MA Comprehensive Examination

Author name

Affiliations

**Area I: (Interdisciplinary Approaches to Learning)**

Write an essay in which you illustrate the benefits of interdisciplinarity in Leadership. Include a definition of leadership. Then describe how an interdisciplinary approach can support that definition. Use examples to illustrate why each discipline is integral to leadership and how each discipline can be implemented. Integrate at least three secondary sources into your argument.

Leadership is a multifaceted concept that has been defined in numerous ways. It is a process of influencing others and directing them to attain specific goals and objectives. It is not only restricted to the chief executives but the entire team heading up the organization is the part of leadership. Leaders perform this practice by applying their leadership knowledge and abilities. They manage the outside influences on the organizations as well as internal factors. Internally, leadership is not about authority but mobilizing people through effective communication to tackle the harshest snags. They also manage the outside influences such as changes in the economy leading to an increase in the competition. Then leaders develop effective strategies to manage these changes. Leaders possess different styles depending upon the situation. The particular style can be the result of their personality and skills and organizational requirements.

In order to carry out all the required functions of leadership effectively. Leaders make use of interdisciplinarity approach to solve problems and answer questions that cannot be reasonably addressed by means of a single technique (Brandstädter & Sonntag, 2016). Thus leadership is effective as a result different disciplines such as the study of persuading in communication as well as the study of motivation in psychology. They learn and do possess the knowledge of how to communicate effectively and pursued people in following the desired directions. They not only use the communication for the purpose of sharing information but also to motivate them and providing them feedback about their required level of performance. Moreover, from management, they learn how to use the management concepts while leading people. Thus, they lead people and do not manage them. They just give them directly and tell them ways how to achieve their objectives.

In addition, leadership is not limited to a few disciples such as management and human resource management (Giannitrapani et al., 2019). But it is an integral part of every discipline that affects the organization objective. Leaders in order to perform their functions effectively in the context of their interdisciplinary approach must possess different traits such as self-aware awareness, vision, commitment, good communication and interpersonal skills, strategic and tactical planning as well as an effective change agent (Negandhi et al., 2015). Thus, with this approach leaders can not only have exposure to multiple ideas but they also have the recognition of situational influences. The one essential characteristic of today's leader in the presence of analytical skills for the purpose of decision making. They can have this only through the interdisciplinarity approach that teaches them different ways of enhancing their capabilities.

Thus, the greatest benefit of interdisciplinarity approach in leadership is to increase the capabilities of leaders to face the competition effectively. Today is the world of intense competition and only those organizations survive who are proactive in their approach. If leaders have knowledge of different disciplines then they will be able to analyze the situation effectively and take decisions accordingly.

**Area II: (Research Methods)**

Good consumers of research understand what constitutes well-designed research and are able to objectively review published research to identify the research’s strengths and weaknesses, and overall applicability to practice.

* + Discuss what constitutes well-designed quantitative research, including the foundational components of a quantitative research study.
  + Describe the criteria a consumer should use to evaluate a quantitative study and determine the study’s strengths and weaknesses.
  + Select one quantitative research study, published in a peer-reviewed journal that investigates some aspect of leadership.
  + Using the criteria you identified, critically evaluate the reported research.

Research must be well designed so you can get the desired benefits of the research. It can be qualitative and quantitative, depending upon the research objectives. Quantitative research deals with the statistical and numerical analysis of data collected. Its emphases on assembling numerical data and then generalizing it across the entire population. It uses methods which are more structured than qualitative data collection methods. Some of the methods that it uses are surveys, interviews, longitudinal studies as well as systematic observations. Moreover, there are different foundational components of a quantitative research study. For example, it makes use of different statistical methods for the purpose of collecting data and analysis of the results. Different software packages such as SPSS is generally used for this purpose. In addition, measurement is also inevitable in quantitative research. Observations are expressed numerically in quantitative research to investigate the causal relations.

Quantitative research can be evaluated in order to determine the study’s strengths and weaknesses. The criteria used for this purpose can be the use of reliability and validity (Forero et al., 2018). Reliability refers to the accuracy and consistency of acquired information. There can be internal and external reliability. Internal reliability refers to the degree to which a measure is consistent within itself. Conversely, external reliability refers to the degree to which a measure fluctuates from one practice to another (Kaviani et al., 2018). Thus, it tells about whether the research is repeatable or not? In contrast, validity refers to the soundness of the evidence. It is about the source of findings and conclusions derived from empirical evidence. It can be internal and external validity and it is measured in terms of degree and is a unitary concept. Similarly, quantitative research must also be credible and researcher should link the study’s results with reality. It means that research results must reinforce researcher inferences. These criteria assess the three main issues: (1) the techniques and methods (2) the qualifications and experiences (3) the standard assumptions of the study. In addition, consumers can go to checking the dependability. It refers to the assurance of the repeating of the findings if there is any finding within the same unit of contributors, coders as well as context.

One such quantitative study is “The Role of Leadership in Innovation” by Richard Dodge, Johanna Dwyer, Stewart Witzeman, Susan Neylon, and Sylvester Taylor. This is a quantitative analysis of a large data set that inspects the association between organizational culture, leadership behaviors as well as innovativeness. The study is credible as the researcher has a prolonged engagement within setting while using the results of the preexisting surveys. The surveys were used from the Center for Innovation Management Studies (CIMS) and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) (Dodge, Dwyer, Witzeman, Neylon, & Taylor, 2017). Both are reliable organizations and are known for their innovation and creativity. Moreover, the investigators in the study possessed the required knowledge and research skills. Similarly, the study also fulfills the criteria of dependability as there is a rich explanation of the study methods in addition to stepwise replication of the data. Moreover, this research is also fulfilling’s the criteria of transferability as there are data saturation and purposeful sampling done by researchers.

