Role of Interpersonal Communication in Effective Leadership: A Descriptive Study

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Abstract

The aim of this illustrative research is to scrutinize the function of inter-individual correspondence in efficacious leadership. The study employs a subjective methodology, utilizing interviews and observations of leaders in sundry organizational settings to amass data. The discoveries of this exploration underscore the significance of inter-individual correspondence capabilities in efficacious leadership. Leaders who possess robust communication competencies are more prone to establish faith, develop connections, and stimulate their team members to accomplish organizational objectives. Furthermore, the exploration also reveals that efficacious communication is a reciprocal process, and leaders must actively perceive and react to their followers' perspectives and feedback. In addition, the study pinpoints precise communication capabilities that leaders ought to possess, including active listening, empathy, perspicuity, and cultural discernment. In addition to this, social media is also a new paradigm shift in the interpersonal communication. Finally, the exploration accentuates the urgency for leaders to invest in communication edification and introspection to continually augment their communication competencies. All in all, this study appends to our discernment of the crucial function that inter-individual correspondence plays in efficacious leadership and endows us with insights into the competencies required for efficacious communication in leadership.

Keyword: Leadership, Communication Skill, Leadership Skill, Social-Media

Introduction

Leadership is a complex phenomenon that has been studied extensively across various domains of human activity. Effective leadership is an indispensable aspect of ensuring triumph for any organization, institution, or assembly. One of the pivotal constituents of effective leadership is interpersonal communication, which pertains to the mutual exchange of information, concepts, and emotions amongst individuals.

Martin & Dowson, (2009) revealed that interpersonal communication performs an indispensable function in establishing bonds, fostering trust, and promoting cooperation amongst members of a team. Interpersonal communication within the domain of leadership is an area of great significance due to its central involvement in the functioning of organizations. The capability to interact effectively is indispensable for leaders as it enables them to inspire, motivate and steer their subordinates towards a common objective. Furthermore, effective communication skills allow leaders to fathom their team members' needs, expectations, and concerns, which, in turn, can be addressed to promote a positive and productive workplace environment. Additionally, interpersonal communication plays a pivotal role in resolving conflicts that may arise in the organizational context. Conflicts are an inevitable part of any organization, and effective leaders must be able to manage them effectively.

Hogan & Kaiser (2005) found that leadership efficacy hinges on successful communication skills, which facilitate amicable discourse, attentive hearing, and harmonious resolution. Leaders who are adept at communicating can pre-emptively interdict conflict escalation and can cultivate a corporate environment imbued with collaboration and teamwork. Additionally, interpersonal communication is an indispensable instrument for leaders to fabricate a communal vision and invigorate their adherents to tirelessly pursue it. Leaders who can articulate their vision clearly and motivate their team members to work towards it can create a sense of purpose and meaning in their work. Effective communication also enables leaders to provide constructive feedback to their team members, which can help them grow and develop their skills. Interpersonal communication is a critical component of effective leadership. Effective communication skills enable leaders to build relationships, establish trust, and foster collaboration among team members. Interpersonal communication is also essential for conflict resolution, creating a shared vision, providing constructive feedback, and motivating team members towards achieving common goals. The factors that contribute to effective interpersonal communication in leadership include communication skills, emotional intelligence, cultural sensitivity, and context-specific knowledge. Further research is needed to explore the complex relationship between interpersonal communication and effective leadership in different organizational contexts. Given the importance of interpersonal communication in effective leadership, there is a growing interest in exploring the factors that contribute to effective communication in leadership contexts. Several studies

have identified a range of factors that influence the effectiveness of interpersonal communication in leadership, including communication skills, emotional intelligence, cultural sensitivity, and context-specific knowledge. In addition to this, social media is also connecting people and is a new paradigm towards the innovative communication tool (Kudeshia & Mittal, 2015).

Literature review

Leadership is a multifarious and intricate concept that has been extensively scrutinized across diverse domains of human endeavour. Effective leadership is an indispensable prerequisite for the triumph of any organization, institution, or group. One of the pivotal constituents of effective leadership is interpersonal communication, which encompasses the transference of information, ideas, and emotions among individuals.

 Zaccaro, (2007). found that interpersonal communication plays a vital role in building relationships, establishing trust, and promoting cooperation among team members. Effective communication stands as an indispensable factor in organizational operations. Its criticality lies in its capacity to drive, guide, and inspire subordinates towards achieving a common goal, thereby making it an essential attribute for leaders. To that end, effective communication skills enable leaders to understand and address the needs, expectations, and concerns of their team members, culminating in a productive and positive work environment. Interpersonal communication is also essential for conflict resolution, which is an inevitable part of any organization.

Carmeli, Brueller, & Dutton, (2009) revealed that leaders adept in the art of effective communication possess the power to avert conflicts from escalating and to instil a work culture centered around collaboration and teamwork. Furthermore, interpersonal communication serves as a vital instrument for leaders to convey a shared vision and motivate their subordinates to relentlessly pursue it. Leaders, who master the art of articulating their vision with clarity, inspire a sense of purpose and significance among their team members. Proficient communication also enables leaders to deliver constructive feedback to their subordinates, facilitating their growth and development.

