

Role of Leader in Improving Institutional Climate

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Koontz and Wehrich (1988, p. 437) have defined Leadership “as influence, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards achievement of group goals. Ideally people should be encouraged to develop not only willingness to work with zeal and confidence. Zeal is order, earnestness and intensity in the execution of work; confidence reflects experience and technical ability. Leaders act to help a group attain objectives through the maximum application of its capabilities. They do not stand behind a group to push and prod ; they place themselves before the group as they facilitate progress and inspire the group to accomplish organizational goals. Hence Leadership is the quality to lead others to accomplish the set goals of organization and who occupies this quality, is a leader.

According to Plunkett (1996) Leadership is the ability to get work done with and through others while winning their respect, confidence loyalty and willing cooperation. This definition clears that leadership believes in togetherness and cooperation . Betman and Snell (1999) put-out that leading is stimulating people to be high performers. it is directing motivating and communicating with people helping guide and inspire them towards achieving team and organizational goals.

According to Koontz and wehrich (1988) Leadership have four major ingredients-

- a. the ability to use power effectively and in a responsible manner.
- b. the ability to comprehend that human beings have differing motivation forces at different times and in different situations.
- c. the ability to inspire followers to apply their full capabilities to a project.
- d. the ability to act in a manner that will develop a climate conducive to responding to and arousing motivations.

The fundamental principle of leadership is this: since people tend to follow those who in their view, offer them a means of satisfying their own personal goals, the more managers understand what motivates their subordinates and how these motivation operate and the more they reflect this understanding in carrying out their managerial actions the more effective they are likely to be as leaders.

Leadership Style

There are several theories on leadership behavior and style. Generally, there are three categories of leadership style on the basis of how leaders use their authority.

Autocratic Leader – In autocratic leadership, there are big status differences between group members and the leader, that's why communication tends to be one-way from the leader to group members. The leader's proposal is usually accepted without any question.

Democratic Leader– This category personifies the values and norms of the group. It provides a platform for open discussion and judgment is made in the light of suggestions given by the group members. The alternatives proposed by the leader must be fit in with the values system of the group. The democratic leader has the ability to perceive the direction in which the group has to move. The democratic or the participative leader consults with subordinates on proposed action and encourages participation from them. This type of leader was seen as ranging from the person who does not take action without subordinate concurrence to the one who makes decisions but consults with subordinates before doing so.

Free Rein– This type of leader uses his/her power very little and gives a high degree of independence to subordinates. Such a leader depends largely on subordinates to set their own goals and the means of achieving them. They tend to be passive and the influence on each other is casual. Individual initiative is not clear and progress is usually nil.

Leadership Qualities – The aim of leadership is to help the members of the group develop a sense of direction and commitment to that direction. A leader must be able to influence all members of the group. An organization leader ensures that all resources are moving in the direction to achieve the organization's objectives. A leader inspires the organization to develop cohesions and leads the organization to success against the hurdle.

A leader works as a catalyst for co-operation and communication and performs the role of change agent in relation to the members of the organization. Leadership establishes goals for the institution and develops strategies to achieve these goals. For the purpose, a leader has the ability to influence others through qualities such as personal influence, expertise, command of language, and creation of mutual respect. He must have a humanitarian outlook. He also requires strong communication skills of mentoring, decision making, delegation, and motivating others. A leader represents his best and becomes a role model for the other members of the organization.

