

Review and Prospect of Differential Leadership Research

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Abstract. Leadership style is under the background of Chinese native culture of difference in the organization leadership and subordinate relations of concrete summary, its essence is the manager in managing subordinates will be divided into "insiders" and "outsiders" and discriminatory a local leadership behavior, Chinese organization that is based on the type of difference as a result of the "pattern of difference sequence" discriminatory, highlighted by the leadership of the inequities of the allocation of resources, reciprocal social exchange and the relationship between dynamic characteristics is not only with western type, the leadership of the existing more highlights the leadership and subordinate in Chinese organization unique interaction, it is worth "localization" of the academic value and research propositions. Therefore, this paper reviews related researches in recent years from the research origin, concept, measurement, theoretical perspective and function mode of differential leadership, and points out the future research direction of differential leadership on this basis, providing theoretical guidance for Chinese scholars to carry out the research on local differential leadership.

Keywords: Differential Leadership; Discrimination; Differential Pattern of sequences; Local Research.

1. Introduction

Local research has been an important topic concerned by Chinese management circles in recent years. Among them, what is effective leadership is one of the issues in the field of organizational management [1]. Researchers believe that as a social process, leadership is universal, but the content of leadership is affected by cultural factors, and there are cultural differences in the connotation and effectiveness of leadership[2]. Therefore, when conducting research on leadership, it is necessary to consider the social culture of the organization[3]. And based on China's leadership style of difference of the birth of "pattern of difference sequence" (Differential leadership) is a kind of very special leadership style, not only with the existing western leadership theories, but also highlights the Chinese enterprise organization leader and the subordinate's unique interactive, to local management researchers to focus on, and an in-depth study of the system.

At present, researches on Chinese leadership mostly use mature western leadership theories to explain Chinese local management problems. For example, scholars mostly use leader-member exchange theory (LMX) and value-driven leadership theory to explore local management problems. However, with the deepening of China's reform and opening up, western leadership theories have more and more influence on China's management practices, and at the same time, the phenomenon of "acclimatization" gradually increases. The reason for this phenomenon is that the interpersonal relationship between leaders and subordinates in Chinese organizations has unique Chinese cultural characteristics. Firstly, from the perspective of ethical norms, interpersonal interaction in Chinese organizations follows the principle of "respect", which means rights and obligations. The imbalance between leadership and subordinate status in an organization. In the organization, since the leader is in a high position, the subordinate follows the principle of "respect" when communicating with him. Moreover, leaders hold the scarce resources in the organization, and subordinates depend on them and are in a passive and weak position. Therefore, in the organizational context of the local hierarchy, subordinates may hide their equal personality in social communication and possess "differential personality". The principle of kinship is regulated by blood relationship or kinship ethics. It is reflected in the organization that leaders often treat subordinates differently according to

their relationship strength, relationship attribute, subordinate ability and loyalty, which is the specific embodiment of the principle of "kinship" in the organization. Secondly, from the perspective of resource allocation, the leader of an organization maintains the relationship between the superior and the inferior by controlling the resources, or maintains the relationship between the superior and the subordinate by allocating resources to the subordinate who is close to them, so that the subordinate of the subordinate is attached to the senior. Finally, from the perspective of reward and punishment mechanism, differential leadership can punish those subordinates who dare to challenge the hierarchy of differential order through formal and informal institutional norms, further consolidating the order established on the basis of differential order and their authoritarian status. Therefore, based on these factors different from the characteristics of western organizations, we should strengthen the localization study of differential leadership based on the Chinese social situation.

2. The Concept Connotation of Differential Leadership

Through the clinical observation and study of Chinese enterprise groups, Taiwan scholar found that there are different treatments in the Chinese leadership organization, leadership will be based on the strength of the subordinates and their relationship (guanxi) and attributes, subordinate loyalty and subordinate to, they are divided into "insiders" and "outsiders", and with different ways of management, such as subordinates to "own" magnanimity, strict demanding of the "outsiders" subordinate and discriminatory in terms of resource allocation, etc. Based on the theory of paternalistic leadership and "pattern of differential order", he put forward differential order leadership. Subsequently, Some scholar enriched the definition and added more elements of Chinese culture when defining differential leadership. They defined the differential leadership as that under the atmosphere of humanism, Chinese leaders would treat different subordinates in different ways and give more preferential treatment to their preferred subordinates. However, These scholar focused on the leadership perspective in their definition of differential leadership, emphasizing the division standard of leadership to subordinates. However, interpersonal interaction in an organization is bidirectional, and both the leader and the subordinate play an important role in relationship maintenance. Therefore, the connotation of differential leadership should be further discussed by subsequent scholars.

