

The Analysis on Leadership Skills in UK Automobile Manufacturing Enterprises

Yanting Cao, Kazumitsu Nawata

Abstract—The UK has strong economic growth, which attracts other countries to invest there through globalization. This research process will be based on quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis using interviews. The secondary analysis will involve a case study approach to understand the important aspects of leadership skills. The research outcomes will be identifying the strength and weakness of the leadership skills of UK automobile manufacturing enterprises and suggest the best practices adopted by the respective countries for better results.

Keywords—Engineering management, leadership, industrial project management, project managers, automobile manufacturing.

I. INTRODUCTION

DUE to the New Millennium, it is inevitable to embrace globalization in a business perspective because of the dynamic nature of economic and social factors. There has been a steep increase in business opportunities inviting more competition and implemented across the globe. Globalization has created an impact on the lifestyle structure, pricing, and income patterns of people, and it has also affected the normalcy of the environment. Nowadays, relocating jobs to other countries has become a common scenario for many enterprises. However, shockingly the entrepreneurs realized that commonly in host countries, the professionalism of managers cannot reach the level to be as good as they required in their home country.

Leadership characteristics can be effective to overcome the cultural differences and can be effective in handling challenges arising out of business expansion and sustainability strategies of the organization. The competencies required for leaders can be questioned at a greater extent in order to tackle the challenges arising out of globalization. Multinational Corporations (MNCs) are having shortage of leaders who have abilities to compete with other countries for the talent management [1].

Due to the impact of globalization, intensive competition and the economic crisis have changed the dynamics of supply chains towards operations and also cause various threats to the overall effectiveness of the organization. Organizations in the UK have faced a major crisis across the globe and have reworked on the skill sets needed by leaders to devise successful strategies [3]. The gaps identified due to financial crises of Western countries alerts on the weakness of handling the regulatory procedures, addressing the complex issues and also resolving the threats of bankruptcy. There are challenges that need to be addressed from a cultural point of view like managing local business partners, expense management and control. In this paper, it will identify the leadership attributes

based on core values and cultural implications and analyze the resulting outcomes, especially analyze and review the leadership skills based on conceptual framework to identify the challenges and suggest corrective measures.



Fig. 1 Leadership Cumulative skills [2]

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focuses on multiple leadership competencies, traits, styles and behavioral attributes, but there is no specific leadership or focused paradigm in reality [4]. The relationship between performance and leadership can be aligned with value creation of employees and company as a whole.

Leadership can be regarded to play a pivotal role in cultivating a positive impact on the culture of an organization

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and also helps in the improvement of the overall functioning of the organization. “The most effective leaders foster, support, and sustain organizational cultures that facilitate the type of management reform envisioned by reinventing government and the attendant increases in effectiveness and efficiency” [5]. It can be summarized that there is strong relationship between leadership and critical parameters of organizational excellence like performance, culture and effectiveness. The leadership attributes are dependent on the organizational effectiveness promoted by the culture and performance of the organization. In a nutshell, leadership styles can boost or affect the performance of the organization and is greatly influenced by culture aspects.

The four frameworks of leadership are Structural leadership, Human resource leadership, Political leadership and Symbolic leadership. The leadership styles are correlative with the responses of the leadership frames for better analysis and the key attributes of leadership styles are grouped under the frameworks.

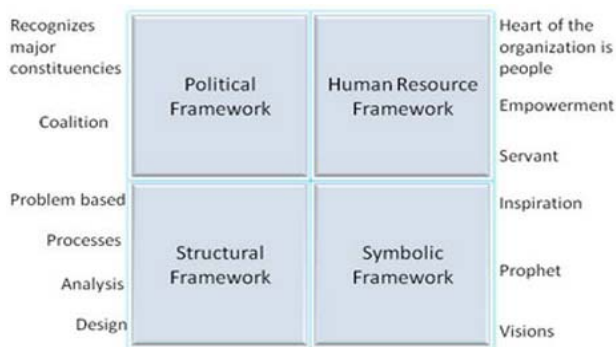


Fig. 2 Frameworks of leadership styles [6]

The outcomes of the Hay group study are that most of the CEO’s were focusing on talent acquisition for framing strategies and develop competencies like deployment, employee engagement, investment planning, coaching and develop organizational effectiveness [7]. Recruitment of skilled people is another requirement of leaders especially UK leaders and they were proactive in handled associated functions of management. Innovation and management in the human relationship field can plan strategies using analytical and programming skills. Western leadership views their workers as a resource having components of production in an impersonal mode [7]. Discussion of objectives is important and needs to be prioritized according to Western leadership principle and the strategy is followed by tactics and command of the personnel [8].

