A STUDY ON LEADERSHIP PREFERENCES AMONG POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS OF ASSAM DON BOSCO UNIVERSITY

[1]Oshyajem Longkumer, [2]Dr. Tania Sur Roy
[1]Research Scholar, [2]Head &Assistant Professor (Senior),
Department of Education,
Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati, Assam, India

Abstract : Based on the classic experiments of Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939), the authoritarian-democratic classification is perhaps still "the most prominent and socially significant typology of leadership" (Krech et al., 1962). Thus, using the Leadership Preference Scale, a descriptive study was conducted among postgraduate students of Assam Don Bosco University. This scale was developed by L.I Bhushan and it was given to a random sample of 100 postgraduate students from Assam Don Bosco University. The present study is an attempt to find out if the factors like gender, geographical area (Rural or Urban) and Family type, significantly influence the leadership style preference. It was discovered that a significant number of students preferred both democratic and authoritarian style of leadership. There was no significant difference of the leadership style preference between gender, family type and geographical areas.

IndexTerms - Democratic and Authoritarian leadership style, higher education, leadership

I. INTRODUCTION

In educational settings, leadership is crucial and its importance is rising every day. Similarly, in organisational studies, research on leadership is crucial. Research on leadership has taken a multifaceted approach, with assessments based on various viewpoints (Bennis, 1995; Bolman & Deal, 1984; Covey, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Sergiovanni, 1984). According to Hoy and Miskel (2001), leadership is the capacity to encourage and facilitate a team's achievement of a goal. A leader's pattern of behaviour when interacting with their team is referred to as their leadership style. Leadership is understood to be the process of influencing a group's behaviour in order to accomplish a specific organisational goal. According to Bass (1990), leadership is defined as the structured or restructured interaction of individuals and groups within an organisation. According to Hersey, P., and Blanchard K. H. (2001), the process of leadership is used to energize the followers, and it is an individual's behaviour that has such influences that aid in the accomplishment of organisational goals. Three types of leadership, including autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles, were identified by Lewin, Lippit, and White (1939) and Liberman et al. (1994).

Autocratic Leadership: The absolute power and independence of the autocratic ruler are granted. In an autocratic leadership style, also referred to as an authoritarian style, the leader makes decisions without consulting the followers. They control the majority of the population and impose their will; no one is allowed to oppose them. On the other hand, this management strategy seems to be effective for personnel who need close supervision to complete particular tasks. This leadership style is disliked by creative team members and staff because it prevents them from improving processes or decision-making, which results in dissatisfaction at work. (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939).

Democratic Leadership: Although the democratic leader considers the staff's suggestions and listens to them, it is ultimately up to them to decide. Team members who contribute to the final decision increase people's sense of ownership and satisfaction because they know their ideas were taken into account. Since they were involved in the decision-making process and were consulted, this leadership style aids the team in assimilating changes better and faster than other leadership styles. Democratic leadership is a style of governance where choices are made jointly.

Several researchers have developed the dimension of democratic versus autocratic leadership (or participative versus directive leadership) as a result of early experimental studies of leadership style (e.g., Lewin & Lippitt, 1938). (e.g., Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Despite the fact that democratic versus autocratic leadership styles are a different aspect of leader behaviour than task-oriented and interpersonally focused styles, the democracy versus autocratic dimension is also related to gender stereotypes. This is due to the fact that one instrumental aspect of these stereotypes is that men are disproportionately dominant, more autocratic, and directive than women. In order to determine whether gender influences leadership styles, demographic characteristics like gender have also been studied (Dappa et al., 2019). Mixed results have been found in the research on how leadership styles differ between men and women. While some studies (Dappa et al., 2019) come to the conclusion that male and female leaders exhibit