**Area III: (Core Study Area)**

Organizational cultures serve as one of the most significant factors affecting an organization's success. What is organizational culture and how does it link to "leadership?" How does Edgar Schein's approach to a culture different from that of Cameron and Quinn? What are the advantages of each approach and which one is most appealing to you and why?

Organizational culture refers to values, actions, and shared vision that constitute an organization environment (Gochhayat, Giri, & Suar, 2017). This includes experiences, beliefs as well as future expectations and is also known as corporate culture. Thus, it is the internal and external identity of the organization. Every organization has its distinctive culture that is different from all other organizations (Bingöl, Şener, & Çevik, 2013). Culture is strong if more employees are showing their agreement to the culture. On the other hand, it is weak, if fewer employees show their agreement with it (Gochhayat et al., 2017).

It takes time to create the organizational culture leading to the creation of the brand image of the organization. It serves as one of the most significant factors affecting an organization’s success as it has an effect on employees performance and their wellbeing. The culture is the main factor that decides the interaction pattern of employees in any organization. If the culture is healthy then employees are motivated and vice versa. Moreover, culture is also a source of guidance for employees. It guides them and gives them direction to achieve their goals. Adherence to organizational culture gives you the predefined policies that guide people about specific behaviors.

The organizational culture has a strong link with leadership. It is a leadership that not only develop but also promotes the culture (Hartnell, Kinicki, Lambert, Fugate, & Doyle Corner, 2016). If the leadership does not support any culture, then no organization can achieve the chosen results. Thus, organizations use leaders to produce or shape their organizational culture. These are the leaders who communicate as well as lead employees in following the corporate culture. Additionally, the organizational culture does evolve with time and influences the external forces. Thus, leaders must prepare people to get adapt to the changes in their organizational culture.

Furthermore, there are different approaches to the culture such as that of Edgar Schein’s approach and of Cameron and Quinn. According to Cameron and Quinn, there are four types of organizational culture. Thus, organizations can have clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and hierarchy culture. Quinn and Cameron have developed the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) that is used to assess the current and preferred organizational cultures using the validated survey method. In clan culture, there is a very sociable working environment. The leaders in this culture are regarded as mentors. In adhocracy culture, there is a lively and entrepreneurial working environment. People are risk takers and innovators. The hierarchy culture is much formal working environment (Szabo & Csepregi, 2015). There are set procedures to be followed. Moreover, market culture is a result-oriented culture that has more focus on working. This approach provides organizations with the predefined culture and assists them in adapting to the culture.

Conversely, Edgar Schein has a different approach to the organization culture. He does not believe in any predefined type of culture but advocates about the development of the culture over an extended period of time. According to him, no organization adopts a culture in a single day but it goes through numerous changes and then gets itself adapt to the external environment. The greatest advantage of this culture is that it allows more flexibility in terms of operations (Bingöl et al., 2013). The culture is developed as a result of the external changes and is rather stable than the cultures of Cameron and Quinn. Thus, it is more appealing to me due to its time taking a feature that allows it more stability.

**Area IV: (Critical Analysis of Readings)**

Critique the following statement:

“Morals and ethics seem more important today than at any other time in history.”

In your critique, address the following points:

1. Why would a person conclude that this statement is correct?
2. Why would a person feel this statement is incorrect?

How are morals and ethics defined from a leadership perspective? In what way(s) do morals and ethics place restraints on behaviors of leaders in an organization?

Morals have always been part of the business practices since from the beginning. Past organizations were also adhering to moral guidelines. But when organizations try to win through attainment and victory then come ethical lapses. If organizations fail, then there are more chances of these organizations to get into immoral practices. Today the business world is moving towards such a situation that is requiring the need for ethical practices in business (Velamuri, Harvey, & Venkataraman, 2017). There is now more and more competition and it is now easy to enter into the market. This is making organizations to engage in the unethical practices for their long term survival. For this purpose, they are using unfair means of conducting the business and facing the competition effectively.

Moreover, we are now living in an era of technology and there now more ways of deceiving other competitors. Now the world has taken the shape of the global village and no organization can escape from this competition. When there are so many forces operating in the market, then there is more need for having morals and ethics in business practices. Thus, ethics are making a retort. Due to this inescapable need, now organizations are going to have a code of ethics and conduct (Schaltegger & Burritt, 2018) Likewise, they are also incorporating ethics into their training and employee orientation so employees may also learn the importance of ethical business practices while joining the organizations. Thus, it is the business culture that guides people and asks them to refrain from unethical or immoral practices. Morals and ethics seem more important today than at any other time in history as today is the world of severe competition. No society can function without any check on the moral values and require the rules and procedures to be used in business practices.

Some people may object this as immoral practices were always there in business organizations. Some organizations were more involved in these practices who have weak corporate cultures. Thus, they were also in need of moral and ethics as today's organizations need these. This is although correct to some extent the degree of this was not much as it is today. However, technology has a greater effect on the ethical decisions as now there is a social-media-driven world and call for the test of morals of all senior executives and a high profile people in the business world.

In addition, these values also affect the leaders and their behaviors in organizations. They are also required to practices these virtues as they are the mentors and role models. They must understand the importance of these values in the organizations. They must ensure the presence of ethics permeates in all features of organizational processes (Bedi, Alpaslan, & Green, 2016). They must engage in the practice of positive workplace ethics as it will add a new moral dimension to their leadership. Thus, they must overall practices the ethical leadership in their organizations to escape from the unethical business practices that cause harm to the organizations in the long run (Mihelic, Lipicnik, & Tekavcic, 2010).

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