

The Situational Leadership Theory

(Annotated bibliographies of five readings on the Situational Leadership Theory)

1.

Graeff, C. L. (1983). The Situational Leadership Theory: A Critical View. *Academy Of Management Review*, 8(2), 285-291. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1983.4284738>

In this article, the author critically analyses the Situational Leadership Theory put forth by Hersey and Blanchard. In this article, the author analyses the situational theory based on three facts namely leader behavior, initiating structure and consideration. The author describes the normative model in detail. While explaining this model, the author demonstrates using the graph of Task and Relationship. The curvilinear nature of this graph shows the relationship between the task behavior and maturity index. The author then explains the four levels of maturity as M1, M2, M3 and M4 where M1 being the least mature and M4 the most mature and argues about inconsistency of these maturity levels in relation with the linear scale of normative model. The author also describes the Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability model(LEAD), which is an instrument to measure leader behavior based on style, style range and style adaptability. The four sub-categories of LEAD include High Task Low Relationship, High Task High Relationship, Low Task High Relationship, and Low Task Low Relationship. The author describes in detail that how Low Task Low Relationship criteria is adequately defined. The author concludes the article saying how LEAD instrument is indefinite.

According to Kotter, "Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations or adapts them to changing circumstances". (Kotter, J., p.25) Managers are in charge of organizing and problem solving, hence are required to possess leadership qualities. This article is a basic article on Situational Theory Model, that tests managerial behavior. The article helps the readers understand the situational theory in depth. The article well written and justifies the title very well. The author describes the LEAD instrument as Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability. The author further states LEAD as inadequate but there are no real life examples to support his arguments. It would have helped understand the theory a lot better if he would have given some examples. The author also pinpoints the shortcomings of the Situational Theory Model and the LEAD model, but he does not provide or suggest any alternative to these models.

2.

Butler Jr., J. K., & Reese, R. M. (1991). Leadership Style and Sales Performance: A Test of the Situational Leadership Model. *Journal Of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 11(3), \ 37. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/40471438>

In this article, the authors describe the Situational Leadership Model (SLM) as defined by Hersey and Blanchard. SLM is based on four leadership styles depend on two criteria; task behavior and relationship behavior. The four styles, S1, S2, S3 and S4 are classified according to the high and low levels of these two criteria. LEAD or Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description is a tool with which these four styles are measured. Although SLM model and LEAD theory has been criticized, it is still has been used and is also used in this case study. The study was based on two hypotheses. A group of 47 branch managers from an insurance company

were selected for this study. The managers were given a questionnaire based on 12 hypothetical situations described by LEAD model. The questionnaire was modified and was based on five point Likert type scale. The responses were measured against the four styles, S1, S2, S3 and S4. The results were calculated for both hypotheses. The results were not very pleasing; in fact they were slightly contradictory. The conclusion after the case study is not in favor of SLM as it yielded results that are more negative. Therefore, in addition to SLM, other models such as Leader Member Exchange Model (LMX) or Normative Decision Theory (NDT) were discussed in brief.

The article states that the Situational Leadership Model (SLM) is not the best model to review the behavior pattern in managers. However, according to the authors, it is still a widely used model to assess the leadership qualities in managers. The main reason this model is so popular can be its simplicity and flexibility and therefore according to the authors, many organizations use it extensively. This particular study shows that SLM is an incomplete method to evaluate managers as leaders. The authors have well demonstrated how SLM failed to work in this particular study. However, the article has only a brief mention about other two models viz LMX and NDT. A comparison between all three models and selection of the better one amongst them would have been helpful.

3.

Vecchio, R. P. (1987). Situational Leadership Theory: An Examination of a Prescriptive Theory.

Journal Of Applied Psychology, 72(3), 444-451. Retrieved from

<http://ehis.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=6f7b02b0->

39dd-4f1d-953d-e5e50e145089%40sessionmgr12&vid=6&hid=4

This article describes the Situational Leadership Theory (SLT). The author describes the SLT in detail by giving an overview and a brief history about this theory. Further, the article outlines the issues in implementing the SLT. The maturity of individual person and as a group affects the test results. In addition, factors such as effectiveness and appropriateness for testing SLT are considered. Statistical analysis is determined as one more challenge. The author discusses various parameters on which statistical results can be varied and examined. The study was based on 303 full-time high-school teachers. The responses were collected on 4 different scales. Instead of using Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability or LEAD instrument, a common instrument in SLT, a modified version of LBDQ was used. In addition, maturity and performance index were also measured. For the testing, different analytical techniques were used. The techniques used were hierarchical regression analysis, creation of subgroups based on structure and maturity levels, and creating different categories based on maturity levels. The author displays the results in a table with different variables which includes structuring, maturity, performance etc. The test results are displayed for the entire tests individually.