similar leadership styles, others claim there is a difference. (Chelladurai, 1984) investigate the relationship between preferred and perceived leadership and athlete satisfaction. The research comparing the leadership styles of men and women is reviewed, and evidence for both the presence and absence of gender differences is found (Eagly et. al., 1992). (Yadav et al., 2020) enable nursing incharges to understand their subordinates' preferences for various leadership styles. Deji & Makinde (2006) discovered that women leaders had a higher level of external orientation and leadership skill than men after analysing various demographic variables such as age, education level, and gender. (Eagly & Johannesen 2001; Eagly, et al., 1992) discovered that women were more democratic or participative than men, and less autocratic or directive. Additionally, numerous studies have backed the idea that genes have a greater impact on leadership role occupancy than environment (Avolio & Gibbons, 1988). On the other hand, some claim that the environment could act as a moderator to play a role in determining the leadership style of an individual. (Zhang, & Arvey, 2007). The purpose of this study is to determine the leadership preferences of postgraduate students in relation to their gender, family type and area.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present study are:
1. To study the leadership preferences of post-graduate students of Assam Don Bosco University.
2. To compare the leadership preference of male and female students of Assam Don Bosco University.
3. To compare the leadership preference of Assam Don Bosco University students from nuclear and joint families
4. To compare the leadership preferences of Assam Don Bosco University students from rural and urban areas.

III. HYPOTHESIS

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between leadership preference of male and female students of Assam Don Bosco University.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between leadership preference of students from nuclear and joint families of Assam Don Bosco University.

H_{03} : There is no significant difference between leadership preference of rural and urban students of Assam Don Bosco University.

IV. METHODS

The current study employed a descriptive and cross-sectional approach. The current study's sample was drawn randomly from Assam Don Bosco University. The Leadership Preferences (L.I. Bhushan, 1995) Scale was used for this study. The current study's population consists of postgraduate students of Assam Don Bosco University. It aims to assess one's preference for authoritarian or democratic styles. It consists of 30 items that must be answered in the following order: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree. The scoring is straightforward, with positive items receiving 5,4,3,2,1 for fully agree to fully disagree. The scoring for negative items is reversed. A higher score indicates a preference for democratic style of leadership. For this study, the statistical techniques used were Mean, SD, T-Test and percentile using SPSS.

i.Description of the test

This LP-scale was developed by L.I Bhushan in 1995. The leadership preference scale is developed to measure the two types of leadership- Democratic and autocratic. There are a total of 30 questions in this scale which are given with 5 alternative options as an answer.

ii.Reliability of the test

In order to ascertain the reliability of the scale, both the internal consistency and temporary stability were determined. Using the responses of 100 students the coefficient of internal consistency as corrected by Spearsman-Brown formula was found to be 0.74. The retest was again done after four weeks on 50 subjects and test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be 0.79 which was significant at 0.01 level of significance.

iii.Validity of the test

To ascertain whether the LPS was a valid measuring tool, the content and construct validities were determined. The behavioural dimensions and characteristics on which the test items were constructed were quite explicitly mentioned. For determining the construct validity of the scale, it was hypothesized on the basis of a review of literature made that the LP-Scores would be negatively correlated with the scores obtained on the F-scale of intolerance ambiguity, extraversion and neuroticism scale and positively correlated with the scores obtained on the A-S Reaction study. The result obtained (Bhushan, 1970) show that the scale possesses construct validity.

Norms for Interpretation of z-score norms (Leadership Preferences Scale)

Sr.No	Range of Raw Scores	Range of z-scores	Grade	Level of Leadership Type
1	129 and above	+2.01 and above	A	Extremely Democratic
2	118- 128	+1.26 to +2.00	B	High Democratic
3	106-117	+0.51 to +1.25	C	Above Average Democratic
4	90- 105	-0.50 to +0.50	D	Moderate
5	77-89	-0.51 to -1.25	E	Above Average Autocratic
6	66-76	-1.26 to -2.00	F	High Autocratic
7	65 and below	-2.01 and below	G	Extremely Autocratic

iv. Sample Size

Using a simple random sampling technique, a sample of 100 postgraduate students was chosen for the current study, out of which 47 are male and 53 are female.

