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The Impact of Cross-Cultural Team Leadership Styles on Team Performance

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Abstract

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This article reviews the literature on the impact of cross-cultural leadership styles on team performance. It compares the perspectives of different researchers who have made significant contributions in this field. Key researchers highlighted include Dickson, Jogulu, Hannay, Bonsu and Twum-Danso. These researchers emphasize the need for leaders to use diverse leadership strategies to motivate team members from different cultural backgrounds. They also recognize the importance of accommodating cultural differences in leadership behaviors. Different frameworks and categorizations of cross-cultural leadership styles are discussed, such as the six dimensions model by Dickson et al. and the four types identified by Jogulu. The literature also focuses on essential leader traits like cultural sensitivity and listening skills. In addition, the moderating role of cultural factors on the relationship between leadership styles and team performance is analyzed. The review summarizes empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of adaptive leadership on performance. It also provides recommendations for future research to further explore theoretical and methodological opportunities in this field. In conclusion, it is noted by the authors that the research on cross-cultural team leadership styles provides a crucial theoretical foundation for understanding and addressing the challenges of multicultural teams, holding profound practical significance for enhancing team performance.

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Keywords

Cultural intelligence, global mindset, cross-cultural competence, bibliometric methods, special issue, leadership, followership, hierarchy, evolutionary biology, cultural evolution.

Introduction

Cross-cultural team leadership style refers to the ability and behavior of leaders to use different leadership styles and strategies to influence and motivate team members to achieve organizational goals in different cultural contexts. Researchers who have provided significant contributions in defining the concept of cross-cultural team leadership styles are Marcus W. Dickson, Undaru Jogulu, Lynda M. Hannay, Samuel Bonsu and Akwasi Twum-Danso.

Review

Dickson et al. in their article argued that cross-cultural team leadership styles need to consider the multiple factors of the leader, team members, and the context, as well as the influence of different cultures on the preferences and effectiveness of leadership behaviors. They proposed a cross-cultural leadership model that categorizes leadership styles into six dimensions: self-protective, authoritative, self-independent, interpersonal, team-oriented, and participative [Dickson et al., 2003, 729-768].

Jogulu explored the differences and connections between leadership styles across cultures based on Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions [Jogulu, 2010, 705-719]. He identified four cross-cultural leadership styles: bureaucratic, authoritative, cooperative, and transformational. He noted that leaders need to be flexible in adapting and utilizing different leadership styles based on their own cultural values and those of their team members.

Hannay applied the servant leadership theory to the study of cross-cultural team leadership and argued that servant leaders, with traits such as cross-cultural sensitivity, listening skills, empathy, humility, trust, and caring, are able to effectively lead and manage culturally diverse team members, and promote team innovation and performance [Hannay, 2009, 1].

Bonsu and Twum-Danso analyzed the relationship and role of cross-cultural leadership and transformational leadership from the perspective of globalization. They argue that transformational leaders are able to adapt and respond to the challenges and opportunities of cross-cultural teams and achieve sustainable organizational development by building vision, inspiring potential, encouraging innovation, and fostering diversity [Bonsu, Twum-Danso, 2018, 37-52].

In terms of categorizing leadership styles in cross-cultural teams, Myers, Kakabadse, McMahon, and Spony (1995), they identified four main leadership styles through a questionnaire survey of top managers in eight European countries: authoritative, democratic, consultative, and laissez-faire. They found significant differences in the leadership styles of managers from different countries, which are related to their national and organizational cultures [Myers A. et al., 1995, 17-18].

Paulienė (2012): she explored the impact of knowledge sharing on cross-cultural leadership and proposed a framework for categorizing leadership styles based on transformational and transactional leadership. She argues that transformational leadership is more likely to motivate employees' knowledge-sharing behaviors, while transactional leadership focuses more on reward and punishment mechanisms. She suggests that leaders should be flexible in applying different leadership styles depending on the culture and context [Paulienė, 2012, 91-100].

In the last five years, the field of cross-cultural leadership research has made remarkable progress and attracted the attention of many scholars. Sertel et al. (2022) conducted an insightful meta-analysis by applying Triandis's form of national cultures to reveal the diversity of leadership styles and their impact on leadership effectiveness in different cultural settings [Sertel et al., 2022, 59]. Their study provides strong recommendations for leaders that adapting leadership styles in different cultural

contexts is a necessary step to improve leadership effectiveness.