The leadership of the UK can be well explained through various studies, which identify and narrates about the specific personality development traits required for successful UK leaders [9]. UK leaders must possess skills to display the innate traits of quality that distinguishes them from other leaders of the world [10]. UK leadership skills are ideal and focused on early leadership concepts based on trait theories and proportions of leadership application. Major challenges faced by UK

leadership are the weakness of application of any style and problems arising out of crisis can cause an impact on style based on situation. Resolution for problems is important and also helps in identifying the effectiveness of the UK leaders in an individual perspective [11]. UK leadership skills are flexible based on situation and contingency with a best leader tag towards leadership sensitivity.

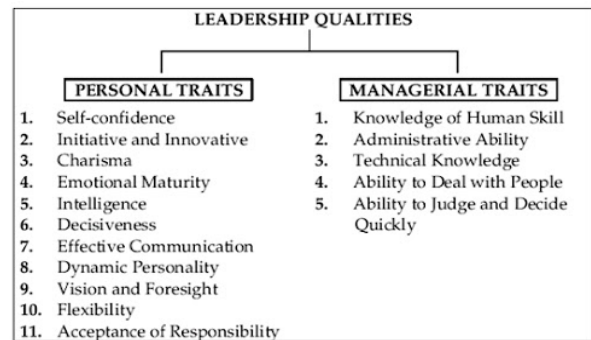


Fig. 3 The Qualities of a leader [7]

The effectiveness of leadership skills contributes to the success of the organization by increasing the business prospects. UK leaders are very versatile in overcoming the challenges like turbulence and volatility in an external environment perspective through training and leadership development through effective skills [12]. UK leaders have a direct link between the organizational performance and leadership skills and also needs a critical review on performance based on the leadership attributes [13]. There are also other links that supported the concept of transformational leadership, which is predominantly followed by UK leaders and is most regarded as the charismatic leadership [14]. From a theoretical perspective, transformational leadership is always linked to the performance of the organization [15]. In order to achieve a higher degree of performance, transformational leadership skills are required for leading the vision of the organization and inspiration is required to motivate workers [16]. The leadership skills and role in success of an organization with respect to the UK is anecdotal and predominantly transformational [17]. The relationship between leadership and performance is very important for UK leaders and the variation of decisions will be based on flexibility in decision-making and capability to handle a crisis [18].

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach

In the research approach, the relevant method will be the inductive approach as the research process is based on human values and seeking information to research questions from participants instead of getting information through hypothesis and complex procedures. Another advantage in qualitative research is that there will be a lot of scope for more value-based opinions and suggestions without any numerical analysis. Qualitative methodology is done through semi-structured interviews, case study or questionnaire for better clarity on the

research purpose and outcomes. Qualitative research will also incorporate the empirical data and present the conclusion by correlating the same with the research objectives. The primary approach will have done through surveys and the secondary approach will be done through semi-structured interviews and case study analysis

B. Target Population for Interviews and Survey

The interview questions will be covered for an automobile manufacturing company. The target populations for interview will be the leaders; supervisors who work in Joseph Cyril Bamford Excavators Ltd. (JCB), UK.

Another aspect of this research will be to conduct personal interviews with the CEOs of the firm related to the research questions and review their expert opinions. The subjective nature of interviews will enhance the quality of the research process and also help in understanding of implementation of global skills for leadership in terms of opinions, thought process related to strategy and the personality of the leader [19]. It is important to use certain projection techniques to record the responses and observation of the interviewee. The perceptions of the CEOs can be recognized and understood through their facial expressions and their body languages, while direct interview would still be better for understanding.