Carmeli, Brueller, & Dutton, (2009).   mentioned that in order to be an effective communicator, leaders must possess skills such as emotional intelligence, cultural acumen, and situational awareness. Further research is needed to explore the complex relationship between interpersonal communication and effective leadership in different organizational contexts. Effective leadership involves more than just issuing directives and making decisions; it also requires establishing robust connections with team members through interpersonal communication. This has led to a burgeoning interest in investigating the factors that facilitate effective communication in leadership settings.

Riggio & Reichard, (2008) found that previous research has identified various factors that can influence the efficacy of interpersonal communication in leadership, such as adeptness in communication, emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and domain-specific knowledge. Interpersonal communication is an essential element of effective leadership, as it enables leaders to connect with their team members on a personal level, create a sense of trust, and foster collaboration. One critical aspect of interpersonal communication in leadership is the ability to listen actively. Active listening involves paying attention to what the other person is saying, asking questions to clarify understanding, and responding appropriately. Effective leaders understand that gaining a thorough comprehension of their team members' needs, concerns, and ideas is crucial before making informed decisions or motivating them. Hence, they prioritize actively listening to their team members and fostering open and candid communication. Furthermore, clear and eloquent communication constitutes another critical element of interpersonal communication within leadership.

Turner & Müller, (2005) revealed that proficient leaders articulate their expectations, goals, and deadlines with precision and brevity to guarantee their team members comprehend what is expected of them. Additionally, they utilize a range of communication channels such as meetings, emails, and one-on-one conversations to effectively convey their messages. Finally, competent leaders acknowledge the significance of nonverbal communication. Nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice can convey a lot of information about a person's thoughts and feelings. Therefore, leaders need to be aware of their nonverbal cues and ensure that they align with their verbal messages. Furthermore, effective leaders use interpersonal communication to inspire and motivate their team members.

Lussier & Achua, (2015). found that effective leaders effectively communicate their vision and mission to their team, emphasizing the significance of their labor and its far-reaching consequences. Additionally, they consistently provide their subordinates with feedback and recognition, lauding their accomplishments and encouraging continued diligence. Leaders who excel at interpersonal communication can establish robust connections with their employees. By attentively considering their team's apprehensions, extending support and encouragement, and creating a space where open dialogue is welcomed, leaders can cultivate a sentiment of faith and deference among their team. This, in turn, can enhance job contentment and boost performance, as workers are more likely to be involved and devoted to their labor when they feel valued and esteemed by their leaders. Effective communication can also help forge relationships between leaders and stakeholders.

Leggett & Neill, (2010) revealed that leaders who communicate efficiently with their stakeholders can establish faith, build rapport, and promote teamwork. This can be particularly crucial in industries where collaboration with external stakeholders, such as clients or vendors, is essential to success. By maintaining open lines of communication and actively seeking feedback from stakeholders, leaders can build stronger relationships and improve their organization's overall performance. In addition to building individual relationships, effective interpersonal communication can also help to build a sense of community and collaboration within an organization.

 Semerciöz, Hassan, & Aldemir, (2011). mentioned that when leaders prioritize open communication and create a culture of transparency and inclusivity, team members are more likely to feel like they are part of a larger community working towards a common goal. This can lead to increased collaboration, innovation, and problem-solving, as team members are more likely to share ideas and work together to find solutions. Another benefit of effective interpersonal communication in leadership is that it can help to create a positive organizational culture. When leaders prioritize clear communication, mutual respect, and open dialogue, they set a positive tone for the entire organization. This, in turn, can create a culture of trust, accountability, and inclusivity, which can attract and retain talented employees and help the organization to thrive in the long term.

Zaccaro, (2007) found that leaders who prioritize effective interpersonal communication can also benefit from increased self-awareness and personal growth. By actively seeking feedback, reflecting on their communication style, and continuously striving to improve their communication skills, leaders can become more effective and empathetic communicators. This can not only help them to build stronger relationships with their team members and stakeholders but can also help them to develop important leadership qualities such as emotional intelligence and self-awareness. When leaders communicate their vision clearly, team members can visualize the future and understand the goals they are working towards. This can motivate team members to work harder and put in extra effort to achieve the desired outcomes. Leaders who can communicate their vision with passion and conviction can inspire their team members to share the same enthusiasm and dedication towards achieving the common goal. Clear communication of expectations is also vital in motivating and inspiring team members. When leaders set clear expectations, team members understand what is expected of them, and this creates a sense of accountability and ownership. They know what they need to do to achieve their goals, and this can motivate them to work harder to meet those expectations.