V. DELIMITATIONS

The study has been delimited to post-graduate students of Assam Don Bosco University and variables that includes gender, family type and geographical area.

VI. INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Objective 1- To study the leadership preferences of post-graduate students of Assam Don Bosco University.

For achieving Objective-1, the researcher adopted Leadership Preference Scale by L.I. Bhushan. The researcher used tables and figures.

Table 1: Shows the frequency distribution and percentage of Leadership Preferences among the Post-graduate Students of Assam Don Bosco University.

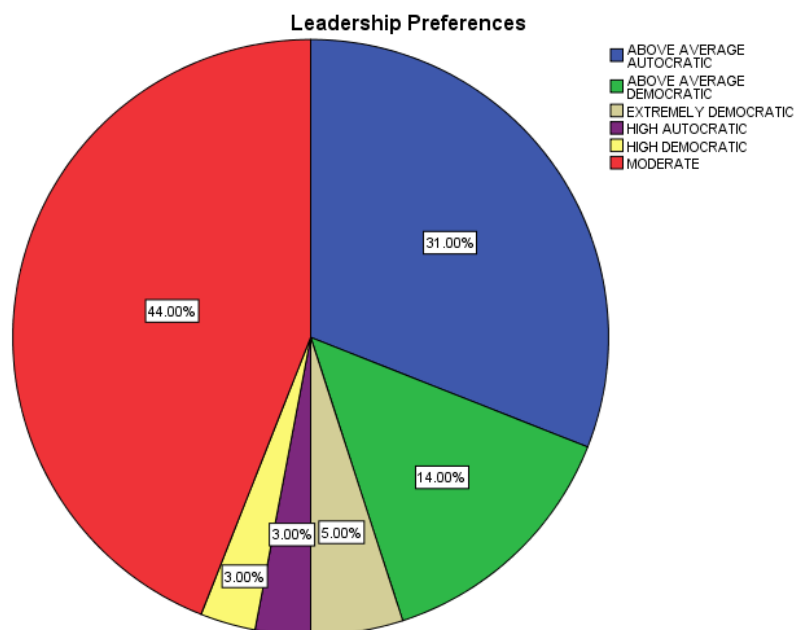| Leadership Preferences	No of students	Percentage
ABOVE AVERAGE AUTOCRATIC	31	31.0%
ABOVE AVERAGE DEMOCRATIC	14	14.0%
EXTREMELY DEMOCRATIC	5	5.0%
HIGH AUTOCRATIC	3	3.0%
HIGH DEMOCRATIC	3	3.0%
MODERATE	44	44.0%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

Fig. 1: shows the percentage of leadership preferences of the post graduate students.

Interpretation

The percentage and level of postgraduate students' preferences for leadership are shown in the aforementioned Table No. 1 and Fig.1. Out of the 100 participants, it was determined that 31 (31.0%) of the graduate students fall into the above-average autocratic category, 14 (14.0%) of the students fall into the above-average democratic category, 5 (5.0%) fall into the extremely democratic category, three (3.0%) fall into the high autocratic category, three (3.0%) fall into the high democratic category, and 44 (44.0%) fall into the moderate level of leadership preference category. It can be inferred that since a significant portion of respondents (44.0%) fall into the moderate category, their preferred leadership style can be either Democratic or authoritarian.

Objective 2- To compare the leadership preference of male and female students of Assam Don Bosco University.