The sampling design will be Random sampling as it is done through research based on surveys and experiments like semi-structured interviews with a random set of participants without any pre-screening.

The respondents were leaders and middle management of JCB. They will be asked to share the opinion and feedback related to behaviors of transformational leadership, commitment of the organization and excellence in performance related to work. The participants were asked to highlight any issues related to the survey or interview questions and also comply with the timelines to complete the survey. Based on the participants' feedback, the questionnaire or survey or interview questions are redesigned. The sample size will be 20 for this automobile manufacturing company. There will be a secondary research plan of conducting interviews with 3-4 people in a detailed manner. The sampling plan will be Random Sampling and the population sample will be a stratified sample for better results.

C. Data Collection Techniques

Semi-structured interview is a process of communication in verbal mode where the interviewer makes an attempt to get the information from the interviewee by asking a set of questions. There is a lot of benefit of collecting data using the semi-structured interview like suggestions and can the overcome the threat of incorrect or poor response of semi-structured interviews and can help in comparative analysis of two similar characteristic traits [20]. Semi-structured interviews are ideal for getting answers with better clarity and stay focused on the topic.

The survey has set of pre explored questions and the also it is important to identify the scope of research. The survey and semi-structured interviews must follow a structured approach

in a formal mode having pros and cons without affecting the quality of the data.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Analysis of Surveys on JCB

In this analysis, the primary data will be interpreted through the semi-structured interview method and also review personal interview approach with the managers with effective leadership skills and styles of an UK automobile manufacturing enterprise, then final research outcomes will be summarized.

Before analyzing the interview data, it is important to understand the research approach in a leadership style perspective. All the responses will be grouped as leadership frame (Fig. 2) to facilitate analysis in a better way. There are four categories of leadership frames namely Structural, Political, Symbolic and Human resource and we can categorize the responses based on the keywords as listed above. The leadership styles are correlative with the responses of the leadership frames for better analysis.

The interview questions are understood and grouped under the leadership frames to understand the research outcomes. These characteristics are part of interview on leadership skills and this grouping will be a pre analysis step for achieving the desired research outcomes.

In the case of JCB participants, it is evident that the most important challenge is the impact of technology and social media followed by globalization and recruitment and short- or long-term strategy. There is not much challenge involved in adaptability and change management in the participant's perspective. Moreover, less challenges in implementing strategy for short term or long term and in terms managing and adapting towards a specific situation, process or practice.

B. Analysis of Interviews of JCB Leaders

Based on interview responses with Managers, the final summary statements are correlated with the research questions. The manager of JCB is Mr. Mike Ross. The interview duration was 30-45 minutes.

- ***Q1; What are the critical competency skills required for the leaders to handle globalization?***
- Mr. Mike Ross stated that leadership is a personal strait and it reflects on the qualities of the person, the place they live and the task they are entitled to do. If there is more clarity on individual skills, then the leader can influence other people by framing objectives and setting goals. Leaders must be knowledgeable and receptive to any change that can benefit the organization as whole. Expansion and organizational effectiveness are integral part of globalization. The major critical competency is to identify the vision or idea towards strategy in a futuristic perspective. Self-awareness, talent acquisition, talent development and very good people management skills are critical competencies required for globalization in a western leadership perspective. Trust building is another critical competency required for effective leadership practice and helps in increasing the confidence level of the

employees of the global organization. In a globalization perspective, leaders must have core competency of thought process towards vision, blended with motivation and awareness on various cultures and work practices of different countries. Leaders of automobile manufacturing enterprises believe in people management as the core competency in managing diverse cultural backgrounds and are open to appreciate and motivation of the talents across the globe. Mr. Mike Ross concluded that leaders focus on employee engagement, motivation, and talent acquisition, knowledge on cultures of different countries as core competencies in a globalization perspective.