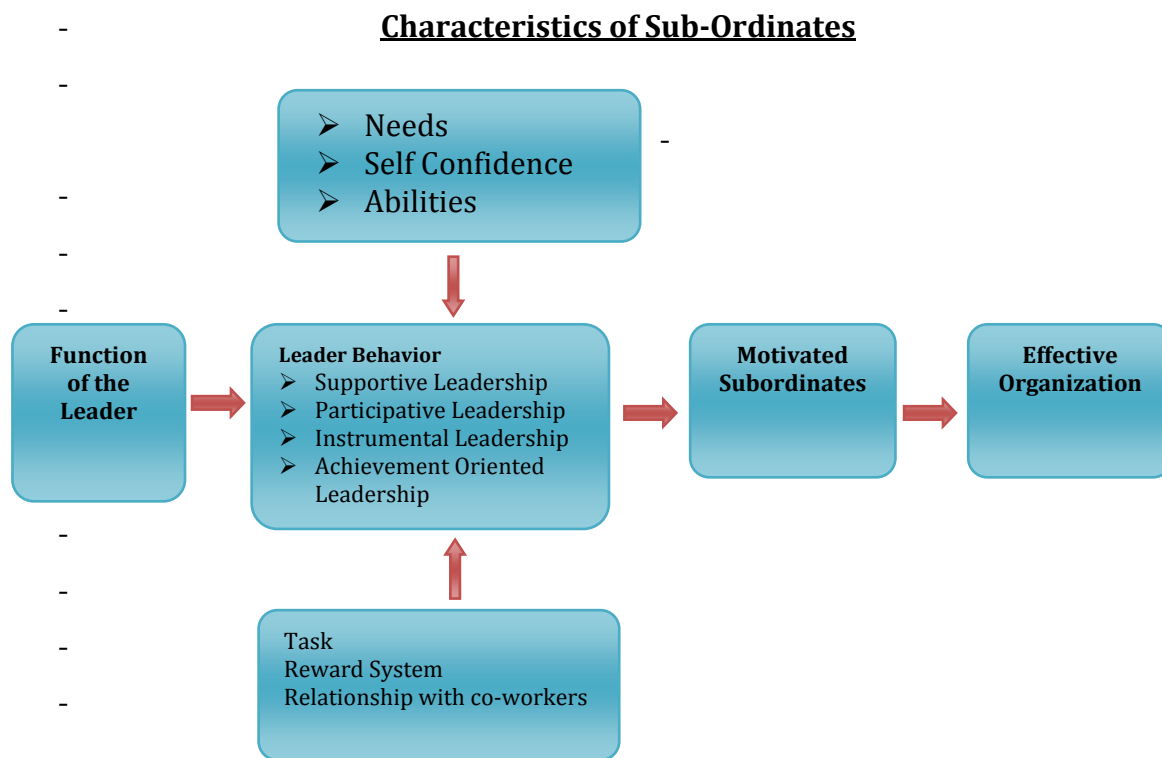
General characteristics of a Leader are as follows:

- A leader stays calm and balanced in any situation
- He is a good listener to others' views and respects them.

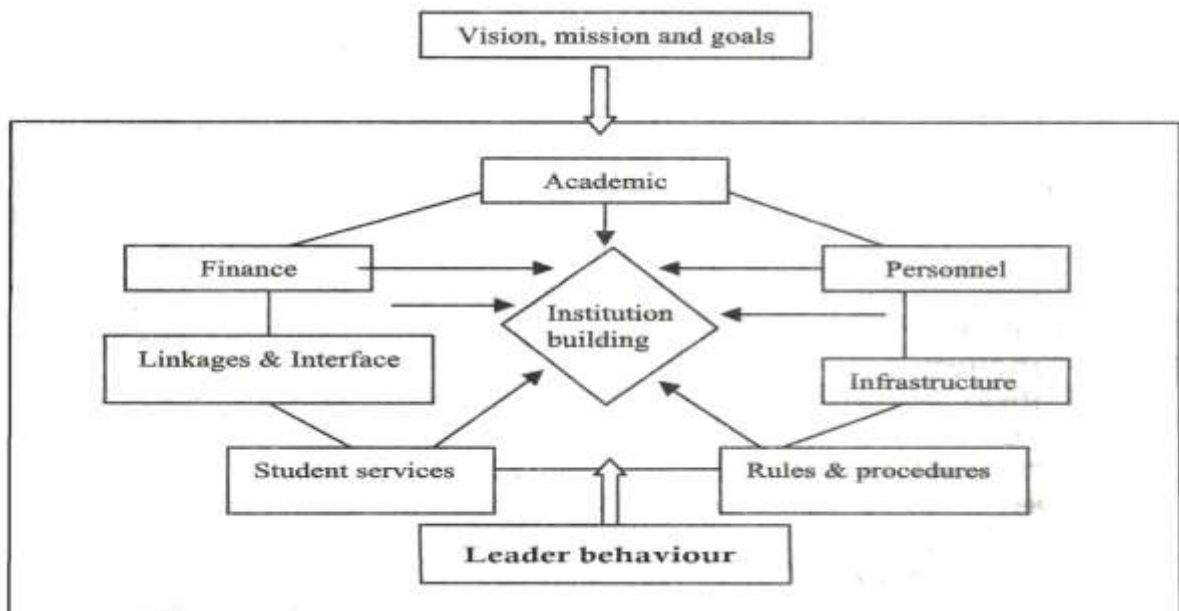
Various Leadership Theories for Improving Institutional Climate

