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A FOCUSED STUDY ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES INVOLVED

<p>Prof. Ajeet Sarkar, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India</p>
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ABSTRACT

Human resource development in today's context is considered as a much advanced concept in the field of HR. It is a process by which people can be helped to conduct their activities in an efficient manner. Leadership development as per most of the organizations is considered as a different subject as an area with which area of responsibility is linked. The main aim of this article is to evaluate that leadership development for any organization is important. With regard to this, a literature review was conducted in which relevant data from journals, reports and textbooks were collected. Informed discussions on themes related to leadership development activities were categorized. Benefits of leadership development include employee's promotion, individual development, nurture of new talents and customer's satisfaction. The leadership development is effective in processes such as training and development, career management, recruitment and selection, succession planning activities and strategic human resource planning. For long term survival organizations can utilize resources and can focus on leadership development.

Introduction

In a competitive changing world today, there is a need of development in all the areas (Jepson, 2009). Human resource development aims at preparing competent workforce for the future. Such workforce needs to have enhanced knowledge, abilities and skills (Brooks & Nafukho, 2006).

Development as per the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) is a process for enhancing Quality of the HR department (Wan, 2007). A person's growth ability is also determined by individual development (Talbot, 1997). Human capital development is based on different perspectives that are as follows:

- Human capital development based on abilities emphasising on resources available within the organization.
- Mental contract that focuses on relationship between employee and employer.
- Collective learning/organizational learning focusing on different aspects of the organization such as production, improvement and knowledge transfer (Wan, 2007).

It has been observed from studies that the tools for HR development such as training and coaching are essential for an organization (Rowold, 2008).

HR development helps individuals to gain knowledge and learn new skills, develop organizational performance keeping in mind the organizational values.

Reasons to implement leadership development

According to Burns (2003) most organizations do not consider leadership development as an important aspect as plans related to it often fails. The reason evaluated for this is that organizations need and manager's need don't complement each other. Moreover, there is less emphasis that has paid on factors such as experiential learning (Shanley, 2007). Empirical studies show that training individual skills and abilities leadership development can be created, but surveys have shown that interaction between manager and its organization is complex which leads to leadership development (Day, 2000). In the words of Olivares (2008) leadership development increases employee's skills and competencies. Similarly, Spendlove (2007) emphasizes on the fact that leadership development leads to developing social capital of organizations.

The reasons related to leadership development within an organization are as follows:

- Save time and cost
- Developing new talents and promoting employees (Addison & Cunningham, 2009).
- Strengthen customer satisfaction and emphasize on individual development.

In the views of Viitala (2005) leadership development if incorporated fairly in organizations can help in assessing individual necessities. According to Mighty & Ashton (2003) leadership development relates to educating people as well as affecting their career in a positive manner. According to Barlow (2006) an individual needs to upgrade himself/herself in terms of needs and responses which are illustrated in figure 1 below. The first stage shown in this figure is readiness for new role when a talent person is identified. The needs are then upgraded by the individual in change stage. This is referred as a transmission stage where the process of development exchange takes place. In the last stage, role development process is followed where the individual needs support from its organization. The transmission stage is the stage where most of the managers fail because they don't get required support.

Some of the surveys present leadership development processes which are as follows:

- *Identifying organizational challenges*: Organization's present and future challenges should be defined. Questions raised in this context are: What is your organization vision and what is being done to attain this vision? What are the performance goals of your organization?
- *Identifying and prioritizing leadership needs*: The following questions should be focused upon to develop leaders' characteristics: How leader's behaviour could be regarded as a problem in finding

out organization's needs? How can leadership development act as a process describing organizational goals? What changes are required to support development plan?

- *Adjusting leadership competencies with organizational goals:* Leadership competencies when attained should be in alliance with the leadership needs.
- Specifying people and determining their competency level which is further attained by leadership development activities (Hammett, 2008).
- *Realizing presented format to attain outcomes:* What learning activities are required to help develop leader's competencies?

Activities related to leadership development

As per Amagoh (2009) it has been shown by surveys that factors such as building a comprehensive set of leadership development activities is focused by successful organizations. This is because these organizations support large number of talents. Leadership development activities are as suggested by McDowall & Mabey (2008) coaching, development centres, and feedback 360.

Gerstberger & Snyder (2006) presented leadership development processes with respect to above methods:

- *Leadership valuation:* Leadership effectiveness and feedback 360 can be represented by using analysis tool.

- *Leadership training workshops:* Leadership principles presented by leadership training workshop in two days.

Major leadership development activities are as follows:

Coaching: Coaching focuses on specific issues correlated to real life (Jones et al., 2006). A series of sessions are conducted between a coach and a trainee (Palmer & Whybrow, 2004). Comparing coaching with training it can be said that coaching is a two-way relation whereas training is a one-way relation. In the process of training, managers can train employees but it is not necessary that manager's expectations are being fulfilled. When feedback is presented trainees need to perform their activities again until expected results are achieved. (Champathes, 2006). Thus, learning opportunities for trainees are provided (Toit, 2007). The success of coaching depends on relationship between organization and trainer (Stewart & Palmer, 2009). Coaching aims at facilitating individual development and performance (Downey, 2003).

Feedback 360: The essential element in HRM is performance appraisal (Dierendonck et al., 2007). It has been shown by studies that one-source appraisal is not sufficient to provide information related to performance appraisal. Multiple-source information related to the individual can be gained by Feedback 360 mechanism (Rensburg, 2006). Feedback from various sources such as managers, supervisors and customers can be received by individuals (Lawler, 1967). Such

feedbacks can be an important source for individuals' performance (Korotov, 2006). Thus, it can be said that job performance of individual can be measured by feedback 360.

As per a survey it has been observed that feedback 360 is advantageous for individuals, teams and organizations. Results of this survey are as follows:

Benefits to individuals:

- It provides individuals to understand what the organization or other people think for them.
- It provides learning feedback and enhances their performance

Organizational benefits:

- Provides better career opportunities.
- Enhancement of corporate culture
- Improves customer services and implement training plans.

Team benefits:

- Strengthens trust and relation between team members.
- Increases team effectiveness and supports team members in development process.

Feedback 360 can be thus said as an essential tool by which performance of managers and employees can be evaluated.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the above discussion that leadership development helps managers to gain knowledge, improve organizational performance and

consider organizational values. Surveys mentioned in the above study provides information that productivity of organization increases with effective development of the HR. Leadership development is effective in processes such as training and development, strategic human resource planning, succession planning and many more. It can be thus inferred that leadership development is effective for both organization as well as individuals.

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Figure1. leadership exchanges



Source: Barlow, Liz(2006), "Talent development: the new imperative?",
Development and Leadership in Organizations, Vol. 20 No. 3.