- **Q2. Explain the various leadership skills developed by JCB leaders to increase their competency levels.**
- According to Mr. Mike Ross, JCB leaders have developed a lot of skills in order to handle the challenges of globalization in an effective way. UK leaders have enhanced their knowledge on various cultures in order to manage the specific people in a better way without compromising on quality and respecting their values. Leaders of automobile manufacturing enterprises have developed listening skills, inclination in trusting people and develop strategies with objectives and plan. In case of failure, analysis of root cause and correction actions are implemented as an outcome of leadership skills developed in order to increase competency levels. Major transformation of leadership skills for JCB leaders is achieved by developing their skills towards reflection and reality in handling challenges across the globe.
- **Q3; What are the challenges of identifying, developing and retaining high potential talents in UK automobile manufacturing enterprises?**
- According to Mr. Mike Ross, it is important to recruit correct talent in order to enhance the value of the company. It is important to choose best candidates with high capability and sincerity to work in the organization. The leaders should do the training need analysis and plan training programs for the development of new recruits. The effectiveness of the training program must be evaluated periodically for better improvement and results. Another challenge across the globe is to retain the employees in order to consistently develop the skill pool. Leaders of automobile manufacturing enterprises have devised a program called backpacker for managers in order to help them to overcome challenges. The backpacker program will help in managing customers; review the performance of specific people with high potential and plan for their performance development on a yearly basis [21]. This practice will help in creating knowledge on leadership and management with a skilled network of employees.

V. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the analyzed data will be correlated with the research objectives. The part is important as it summarizes the research outcomes and also helps in suggesting few recommendations as a scope of research.

A. UK Negotiation Approach

There are two main approaches followed by UK leaders namely Soft line and Hard Line approach used for negotiations of business proposals. Hard line approach is followed by UK leaders when they have to initiate a deal and propose concessions till the final point of compromise is done [22]. It is important that the UK leaders need to take up the initial position tackling the egos leading to reconciliation of actions in a futuristic perspective establishing pre-determined targets for the organization.

The UK leaders follow the soft line approach [23] with the main objective of maintaining relationships with a more realistic and rich approach. Mutual interests of partners will be shared and focus will be based on teamwork with sharing profits on a mutual basis with a standard agreement. The major features of the Soft line approach will be people and they need to be separated from problem, focusing on the interests rather than positions, provide options before decision making and finally choose the criteria and objective for achieving the desired outcomes [23]. The UK leaders need to focus on business objectives mutually and facilitates exchanges of lower or higher values in a relative fair manner.

Based on the Hard line and Soft line approach, Maddux [24] developed negotiation process in six steps. The negotiation process will be understanding and identifying each other, frame the objectives and plan for goal setting, process start-up, expressing issues, non-compliance and disagreements, compromise strategy and reassessment and finally settlement and agreement on core values [24].

B. Summary and Recommendations

The research objectives are with effective research outcomes and the interpretation reveals that UK leadership skills are fresh and unexpected but the scope of developing the skills of leadership is valid for an automobile manufacturing firm. Initially there were challenges faced as JCB Company did not give permission to conduct the interviews. The entire research has helped in the conceptual understanding of UK leadership skills using different theories and also helps in sharing of best practices of diversified work cultures, which can mutually benefit the leaders of automobile manufacturing enterprises. The negotiating behaviors of leaders and the basic concepts are discussed for better understanding in the literature review.

There should be more research conducted for the management of leadership skills for leaders of manufacturing enterprise. Future research must be focused on comparison of leadership strategies valuing the best practices of different industry. The usage of qualitative methods can explore the competency levels in a cross-cultural perspective and also develop an effective strategy for developing globally accepted leadership practices by exploring possible avenues to interact effectively and overcome the difference or variations. There will be more important studies on future parameters based on the personality of the leaders, the mind-set, and focus of objectives etc. based on the value system, culture, business ethic and negotiations.

Characteristics and qualities of effective leadership skills are

definitely a future focus area. Some of the key research parameters will be opportunities for the leader, practice of motivation, various complex scenarios affecting the business, and retention of specific talents in a global manner. Another future direction is to develop a global network with a focus on change management and social skills development for multinational manufacturing corporations.

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