Table 2: shows comparison of mean scores of leadership Preferences of sample with respect to gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p	Level of Significance
Male	47	104.78	15.42	1.39	98	0.17	Not significant at 0.05 level
Female	53	100.64	14.24				

Table 2 displays the results of the computed t-test in relation to the gender differences of the postgraduate students' preference for leadership. With mean scores of 104.78 and *SD* of 15.42 for male and mean scores of 100.64 and *SD* of 14.24 for female, the computed t-value came out to be 1.39, which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance for *df* 98; Also, P=0.17, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the leadership preferences of Assam Don Bosco University between male and female post-graduate students. Hence, inferring that there is no gender difference in leadership preferences, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Objective 3- To compare the leadership preference of Assam Don Bosco University students from nuclear and joint families.

Table 3: shows comparison of mean scores of leadership preferences of sample with respect to family type.

Type of Family	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p	Level of Significance
Joint Family	27	103.66	17.28	0.44	98	0.66	Not significant at 0.05 level
Nuclear Family	73	102.19	14.00				

Table 3 presents the findings of the computed t-test in relation to the family type of the post-graduate students concerning to their preference for leadership style. With mean scores of 103.66 , SD of 17.28 for students from Joint family and mean scores of 102.19, SD 14.00 for students from Nuclear family, the computed t-value was 0.44, which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance for *df* 98; additionally, P=0.66 is higher than 0.05. This indicates that there is no distinction on the leadership preferences among the postgraduate students coming from nuclear family and joint family. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Objective 4- To compare the leadership preferences of Assam Don Bosco University students from rural and urban areas.

Table 4: shows comparison of mean scores of leadership Preferences of sample with respect to geographical area.

Area	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p	Level of Significance
Urban	55	101.76	16.62	- 0.61	98	0.54	Not significant at 0.05 level
Rural	45	103.60	12.54				

Table 4 displays the results of the computed t-test in relation to the respondents' geographical area concerning to their preference for leadership style. With mean scores of 101.76 and SD of 16.62 for students from urban area and mean scores of 103.60 and SD of 12.54 for students from rural area, the computed t-value came out to be 0.61, which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance for *df* 98; Also, *p*=0.54, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the leadership preferences of postgraduate students belonging to rural and urban area. Hence, the null hypothesis, is not rejected.

VII. INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

In the previous section, the data collected for this study were analyzed and several findings were made.

   i. It was found that 44 (44.0%) of post-graduate students fall into the moderate level of leadership preference category, while 31 (31.0%) fall into the above-average autocratic category, 14 (14.0%) fall into the above-average democratic category, 5 (5.0%) fall into the extremely democratic category, three (3.0%) fall into the high autocratic category, and three (3.0%) fall into the high democratic category.

   ii. Therefore, in total, 34.0 % of students preferred Autocratic leadership, 22.0% preferred democratic leadership and 44.0% preferred both Autocratic and democratic leadership.

   iii. There is no significant difference between leadership preference of male and female post-graduate students of Assam Don Bosco University. The study's findings confirm earlier studies that found no significant differences between men and women in the leadership styles exhibited by leaders. (Greiman et al., 2007; Kent et al., 2010; Isaac et al., 2010)

iv. There is no discernible difference in the preference for leadership among the post-graduate students coming from nuclear and joint families.

v. There is no discernible difference between postgraduate students from urban and rural areas in terms of their preference for leadership.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

i. Workshops and programmes on leadership might be held on a sporadic basis in order to achieve the goal of bringing to the attention of the students, the variety of leadership styles that exist and the ways in which each style affects them.

ii. The students will benefit from workshops and shorter-term trainings by being able to recognize the various leadership styles of their teachers, appreciate their effective techniques, and take lessons from them to apply to their own leadership styles.

iii. To encourage student participation in extracurricular as well as required college activities so that students can refine their leadership skills and become better prepared to take on global leadership roles.

iv. Universities and colleges can promote the development of leadership skills of students through various professional and social organizations on campus.

v. A comparative analysis of male and female teachers' preferred leadership styles can be conducted.

vi. An investigation at the differences and similarities between rural and urban school principals.

vii. To study the interaction facilitation dimension in leadership behaviour.

viii. To examine the impact of the teacher's leadership style on the students.

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