The article describes a case study in detail. The survey questions were designed based on various parameters and were modified according to group need. Along with performance and maturity index, other criteria such as structuring, leader-member qualities were also assessed. In my opinion, the tests were carefully created. In this case, the questionnaire was modified and instead of using LEAD, a modified version of LBDQ was used. The results should have been assessed against LEAD instrument, which would have given more accurate results for this

particular study. I think the situational leadership theory can be well applied to distance education courses too. In a DE course, the designing team has to take into consideration the learners' needs. The course designing and delivery should be such that every student should benefit. Like in SLT, the leadership style varies according to the maturity level of subordinates, in DE, teaching and course delivery style can be manipulated according to the learners' needs and learning styles.

4.

Gumpert, R. A., & Hambleton, R. K. (1979). Situational leadership. *Management Review*, 68(12),8. Retrieved from <http://ehis.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=6f7b02b0-39dd-4f1d-953d-e5e50e145089%40sessionmgr12&vid=6&hid=4>

This article discusses the use of Situational Leadership Model at Xerox. This is a case study to evaluate how managers incorporate the Situational Leadership Model at the workplace. In the beginning of the article, the authors describe the Situational Leadership Model, proposed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, in detail. This model is based on two major managerial behaviors namely task behavior (one-way communication) and relationship behavior (two-way communication) and are further classified into four subgroups depending on high and low values of these behaviors. The variable is the maturity index. The study was conducted on 65 managers from Xerox Company. The participants were given three types of questioners. 1. A manager questionnaire that was based on demographic survey. 2. Professional Maturity Scale where the managers assessed up to 4 subordinates 3. Manager rating form was given for self-assessment as managers. After the data was collected, the participants were rated on five point

scale and were classified in two categories as highly effective managers and employee performance or less effective group. The authors conclude that highly effective managers have more knowledge and usage of situational leadership

The article is well presented in a very simple format. The study was based on the managers who already use the Situational Leadership Model. Therefore, the study was focused more on how well the managers actually use the Situational Leadership model. The questionnaires were divided into three simple categories that made the survey simpler. Different parameters were set and assessed. The managers were divided into two broad categories as less effective and more effective. The study could have included more complex evaluation method. The simplicity of this article makes it easier to study. More surveys and more parameters would have definitely helped to strengthen the study. The presentation of the case study is very well organized.

5.

Cubero, C. G. (2007). Situational leadership and persons with disabilities. *Work*, 29(4), 351-356.

Retrieved from

<http://ehis.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.umuc.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=6f7b02b0-39dd-4f1d-953d-e5e50e145089%40sessionmgr12&vid=10&hid=4>

This article focuses on dealing with disability in workplace. A detail analysis on how managers use the Situational Leadership Model with workforce having disabilities. After studying the results, future suggestions are made to improve the Situational Leadership Model and how to apply it towards dealing with disability. The author starts the article by describing the Situational Leadership Theory. The author also lists and illustrates important characteristics of a

typical manager who follows the Situational Leadership Model. The author further discusses the impact of manager's leadership styles on employees' performance. Flexibility is important in leadership styles and is critical while dealing with subordinates with disabilities. The author explains the perceptions of employers and perception of workers with disabilities by giving examples and by citing works of many authors. Later, the author explains the advantages of Situational Leadership Model for persons with disabilities. The author then discusses the potential benefits of the Situational Leadership Model to the employer as well as to the workers with disabilities. The author concludes the article by providing possible research. The author suggests a comparative study between the Situational Leadership Model and Contextual Supervision and between the Situational Leadership Model and the Contingency Theory.

The managers should have leadership qualities to run a successful organization (Kotter, J.). As a good leader, the manager should show the people he/ she is managing a proper way and vision. In this article, the author portrays this model in reference with the workforce with disabilities. The author clearly points out the potential benefits of using this model to both, the employer and the disable workers. The Situational Leadership Model is good for persons with disabilities due to its flexibility. Under this model, the task and the relationship can be controlled and hence can be individualized. This managerial behavior can help develop a stronger workforce and results in better organizational functioning. In the end of the article, the author suggests the future study and gives a direction by providing two models for further research.

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Assignment 1

References:

Kotter, J.P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard University Press