1- Path-goal Theory of Leadership –

According to this theory the main function of the leader is to clarify and set goals with subordinates to help them to find the best path for achieving them and to remove obstacles. Rather than suggesting that there is one best way to lead, this theory suggests that the appropriate style depends on the situation. Ambiguous and uncertain situations can be frustrating for subordinates and a more task-oriented style may be called for. In other words when subordinates are confused, then the leader may tell them what to do and show them a clear path which leads towards goals.



The theory proposes that the behavior of the leader is acceptable and satisfies subordinates to the extent that they see it as a source for their satisfaction. Another proposition of the theory is that the behavior of the leader increases the effort of subordinates. It makes satisfaction of the needs of subordinates dependent on effective performance and also enhances subordinates environment through coaching, directing, supporting and rewarding. The key to this theory is that the leader influences the paths between behavior and goals.

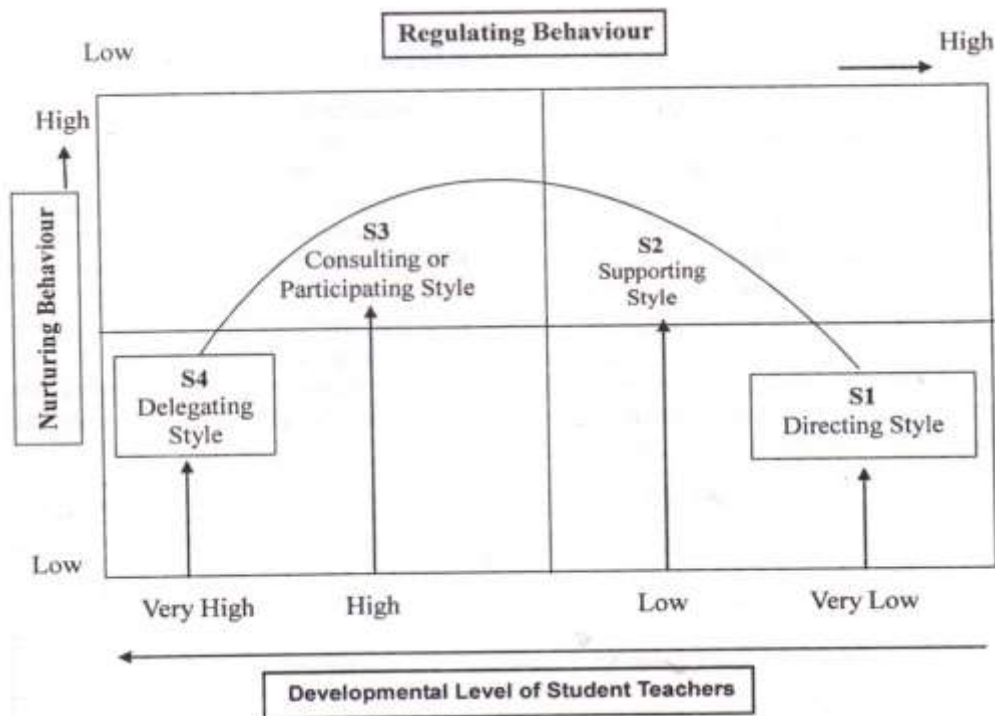


The above figure shows that how behavior of a leader influences the paths between behaviors and goals. The leader can do this by defining positions and task roles by removing obstacles to performance, by enlisting the assistance of group members in setting goals, by promoting group cohesiveness and team effort, by increasing opportunities for personal satisfaction in work performance by reducing stress and external controls by making expectation clear and by doing other things that meet subordinates expectations (Koontz & Wehrich, 1988).

