

Literature Review: Democratic Leadership Within the Bureaucratic System

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### **Abstract**

In an effort to ebb the rate of attrition, bureaucratic institutions today reflect the need for an effective leadership style that enhances personal growth (maturity) in conjunction with support for its mission-goals and objectives. The researchers in this review highlighted confluency and disconnections between lower-level members and managers. In order to articulate the need for change within their respective environments, this paper correlates, compares, and contrasts a condensed version of literature containing job satisfaction, motivation, and empowerment.

### **Keywords**

*Leadership styles, job satisfaction, motivation, empowerment, morale*

### **Introduction**

Effective leadership can only be accomplished with the cooperation of its organization's lower-level members. Various leadership methods can construct and encapsulate constructive energy from its workforce or completely disregard the comprehensive potential power emanating from subordinates within the organization. A Democratic and transactional leadership subtext within the bureaucratic system is the purposeful implementation to mitigate membership, as the results from the reviewed articles will communicate. Job satisfaction is impelled by empowerment, induced by motivating factors, which is predicated by leadership style.

### **Historical Background**

Max Weber (1864 – 1920), renowned German social-theorist, postulated a fundamental theoretical model, that proliferated the modern industrial world. He articulated the evolution of an administrative division of labor, structured within organizational hierarchies. Bureaucratic Leadership formulates the policies, guidelines, directives, and procedures that control activity within a bureaucratic construct. This distinct style of governing is prevalent within public service (governmental agency) and draws a clear delineation between leadership and subordinates. Weber's intimation of efficiency extracts the ties of friendships and relational obligations from organizations, leaving impersonal, specialized expertise to better handle organizational productivity.

### **Bureaucratic Leadership**

Bureaucratic Leadership examines responsibility in terms of the logic of individualized responsibility and, its leaders are influencing desired performance goals (Nelson, 2007, p. 541). Bureaucratic actors are held accountable for the actual outcomes associated with their tasks. Thus, the administration assigns power (domination) through knowledge, resulting in social leveling. Publicly elected officials assign causal responsibility to individual bureaucratic leaders, who then exercise accountability tools (Langenbacher, 2001, p. 4).

### **Participative/Democratic Leadership Style**

Participative/Democratic Leadership concentrates on developing an employee's organizational well-being and their comprehensive personal health. Democratic Leadership encourages members to be included in decisions by allowing participation in various aspects of

the decision-making process. With an emphasis on consultation, leaders in this style consult with members, yet retain the right to make the final decisions.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction can be viewed as the feeling or emotional response (attitude) to varied work-stimulus. The work stimulus can have a positive presence of well-being and approval or negative disapproval result. Work stimulus is an individual's reaction to other employees, leadership/management, physical work environment, and culture. "Job satisfaction can be defined as the feelings people have about their jobs. It implies doing a job one enjoys well and being suitably rewarded for one's efforts. It further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work" (Osakwe, 2014, p. 44).

### **Motivation**

Similar to Job Satisfaction, motivation can emanate from various sources, having the impetus of both emotional (experiential) and psychological (cognitive) processes, explaining the reasons an individual or group has to behave or respond in a particular way. Motivation is the driving factor or impetus to produce and contribute to a work environment.

### **Review of Literature**

Niaz Ilhan (2014) points to the potential acuties of Bureaucratic Leadership (p. 5). The Pakistani monarchy existed alongside a parliamentary government but was besieged with issues. A proponent for bureaucracy, the author takes a position that the best results from leadership would have occurred if the ruling body would have accepted the advice from their current

bureaucratic system. Ruling monarchies draw from the people's resources, who eventually suffer from apathy, fraud against their society, and fatalism as they fall out of grace with their rulers (p. 105). With the insertion of religious ideologies and praetorian powers, warring factions rise in contention. "During such periods of chaos, the cost to society is enormous, and a resurgent despotism is deemed preferable to continued anarchy and warlordism" in the absence of Bureaucratic Leadership, even if the rulership's treatment is harsh and cruel (p. 106).

Bureaucracy requires a strong central power to maintain stability, and in the absence of such power, a state/organization may fall (Niaz, p. 105). Bureaucratic governance depends primarily on the wisdom and strength of the leadership interdependent with the competence of its subordinates (p. 106). Of course, this power can be misused and abused causing impropriety and distrust within the system (p. 105).

Erik Langenbacher (2001), in his review, comparing Alexis De Tocqueville and Max Weber, shared similar worldview perspectives. Both theorists perceived that the march of equality will result in the fundamental leveling of society, thus withering away hierarchy and status, resulting in a basic equality of social conditions (p. 4). The Bureaucratic Leadership view, held by the two sociologists, believe in essence, that we are entering a new beginning for organizational change, in ordinance with the proponents for a new civility within an organizational hierarchy.

Democratic leadership, by contrast, also from a sociological perspective, loosens social ties but tightens natural ones (Langenbacher, 2001, p. 5). These sociologists reviewed by Langenbacher, theorize that "it is impossible for individuals to remain completely self-contained" (p. 4). We need the socialization of other humans, "the majority," to reflect of

ourselves (p. 4). Unfortunately, Langenbacher's review does not go far enough, as it omits those who are considered a recluse. Technology, and its advancements, have left humans satisfied with their individualism. Computers, and their symbols, replace democracy, and people are left self-contained in their environment.

Participative Leadership and empowerment from a psychological, cognitive perspective are symbiotic. Maintaining a competitive edge, compels companies to adapt to rapidly to changing environments (Priyadharshany & Sujath, 2013, p. 23). Empowerment within the organization propels its members to grow intellectually and emotionally and to develop new management perspectives that make it necessary to empower the workforce as a source of strategic advantage (p. 23).