Lonati's (2020) study introduced a theory based on agricultural origins that provides an in-depth explanation of cultural differences between participative and directive leadership styles. His argument emphasizes the role of different agricultural production patterns and social structures in shaping leadership styles and points to the changing influence of modern society [Lonati, 2020, 1-7].

Harb and Karami-Akkary's (2019) cross-cultural analysis focused on Lebanese school leadership, revealing that leaders in the region favor democratic and transformational leadership styles while being constrained by bureaucracy and authority. This study provides important insights for leaders that increased cultural sensitivity and adaptability are key components of successful leadership in environments where cultural differences are evident [Harb, Karami-Akkary, 2019].

In his book, Gutterman (2019) provides a comprehensive summary of cross-cultural leadership research, outlining different leadership theories and models, as well as their applicability and limitations in different cultural contexts. He suggests some directions and challenges for future research, pointing the way for the future development of the field [Gutterman, 2019].

Finally, Rahim's (2023) study focuses on organizational conflict management and proposes a comprehensive conflict management model. He highlights the importance and complexity of cross-cultural conflict management, providing insights for leaders to deal with conflict in multicultural teams. Together, this body of research builds a rich picture of cross-cultural leadership research that provides a solid theoretical foundation for better understanding and addressing cross-cultural leadership challenges [Rahim, 2023].

In the literature on different metrics for assessing team performance and cross-cultural leadership factors, a series of scholars have provided profound insights. Sağ, Kaynak, Sezen (2016) emphasize the crucial role of team culture, team atmosphere, team factors, and cross-cultural competence in team performance, finding a significant positive correlation between these factors and the communication and innovation capabilities of multinational teams [Sağ et al., 2016, 60-69]. Ochieng, Price (2010) focus on communication, trust, conflict management, leadership, team building, and cultural differences, proposing recommendations for improving these factors [Ochieng, Price, 2010, 449-460]. Toor, Ogunlana (2008) construct a model of cross-cultural leadership competence from the perspective of project management, including technical, interpersonal, environmental, and strategic capabilities, considering these abilities crucial for enhancing the performance of cross-cultural construction project teams [Toor, Ogunlana, 2008, 192-195].

In the study of cross-cultural leadership factors, Dickson, Den Hartog, Mitchelson (2003) review global leadership research, pointing out challenges and opportunities in terms of theory and methodology [Dickson et al., 2003, 729-730]. Javidan, Dorfman, De Luque, House (2016) explore perceptions of leadership in different cultural backgrounds, discovering cross-cultural and culture-specific leadership behaviors and attributes [Javidan et al., 2016, 119-154]. Lakshman (2013) examines the leadership efficacy of bicultural leaders, introducing the concept of bicultural leadership [Lakshman, 2013, 922-940].

Regarding performance indicators related to cross-cultural team leadership styles, Caligiuri, Tarique (2012) propose a framework for dynamic cross-cultural capabilities, finding that these abilities are correlated with the satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment of global leaders [Caligiuri, Tarique, 2012, 612-622]. Deng, Gibson (2009) model the abilities and patterns of cross-cultural leadership, presenting four dimensions of cross-cultural leadership capabilities [Deng, Gibson, 2009]. Rao-Nicholson, Carr, Tagg (2020) conduct a strategic analysis of the impact of leaders' cultural intelligence, cultural sensitivity, cultural adaptability, and cultural integration on cross-cultural

leadership adjustment, as well as the influence of leadership adjustment patterns on team members' perception of trust, commitment, and performance of leaders. These studies collectively reveal the profound impact of cross-cultural leadership on team performance, providing valuable insights for practical team management [Rao-Nicholson, Carr, Smith, 2020].

Comparing the studies

There are some commonalities and differences among these researchers in the study of cross-cultural team leadership styles. The following is an analysis of the main points and contributions of these researchers:

Commonality Points:

Consideration of Cultural Differences: Most researchers have emphasized the importance of the need to consider different cultural factors in cross-cultural team leadership. They believe that culture has a significant impact on leader behavior and team member reactions.

