

The Role of Emotion in Leadership and Organizational Performance

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Abstract— The role of emotion in leadership is becoming increasingly important. Effectiveness relies on the ability of leaders to respond to ongoing pressures and to manage others efficiently. Leaders display variety of emotions including positive and negative emotions to affect the followers and to guide them in the right way to achieve the common goal. Leaders display emotion proposed to affect the followers' performance. However, study on the relationship between leader display emotion and the followers' performance is limited. This manuscript reviews and concludes with recommendations for future theoretical and empirical work in this area.

Key Words: *Leadership, Leader Display Emotion, Organizational Performance*

1 INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a key role in achieving organizational success. Leadership is a process of influencing and motivating people to achieve a common goal. Leader display emotion is an essential factor in developing leadership and ultimately influencing organizational performance that has received leadership scholars' attention since twenty-first century [2]. Emotional expression is a tool for influencing people and effective leadership that reflects leadership skills in various ways such as "socio-emotional orientation" "leader consideration" and "human relations skills" [12].

Leader display emotion proposed to affect leadership behaviours, such as leading support, developing trustful relationship, exhibiting moral integrity, providing safety, fostering collaboration, offering intellectual stimulation, encouraging organizational learning, and practicing consultative and shared decision making [8]. Regardless of the leadership lens that one may look through (e.g., transformational leadership, leader-member exchange, individualized leadership, charismatic leadership), emotion proposed as an indicator of the quality of relationship between leaders and the followers [6].

The study of display emotion in the field of leadership is an emerging domain which this review is focusing on. This review paper has two primary goals. The first goal is to state definitions and theories in regard to leader display emotion in the field of leadership. The second goal is to state the potential gaps in literature and state future directions based on review of past leadership scholars. This review contributes to the leadership literatures in the following two ways: The findings of this study indicate that, display emotion has consistently been defined in leadership literature with basic psychological theories, which has contrast with the state of the science within the domain of organizational behavior. The notice to this contrast could be the selective nature of this review as it included the articles published in the top-level management and psychological journals.

The second contribution is to the theory. This review indicates that the explanatory theory development in this domain is scarce. Along with this concern, in most of available studies display emotion has been viewed as emotional labour and part of the tasks for service employees. Thus, literature mostly skewed towards the

effects of positive and negative moods and emotion and at the individual level. Very few studies on display emotion within leadership domain are available that paid attention to the effect of leader display emotion on performance. In summary, there is an urgent need for leadership scholars to focus attention on explanatory theory, role of leader display emotion on group level and organizational outcomes in regard to leader display emotion.

2 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATION

There are multiple definitions of emotions abound, ranging from feeling and mood states [9] to physiological changes [3] to neuro-physiological components [2] to reactions to an event [7]. Cognitive Appraisal Theory (CAT) is a popular theory in emotion-related studies. From Cognitive Appraisal Theory, emotion defined as "an organized mental response to an event or entity". Appraisal theorists like [5] compared emotions with moods and suggested that emotions are shorter, target-centered and more intense than moods. Also, they suggested association between emotions and their different assessments such as event, person and the situation. Although, researchers have not agreed upon specified dimensions for appraisal, but discrete emotional states have been characterized as having different patterns such as valence, arousal, uncertainty, other-responsibility and individual control. In sum, based on Cognitive Appraisal Theory, emotions are transient, intense reactions to an event, person or entity [4].

Some leadership researchers defined emotions from Affect perspective. Affective Events Theory (AET), within which leadership serves as a context. From the AET, emotion defines as "mood" or "affect" that refers to longer lasting positive or negative emotional experience and is classified as state affect (mood) and trait or dispositional affect. Moods are longer in duration than emotions yet shorter in duration than trait affect. Moods activate in an individual's cognitive background, have no specific target, less intense than emotions and persist for a longer duration. Trait affect is a stable, dispositional tendency in evaluating events as a positive or negative.

[6] integrated the two theories of Leader-member Exchange relationship (LMX) and AET in studying multi-level affect. As the authors discussed, leader's mood and feelings at work has impact on

subordinate moods and feelings and has im pact on their creativity. Regardless of the theoretical underpinning and the studies contribute to and extend knowledge within the leadership literature, the organizational outcomes of leader display emotion are still scarce. review of past studies indicates that most of the available studies on display emotion are within psychological and marketing domain that focusing on the outcomes of emotional labour at individual level. Yet, the organizational outcomes of display emotion within leadership domain are very limited [10].