3. The Theoretical Basis of Differential Leadership

From the perspective of leadership behavior in organizations, in Chinese organizations with "differential order pattern" operation, leaders often seek advice from "own people" in the decision-making process, reach consensus with "own people" in the interaction process, and then form a decision. From the perspective of the operation mode of rules and regulations in the organization, the internal and external relations of the organization are deeply embedded, and the formal organization presents informality. At this time, the strength and attribute of the relationship with the leader is the standard for judging "own people", "outsiders" and "people on the edge of the organization", and also the boundary of the operation of rules and regulations. In this way, "outsiders" must abide by the organization's rules and regulations. However, the subordinate of "own person" does not strictly follow the rules and regulations, and can be accommodated even if it violates the rules and regulations. At this time, the organization's rules and regulations are in "differential order". From the perspective of the employment mechanism in organizations, Chinese organizations in the differential structure not only consider the working ability of talents but also pay attention to the relationship between individuals and leaders. Specifically, leaders in Chinese organizations are deeply influenced by the two dimensions of "personal ability" and "relationship with leaders" in terms of employment. From the perspective of the promotion mechanism in an organization, "relationship" and ability are important factors that influence the evaluation and promotion of subordinates, and "relationship" plays a significant role in personal promotion. Subordinates who are treated unfairly by the leader can

get more care from the leader in work and more work resources, which will be more conducive to their career growth and promotion .

Differential pattern theory has a strong explanatory power for Chinese society and interpersonal relationship, which best represents the nature of interpersonal relationship in Chinese society. Therefore, it is of great significance to understand the influence mechanism of Chinese leadership theory to study the leadership phenomenon in Chinese organizations with the differential pattern theory.

4. Research on Differential Leadership

Differential leadership is a unique leadership style in Confucian culture, which is mainly characterized by "relationship" between people. It pays attention to egotism, humanism and specialism ethics, which accurately fits the reality of interpersonal communication in Chinese society. This kind of leadership behavior is influenced by the traditional Chinese culture, such as respecting the lower level, being loyal, filial piety and righteousness, and so on. It exists in the organization for a long time and plays an important role in maintaining the effective operation of the organization. In recent years, it has attracted the attention of many scholars and won the praise of scholars .

4.1 Individual Level

Differential leadership, a kind of relational leadership, is a common leadership style in Chinese organizations. Although the concept of differential leadership has been proposed for more than ten years, there is not much research on it. A review of the existing research on differential leadership shows that it has a significant impact on subordinates' attitude, behavior, performance and creative output.

4.2 Team Level

From the perspective of learning theory of the difference in the team leader, team "outsiders" groups and "own" will compare, and learn from group himself, is expected to establish a good interaction, in this interaction, team communication and exchange to strengthen communication, knowledge sharing channels have been established, so as to promote knowledge sharing between members of the team. Some scholar took 46 working teams in Taiwan as the research object to study the influence of differential leadership on team knowledge sharing behavior. They found that the differential leadership at the team level significantly affected the knowledge sharing behavior in the team. In addition, differential leadership at the team level has an impact on the team identification of subordinates. Other scholar pointed out that the caring communication and promotion reward of differential leadership have a positive effect on team identity, while tolerance of mistakes has a significant negative effect on team identity. The ethical climate of the team partially mediates the relationship between them. From the perspective of social impact theory, the differential leadership in a team, the motivation of "outsiders" subordinates to obtain the preferential treatment of leaders will prompt them to learn from "insiders" subordinates, work hard and put forward new ideas; At the same time, "insider" subordinates feel the competitive pressure from "outsider" subordinates. In order to maintain their own advantages, they will show loyalty to leaders and put forward more work-related ideas. Therefore, it is conducive to the improvement of the creativity of the whole team members . Some scholars, based on the role theory and from the perspective of the dynamic process of knowledge team interaction, explore that differential leadership can have a double-sided impact on team operation through team conflict. For example, some scholar found through empirical research that differential leadership could predict team creativity and team knowledge hiding, and that team conflict and task conflict mediated this process [4].