It is this confluence that we are able to recognize the contrast between social and intellectual behavior within the Democratic style of leadership. Sociologist's theories point us to the intrinsic learnings from individual and group behaviors. At the same time, organizational psychologists support an educational approach to management to empower subordinates, thus creating job satisfaction mechanisms.

### **Job Satisfaction in Bureaucratic Leadership**

Bureaucratic Leadership, like all other leadership styles, change in order to comply with a constantly changing cultural and societal environment. In their review, the Roos' agree that the modernization process in transitional societies contradicts the role of the bureaucratic administrator (Roos Jr. & Roos, 1970, p. 69). Admittedly, their research examining the role of bureaucracy in the development process revealed an emergence or overabundance of overpowering bureaucracies. "One case study of Thailand pictures the bureaucracy in a

bureaucratic policy as a self-serving mechanism, not controlled by independent political forces, acting in a way that is in the bureaucrats' self-interest." One tends to agree with this assessment based on personal experience under a Bureaucratic Leadership; however, the rate of employment within institutional bureaucracy (New York State Department of Corrections) is dwindling. Participative leadership organizations, in contrast are exemplifying expansion in dissimilar areas of business.

### **Job Satisfaction in Participative Leadership: A Psychological Approach**

Carless (2004) purports that the characteristics of the psychological approach to participative job satisfaction decentralize power by involving employees in the decision-making process, but also suggests that members cognitively appraise their work environment, attaching values to it (p. 405). Organizational climate, as a psychological profile, represents a collective or shared summary perception that members attach to organizational practices and characteristics in a work setting (Carless, 2004, p. 405). As such, the psychological climate reflects the individual's judgment and the degree to which the workplace is to be deemed beneficial (p. 405).

### **Job Satisfaction in Participative Leadership: A Motivational Approach**

Carless (2004) contrasts the psychological approach with motivation, as she describes empowerment as a constellation of experienced psychological states or cognitions. Motivation is based on the employee's perception of their specific power to cope with situations and people they encounter (p. 405). The motivational approach puts less emphasis on the delegation of power and discerns, instead, open communication, inspirational goal setting, personal encouragement, and feedback, which are the primary components for increased loyalty and

commitment related to job satisfaction in a Participative Leadership (p. 405). Her entire argument mediates the determinants of empowerment.

### **Morale & Employee Impact**

Osakwe (2014) establishes that workers satisfied with their job will be co-operative and well-motivated (p. 44). Good morale is a contributor to increased productivity while declining morale and those dissatisfied will be inclined to produce low-quality output, go on strike, be absent from work, invoke grievance procedures or, ultimately leave the organization (Osakwe, 2014, p. 44). Morale emanates from within the individual and attaches characteristics assimilating to the organization. Conversely, Priyadharshany, & Sujatha (2013) suggest that it is the mechanism of the organization that engages an employee to satisfaction, and it is the environment that supports them to empowerment (p. 37).

### **Unmotivated Workforce**

According to Natoli (2014), aggression, submission, and conventionalism can both motivate and be productivity killers (p. 4). Employee survival is the equivalent of life and death in a biological system, and one could prescribe that motivation is a crucial component to the fulness of life. Imagine motivation as the air in which we breathe. Punishment, another factor of the unmotivated workforce, is used to control within a Bureaucratic Leadership and is triggered by feelings of self-righteousness. Those employees who match the culture of bureaucracy will become an integral part of the system. Those who do not or cannot establish congruency with the administrative construct will be unmotivated, causing failure within the system (p. 4).

Similarly, Ennis (2017) resolved that assumptions about workers were counter-productive because they either led to the imposition of brute force, rigid rules, and close and unyielding

supervision on the workforce, which brought about an unproductive, unmotivated group of people (p. 16).

Motivation has intrinsic and extrinsic factors, inside an individual and outside an individual. Examples of intrinsic motivation in the workplace are wages, health benefits, flexible hours, work environment, promotions, culture, and equality. Correspondingly, the same factors for intrinsic motivation can be viewed as extrinsic factors. The paired impetus for pleasure can also preclude us from experiencing pleasure as well. An employee's relationship to agency motivates or draws them closer to perceived job satisfaction (conscious or unconscious workplace goals).

Ennis (2014) believes that too much authoritarianism and the bureaucratic organization becomes sclerotic, with low quality, low productivity, high turnover, and a dearth of creativity; too little authoritarianism and the organization lacks the structure to complete its objectives (p. 4). Unwilling subordinates in both a Bureaucratic or Democratic leadership will be exposed to increased socialization and be left feeling greater conflict, making them less likely to submit to authority (Ennis, 2014, p. 4). Fearing reprisal, they are most likely to mask their disagreement with the organization's convention and create a façade divergent to the organizational societal, cultural, and productivity goals (p. 4).

## **Conclusion**

The consensus of literature reviewed propagate circumstances, wherein the bureaucratic leadership system can be effectual as a conventional organizational structure. However, most of the reviewed literature yields to the flexibility of Democratic leadership's flexibility that fosters maturity and well-being in its members. Industrial and nonconventional organizations maintain

order and discipline, as they both require the focus of agency missions. The comparable results reveal the possibility of integrating a democratic style of leadership within the hierarchy of a bureaucratic organization. Each supervisor/manager or administrator possess the intrinsic power given to them by the bureaucratic system. Managers and leaders can assimilate these articles' concepts to aid their ever-increasing search to become more proficient leaders. The nuanced dynamic of participative leadership can be infused in bureaucracy. The installation of intellectual growth in an organization formulates relationship connectivity, decision making, and feedback, which is discovered to increase motivation, morale, and job satisfaction. The articles reviewed can fuse a manager's current abilities with actionable knowledge to maintain their competitiveness and their subordinate's interrelatedness.

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