by structure, age and sex.

In conclusion, all the hypotheses have been accepted.

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