2- Situational Leadership Theory-

has been developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard in 1974. Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) comprises two dimensions of leadership behaviours- leader engages in one-way communication, prefers structure, control and supervision while nurturing behavior means the extent to which the leader resorts to two-way communication, praises, listens and facilitates the achievement of goals by the followers.

In view of this theory, teacher educator and student teachers' relationship is considered to be that of a parent-child. The third dimension of this theory has been worked out on the basis of student teachers' developmental (maturity) levels which may be assessed on the basis of three Cs-Competence, Commitment and Cohesiveness- in respect of teaching-learning processes and their various contours. The 3Cs being high imply higher developmental level while 3Cs being low imply low developmental level. Thus, four developmental levels-very high, high, low, very low-may be conceptualized. These will, by and large determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of leadership styles. These leadership styles may be directive or authoritarian style (S1), supporting style (S2), consulting or participating styles. Following diagram illustrates these styles.



Relationship between Leadership Styles and Development Level of Student Teachers in SLT

(Adapted from Hersey and Blanchard 2005)

3- Transactional & Transformational Leadership Theory-

Transactional leadership styles are more concerned with maintaining the normal flow of operations. Transactional leadership can be described as “keeping the ship afloat.” Transactional leaders use disciplinary power and an array of incentives to motivate employees to perform at their best. The term “transactional” refers to the fact that this type of leader essentially motivates subordinates by exchanging rewards for performance. A transactional leader generally does not look ahead in strategically guiding an organization to a position of market leadership; instead, these managers are solely concerned with making sure everything flows smoothly today.

A transformational leader goes beyond managing day-to-day operations and crafts strategies for taking his company, department or work team to the next level of performance and success. Transformational leadership styles focus on team-building, motivation and collaboration with employees at different levels of an organization to accomplish change for the better. Transformational leader sets goals and incentives to push their subordinates to higher performance levels, while providing opportunities for personal and professional growth for each employee.

Table 1 summarizes the roles of transformational and transactional leaders.

Table 1
Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles Compared

Transactional Leader	Transformational Leader
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingent reward: contracts exchange of rewards for effort, promises rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishments. • Management by exception (active): Watches and searches for deviations from rules & standards, takes corrective actions. The leader acts when he anticipates that performance is likely to deviate from standards. • Management by exception (passive): Intervenes only if standards are not met. • Laissez faire: Abdicates responsibility, avoids making decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charisma-Provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust. • Inspiration- Communicates high expectation, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses important purposes in simple ways. • Intellectual stimulation: Promotes intelligent rationality and careful problem solving. • Individual consideration: Gives personal attention, treats each follower as an individual, coaches and advises.

(Adapted from Bass 1990)

Both leadership styles are needed for guiding an organization to success. Transactional leaders provide distinct advantages through their abilities to address small operational details quickly. Transactional leaders handle all the details that come together to build a strong reputation in the society. Transformational leadership styles are crucial to the strategic development of a small business. Small businesses with transformational leaders at the helm shoot for ambitious goals, and can they achieve rapid success through the vision and team-building skills of the leader.

Hence Hiekman (1990) argues that both leadership and management are needed by the organization to be effective. The leader embraces sweeping change and worries more about how much influence he can bring to shape direction and to set organization priorities. Thus the above discussion shows that leader plays key role in improving institutional climate. For this the leader has to be acquired and imbibed the above mentioned qualities of leadership. In this context there is a need to organize a proper training programme for leaders on regular basis to train them in various leadership styles.

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