3 Literature Review

Literature suggests that strong emotions in the workplace, either positive or negative can influence performance. Thereby, its essential for leaders to learn how to influence group members' emotional reactions. However, research in this domain is scarce. Unlike many studies that conceptualised display emotion as duty of front-line service employees few studies included leadership perspective that included in our review.

[7] used the phrase: "leading with emotional labour" to refer to leaders and managers who use emotional displays and emotional labour to influence moods, emotions, motivations and performance of employees and subordinates. The reserachers suggested that display emotion is an essential part of a leader's job duties same as service employees and so conceptualised display emotion as emotional labour. The authors believed that emotional labour refers to "display emotions as part of the job duties".

[4] was among the few researches that included the organizational outcomes of leader display emotion. The findings show that leader display of positive emotions (e.g., happiness) encourages the subordinates in doing their tasks and can increase performance and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) among the employees. In contrast, leader expression of negative emotions (e.g., sadness and anger) can discourage subordinates to work harder for organizational goals. Although, how subordinates interpret the displayed emotions and differentiate between negative and positive emotions would be influenced by how they perceive the appropriateness of the emotion displayed [4].

Perceive leader express emotions as helpfulness, caring and supportiveness improves the interpersonal relationship between the leader and subordinates [10]. Strong exchange relationship between leader and subordinates carries out positive organizational outcomes, such as increasing OCB and job satisfaction [9] and reduce turnover intention [16]. Leader's ability in understanding self and others' emotional state help the leader in displaying appropriate emotion to influence the subordinate and effective leadership [6].

As [7] discussed, organizational display rules might require leaders to use different strategies in managing and expression their emotions in different scenarios. Although, leaders might use different strategies to manage and express their emotions as there are different leadership styles. Majority of studies in the fields of organizational behavior and leadership suggest two strategies in managing and displaying emotions as Surface Acting (SA), which refers to

modifying the expression of emotions and Deep Acting (DA), which describes manipulating internal thoughts and feelings to actually feel a desired emotion and expression of it as the real feeling [5].

[13] argued that surface acting and deep acting are two different strategies in regulating and expressing inner feelings. The author dissd that deep acting is more beneficial to the self and organization than surface acting. [16] found that the authenticity of leader positive affect displays (which is more consistent with deep acting than surface acting) was positively associated with employee trust in leadership. Further, [9] has found that perceive leader deep acting had a beneficial effect on employee perceived higher quality of exchange relationship with leader, but surface acting did not.

4 Future Direction

From the above discussion, it appears that there is an inconsistency in previous studies with regard to the outcomes of leader display emotion in organizations. Basically, it is difficult to identify the positive and negative outcomes of different emotions that a leader express on the followers. As a result, it is not easy to distinguish the performance consequences of the leadership in regard to display emotions in a firm. As previous researchers agreed, emotions influence interpersonal relationships, thoughts, moods and feelings [9]. However, its highlighted that display emotion is a leadership tool to influence people, but the organizational outcomes of such tool have yet to be investigated [16].

The gaps in leadership literature should be filled by comparison studies that link the organizational outcomes of various display emotion strategies by organizational leaders in public and private sectors, with respect to cultural diffeernces. Various display emotion strategies can have different impacts on the performance and its essential for organizational leaders to be aware of certain strategies which are likely to be more effective than others in ultimately improving employee satisfaction and increasing performance [13].

Most of research on the outcomes on leader display emotion are in experimental settings [4]. Although, experimental researches are thoroughly grounded in theory, but quantitative data to support the effects display emotion on interpersonal relationships is scares. Understanding the outcomes of various emotions at work helps leaders enhance group performance by improving the employees' mood and feelings. Future research should consider the impact of gender, religion and other demographic dimentions on the organizational outcomes of diplsay emotion. Future studies should pay attention to the outcomes of leader display emotion in group and individual level in regard to gender differences [10].

5 Conclusion

Importance of leadership in organizational performance has always attracted business practitioners' and scholars' attentions to find effective strategies for improvement. The influence that leaders make on the followers involves expression of various emotions. In fact, emotions are involved in every interaction we make. As

leaders influence people through the interactions and communication, emotional expressions in important part of the leading process. Although, the subordinates may understand and interpret the emotional expressions in different ways that influence their moods, feelings and performance. Thus, to influence employees and improve performance, leaders must be aware of the outcomes of various emotions expressed on their subordinates' and their performance.

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