Howell & Shamir, (2005) found that leaders who communicate expectations clearly also ensure that their team members have the necessary resources, support, and feedback needed to meet those expectations. Effective communication can also help leaders to provide feedback and support when needed. When leaders provide feedback constructively, team members are able to grasp their strengths and areas requiring improvement. This, in turn, allows them to concentrate on their strengths while working on their weaknesses. Conflict is an inevitable part of any organization, and it can harm both the team and the organization if not handled well. Leaders who possess impeccable communication skills can help to resolve conflicts by identifying the underlying causes of the issue, actively listening to all perspectives, and finding solutions that satisfy all parties involved. Identifying the root causes of conflicts is crucial, and effective communication plays a key role in it.

Bush, (2008). Leaders who communicate effectively can gather information from all parties and ask questions to understand the underlying causes of the conflict. By identifying the root causes of the issue, leaders can address the matter head-on instead of just addressing the symptoms. Providing encouragement and support, leaders can create a favorable work

environment where team members feel valued and appreciated, leading to increased motivation, better performance, and a sense of purpose and direction. In addition to motivating and inspiring team members, effective communication can also help leaders create a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. When leaders communicate transparently and candidly, team members feel that their opinions and ideas matter. This creates a sense of belonging and promotes a positive team culture, resulting in improved collaboration, innovation, and problem-solving.

Objective

1. To explore the various parameters of interpersonal communication
2. To find the influence of interpersonal communication in effective leadership

Methodology

In this study 242 respondents were surveyed to know the factors that determines the role of interpersonal communication in effective leadership. A structured questionnaire was used in this study for conducting the survey. Also, a convenient sampling method was used by the researcher for collecting the primary data. After the completion of the fieldwork, the data was analysed and evaluated by mean and t-test.

Findings

Table below is sharing respondent's general details in which it is found that in total 242 respondents males are 46.2% and females are 53.8%. 26.4% are in the age group of 18 – 24 years, another 26.4% are between 25 – 34 years of age, 24.4 % are in the age group of 35 – 44 years and remaining 22.8% are above 45 years of age group. 22.7% of the respondents are single, 60.4% are married with kids and remaining 16.9% are married without kids. Talking about their monthly income, 20.7% have monthly income between INR 25,000 – INR 50,000, 26.8% have monthly income between INR 50,001 – INR 100,000 and rest 52.5% have monthly income above INR 100,000.

Table 1 General Details

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Female	130	53.8

Male	112	46.2
Total	**242**	**100**
Age (years)		
18 – 24	64	26.4
25 – 34	64	26.4
35 – 44	59	24.4
Above 45	55	22.8
Total	**242**	**100**
Marital Status		
Single	55	22.7
Married with kids	146	60.4
Married without kids	41	16.9
Total	**242**	**100**
Monthly Income (INR)		
25,000 – 50,000	50	20.7
50,001 – 100,000	65	26.8
More than 100,000	127	52.5
Total	**242**	**100**

Table 2 Role of Interpersonal Communication in Effective Leadership

S. No.	Statements	Mean Value	t value	Sig.
1.	Advance effective communication	4.18	15.188	0.000
2.	Keep the feedback loop open	3.86	11.140	0.000
3.	Helps in expanding the opportunities	4.29	16.975	0.000
4.	Makes you relatable	3.74	9.541	0.000
5.	Demonstrates social awareness	3.25	3.276	0.001
6.	Increase client satisfaction	3.93	11.983	0.000
7.	Helps in building trust	4.07	13.917	0.000

8.	Helps in maintaining personal relationship	4.13	14.762	0.000
9.	Makes a person a better leader	4.43	18.457	0.000
10.	Helps in encouraging empathy	3.65	8.536	0.000

Table above is showing the factors that determines role of interpersonal communication in effective leadership. The respondent says that interpersonal communication makes a person a better leader with mean value 4.43, helps in expanding the opportunities with mean value 4.29 and advances effective communication with mean value 4.18. The respondent also believe that it helps in maintaining personal relationship with mean value 4.13, helps in building trust with mean value 4.07 and increases client satisfaction with mean value 3.93. The respondent also says that it keeps the feedback loop open with mean value 3.86, makes you relatable with mean value 3.74, helps in encouraging empathy with mean value 3.65 and demonstrates social awareness with mean value 3.25. Further t-test shows that all the statements are significant (with the value below 0.05).

Conclusion

Effective leadership is contingent upon the adeptness of an individual in interpersonal communication. Leaders who possess a proficiency in this area are more likely to inspire, motivate, and exert influence over their subordinates in the pursuit of objectives. The efficacy of communication plays a vital role in cultivating trust, enhancing cooperation, and fostering a sanguine work milieu. The ability to communicate with a diverse range of stakeholders, including team members, superiors, clients, and affiliates, is imperative. Furthermore, leaders must navigate through cultural and linguistic barriers, manage conflict and crises, and convey sensitive information with acumen and tactfulness. The findings of this study underscore the significance of honing and refining interpersonal communication skills in the context of leadership. As leaders continue to prioritize effective communication, they can foster more robust and meaningful relationships with their subordinates, cultivate a constructive work environment, and stimulate growth and achievement within the organization.

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