Diversity of Leadership Styles: These researchers recognize that leaders need to be flexible in using different leadership styles in cross-cultural teams. They have proposed different categorizations of leadership styles, such as bureaucratic, authoritative, collaborative, and transformational, in order to accommodate team members in different cultural contexts.

Focus on Leader Traits: Some researchers have paid special attention to leader traits such as cultural sensitivity, listening skills, empathy, humility, and trust. These traits are considered essential to effectively lead team members from different cultural backgrounds.

Focus on sustainability and change: Some researchers believe that transformational leaders in cross-cultural teams are able to adapt and respond to challenges by building vision, inspiring potential, and encouraging innovation to achieve organizational sustainability.

Importance of cross-cultural conflict: Some researchers have focused on the complexity of cross-cultural conflict management, emphasizing the importance of dealing with conflict in multicultural teams and providing insights and recommendations.

Points of Difference:

Differences in theoretical frameworks: Researchers have used different theoretical frameworks to explain cross-cultural leadership. Some are based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, some apply servant leadership theory, while others analyze it from a globalization perspective.

Classification focus of leadership styles: Different researchers have focused on the classification of leadership styles. Some focus on different dimensions of leadership behavior, some emphasize the importance of specific traits for leadership effectiveness, and some classify leadership styles into several specific types.

Focus on Impact on Team Performance: Researchers have focused on different aspects in their studies on the impact on team performance. Some focus on the impact of cultural factors, team culture and climate on performance, while others focus on the direct impact of cross-cultural leadership skills on performance.

Differences in time span: Some researchers focus on recent research developments, while others review and summarize past research. This reflects the focus and trends of cross-cultural leadership research at different points in time.

Overall, these researchers have collectively built a rich picture of cross-cultural leadership research that provides a solid theoretical foundation for us to better understand and address cross-cultural leadership challenges. Their research provides practical advice for leaders to lead teams more effectively in different cultural contexts.

Conclusions and comparative analysis

The above literature review reveals the flexibility of leaders to use different leadership styles in different cultural environments and the importance of cultural factors in moderating the relationship between leadership styles and team performance. The impact of cross-cultural leadership styles on team performance can be summarized in the following three aspects

- 1. Analysis of the mechanisms of cross-leadership styles and team performance:
- -Cross-leadership styles have been repeatedly emphasized in the literature as having both direct and indirect effects on team performance. The flexible use of different leadership styles, especially transformational leadership, democratic leadership, and servant leadership, is believed to promote team innovation, communication, and cooperation, thus improving overall performance levels.
- -Some researchers have emphasized the positive impact of leaders' personal traits, such as self-protection, empathy, and transformational skills, on team performance. These traits are believed to help build team trust, stimulate potential, and effectively resolve intra-team conflicts, ultimately driving the team toward a common goal.
- 2. The moderating effect of cultural factors on the relationship between leadership style and team performance:
- -It is clear from the literature that cultural factors play a key role in the relationship between leadership style and team performance. Team members from different countries, regions, or cultural backgrounds have different expectations and preferences for leadership behavior, which may affect the effectiveness of leadership style.
- -Some researchers have mentioned Triandis' form of national culture and Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions, which emphasize the influence of culture on leadership behavior. Cross-cultural leaders need to consider and adapt to leadership expectations in different cultures to improve leadership effectiveness.
- 3. Empirical findings support the mechanisms by which cross-cultural leadership styles influence team performance:
- -Empirical findings support the positive impact of leadership styles on team performance. For example, some studies refer to Sertel et al.'s (2022) meta-analysis that reveals the necessity of adapting leadership styles to improve leadership effectiveness in different cultural settings.
- -The dynamic intercultural competence framework proposed by Caligiuri and Tarique (2012) showed that leaders possessing intercultural competence was significantly and positively related to satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment of global leaders, further confirming the relationship between leadership style and team performance.

Overall, research in the literature suggests that the flexible use of different leadership styles has a significant impact on team performance, which is moderated by cultural factors. Empirical findings further support the positive impact of leadership styles on team performance.