5. Future Research Prospects of Differential Leadership

5.1 Development of Differential Leadership Scale

Current differential leadership scale, which is based on more staff perspective, its validity and reliability although has reached the requirements of the mainland, but over time, the continuous development of economy and corporate change, scale can also can reflect the mainland in the organization management problem remains to be further discussed. Moreover, in the existing research and interpretation, most scholars classify employees from the perspective of leadership, but in the actual situation, the classification of employees is also very important, and these two classification models will produce deviations. Therefore, in the future, we can consider developing the differential leadership scale from the perspective of leadership and subordinates based on the context of the Chinese mainland, exploring dimensions that may be overlooked, considering more contextual factors, supporting with more theoretical models, and further improving The reliability and validity of the scale provides more quantitative evidence support.

5.2 Enrich the Research on the Effectiveness of Differential Leadership at the Individual Level

Regarding the effectiveness of differential leadership at the individual level, the impact of differential leadership on the effectiveness of subordinates is tested theoretically and empirically. First of all, the existing research mainly focuses on the positive aspects of the leadership behavior, innovation behavior and creativity of the subordinate leaders. But the differential leadership is a "double-edged sword". When studying the effectiveness of differential leadership, we must not only consider the positive impact of its biased treatment, but also the negative aspects of differential leadership. For example, in the process of vying for leadership bias and the need to treat the resources behind them, there will be confrontation, exclusion, and even organizational conflicts and conflicts, reducing leadership effectiveness. Therefore, future research should focus on the "dark side" of differential leadership, such as exploring the influence of differential leadership on the turnover intentions and separation behaviors of non-ethical behaviors, non-ethical behaviors, anti-production behaviors, silent behaviors, and workplace depression. Pros and cons face the effectiveness of differential leadership. Secondly, in the discussion of the mediating effect of differential leadership effectiveness, the existing research mainly focuses on internal human identity perception, work input, emotional commitment, organizational support, psychological privilege and team innovation atmosphere. But are there other mediator variables in the process of the effectiveness of differential leadership? For example, psychological contract, psychological security, psychological empowerment, and subordinate identification of leaders or organizations, etc. Is it an intermediary? This is a fundamental key issue that is worth exploring. Furthermore, in the discussion of the regulatory effects of differential leadership effectiveness, current research focuses on variables such as individualism/collectivism, individual modernity/traditional, rights distance, and traditional Chinese values. Are there other regulatory variables in addition to the above-mentioned regulatory variables? For example, do employees' emotional intelligence, political role in the process of differential leadership effectiveness? Finally, from Team-level research leadership behavior plays an important role in in-depth analysis of team members' psychology, behavior, and performance. Then, what is the mechanism of the effect of team-level differential leadership on the effectiveness of individual facial facial genus? Therefore, future research should conduct cross-level systematic research on differential leadership.skills, and other variables that reflect employee characteristics also play a regulatory.

5.3 Enrich the Research on the Mechanism of the Effectiveness of Differential Leadership at the Team Level

Leadership behavior is multi-level[5], and team-level research contributes to the understanding of the overall phenomenon. From a fair perspective, the "self-person" subordinates perceive the leadership's biased approach to improve their work efficiency, and then the leader may lead the team

to meet performance requirements. On the other hand, the “outsiders” subordinates will be dissatisfied with the perceived differential treatment of leaders. In particular, the uneven distribution of resources may lead to unfair feelings of “outsiders” and reduce the enthusiasm and satisfaction of subordinates[6], which in turn affects team effectiveness[7]. From a cognitive perspective, the “outsiders” ministry recognizes that the employee classification model of differential leadership is not static and will change with the subordinate's own ability and loyalty. This subordinate classification model forms an incentive source for the hard work of “outsiders” to a certain extent, and enhances the enthusiasm of the “outsiders” subordinates, which in turn affects team effectiveness. Therefore, whether the influence of differential leadership on team effectiveness plays a positive or negative role seems to be inconclusive. Therefore, future research should explore the role of differential leadership at the team level.

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