Summary

Summary of the Main Findings:

Diversity in Cross-Cultural Team Leadership Styles: The literature emphasizes the need for leaders to employ different leadership styles and strategies in diverse cultural backgrounds to influence and motivate team members toward organizational goals. Various theoretical frameworks, such as Dickson et al.'s cross-cultural leadership model, Jogulu's leadership style classification, and Hannay's servant

leadership theory, are provided to comprehend the complexity of cross-cultural team leadership.

Significance of Cultural Differences: All researchers underscore the crucial consideration of the impact of cultural differences on leadership behavior in cross-cultural team leadership. From national cultural forms, cultural dimension theories, to discussions on the influence of agricultural origins and modern society, researchers recognize the profound shaping effect of cultural backgrounds on leadership styles.

Flexibility in Leadership Styles and the Importance of Personal Traits: Jogulu, Lonati, Gutterman, and others highlight the necessity for leaders to flexibly adjust and utilize different leadership styles based on cultural differences and team member characteristics. The focus on personal traits such as self-protection, empathy, and transformative abilities is considered essential for successfully leading cross-cultural teams.

Emphasis on Diversity and Innovation: Some studies emphasize the role of transformative leadership in a global context, fostering sustainable development in diverse multicultural teams through the establishment of vision, unlocking potential, and encouraging innovation.

Differences among Researchers: Researchers differ in methodologies, focus areas, and theoretical frameworks. Some use meta-analysis, while others employ surveys and theoretical constructs; some focus on leadership styles, others on globalization and transformative leadership, and some on organizational conflict management.

Profound Impact of Cross-Cultural Team Leadership Styles on Team Performance:

Researchers provide evidence emphasizing the critical importance of cross-cultural leadership for team performance. This includes the correlation between dynamic cross-cultural abilities and the satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment of global leaders, as well as the modeling of four dimensions of cross-cultural leadership abilities.

Recommendations for Future Research:

In-Depth Exploration of Theoretical and Methodological Challenges and Opportunities: Researchers point out challenges and opportunities in theory and methodology, guiding future research directions. In-depth exploration of cognitive perceptions of leadership in different cultural contexts and further investigation into dynamic cross-cultural abilities are deemed beneficial.

Broadening Research Focus: Future research could widen its scope to various aspects of cross-cultural team leadership, including the adaptability of leaders in different cultural environments and the impact of cultural transitions on leadership styles. Additionally, a deeper exploration of organizational conflict management is suggested as a potential research direction.

Continued Study of Key Factors in Team Performance: Future studies can delve deeper into the measurement and influencing factors of team performance, exploring the relationships between team culture, team atmosphere, and team performance in diverse cultural environments to provide more comprehensive management insights.

In conclusion, the research on cross-cultural team leadership styles provides a crucial theoretical foundation for understanding and addressing the challenges of multicultural teams, holding profound practical significance for enhancing team performance.

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Эффект стилей лидерства в кросс-культурных командах на результативность команды

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Аннотация

В статье представлен обзор литературы, посвященной влиянию кросс-культурных стилей руководства на эффективность работы команды. В ней сравниваются точки зрения различных исследователей, внесших значительный вклад в эту область. Среди основных исследователей выделяются Диксон, Джогулу, Ханней, Бонсу и Твум-Дансо. Эти исследователи подчеркивают необходимость использования руководителями разнообразных стратегий лидерства для мотивации членов коллектива из разных культурных слоев. Они также признают важность учета культурных различий в поведении руководителей. Обсуждаются различные схемы и классификации кросс-культурных стилей лидерства, такие как модель шести измерений Диксона и др. и четыре типа, выделенные Джогулу. В литературе также уделяется внимание таким важным чертам лидера, как культурная чувствительность и умение слушать. Кроме того, анализируется модераторская роль культурных факторов на взаимосвязь между стилями руководства и эффективностью работы коллектива. В обзоре обобщены эмпирические данные, подтверждающие положительное влияние адаптивного лидерства на эффективность работы. В нем также даны рекомендации для будущих исследований, направленных на дальнейшее изучение теоретических и метолологических возможностей в этой области.

Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

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Ключевые слова

Культурный интеллект, глобальный менталитет, кросс-культурная компетентность, библиометрические методы, специальный выпуск, лидерство, следование, иерархия, эволюционная биология, культурная эволюция.

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