

## **Analyzing the Leadership Styles of Managers in an Organisation and Comparing it with the Self Perception of the Leader Style**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper intends to analyse the extent to which the different leadership styles (using the situational leadership model) i.e. Direct (A) , Coaching (B) , Facilitating (C) and Delegation (D), are applicable in an organisation across the various levels of supervisors. Further, the leadership style of the various supervisors (as indicated by a subordinate response survey) was compared with the self-perception of the leadership style using a self perception survey. Each supervisor exhibited more of one style and less of the other. Primary data has been collected from a software company in New Delhi. In most of the cases the leaders over perceived themselves to be more of delegators and believed they supported their staff by delegating them the responsibility and authority. Whereas, in all of these instances the subordinate response suggested that they exhibited the direction style more. While no one leadership style is good or bad, it has been shown through some previous studies that subordinates prefer a delegation style of leadership more in an organisation. This provides useful insights for top managers that what they might perceive as delegation role is being viewed by subordinates as more of a direction role involving less motivation factors and autonomy from the leader's side. The supervisors might actually need to redefine their job role to suit this leadership style which is preferred by the employees and match it with their own perception. Proper communication between the supervisors and subordinates is required to discover the gaps and understand the lack.*

**Keywords:** leadership, delegation, self-perception, autonomy.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The chosen organisation for the study has consistently ranked high in the Great Place to Work index constituting to the top 5 globally. This year however, it topped the charts and became The Best company to work for. This is what motivated us to learn of the leadership styles of the superiors in the organization and understand the harmony between the supervisors and the subordinates..As a company, we found the organisation to be less ridden with multiple layers of authority and there were more functional separations that of line of control.

The situational theory of leadership suggests that no single style is ideal. Rather, everything relies upon the current circumstance and which sort of administration and techniques are most appropriate to the undertaking. As indicated by this hypothesis, the best pioneers are those that can adjust their style to the circumstance and take a gander at prompts, for example, the kind of errand, the nature of the gathering, and different elements that may add to taking care of business.

Situational initiative hypothesis is frequently alluded to as the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory, after its designers, Dr. Paul Hersey, creator of "The Situational Leader," and Kenneth Blanchard, creator of "One-Minute Manager."

The Situational Leadership Model is a relevant structure for pioneers to coordinate their practices with the execution needs of the individual or gathering that they are endeavouring to impact. Situational Leadership depends on the connection among pioneers and adherents and fills in as a system to dissect every circumstance

dependent on the Performance Readiness Level that a devotee shows in playing out a particular undertaking, capacity or goal. At that point, in light of the pioneer's determination, the fundamental measures of relationship conduct and assignment conduct are connected and conveyed to the supporter with the end goal to help their requirements and advance improvement.

The structure is reliant upon two key practices: supporting and coordinating. Coordinating practices incorporate giving particular headings and guidelines and endeavouring to control the conduct of gathering individuals. Supporting practices incorporate activities, for example, empowering subordinates, tuning in, and offering acknowledgment and input.

The theory identifies four basic leadership styles, including:

**1) Directing (A):**

- a) High on directing behaviour
- b) detailed instructions, gives specific goals and objectives
- c) low on supporting behaviours
- d) checks frequently with staff to keep them on track
- e) demonstrates the steps involved in doing the job

**2) Coaching (B):**

- a. Represents Management Position in a convincing manner
- b. High on both directing and supporting behaviours.
- c. Tries to motivate people to make decisions
- d. Praise staff for their good work
- e. Provides staff with a lot of feedback on their progress

**3) Facilitating (C):**

- a) Low on directing behaviour and high on supporting behaviours
- b) Involves staff in making the decision which will affect their work
- c) Makes the staff feel free to discuss their concerns
- d) Holds frequent staff meetings
- e) Helps staff locate and support their own development activities
- f) Listens to staff problems and concerns without criticizing or judging

**4) Delegating (D):**

- a) Low on both directing and supporting behaviours
- b) Delegate broad responsibility to staff and expect them to handle the details
- c) Expect the staff to find and correct their own errors

The main point of SL theory is that not one of these four leadership styles is best. Instead, an effective leader will match his or her behaviour to the developmental skill of each subordinate for the task at hand.

We use these four leadership styles in our analysis in the organisation.

**LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Situational leadership is seen to have emerged after the concept of trait-based leadership. Social scientists like Karl Marx, Hebert Spener (1884) believed that any personal or leadership traits are imbibed by the result of time intervention, that time is the key to produce a leader. Psychologists assumed that no optimal profile for a leader exists, and no leader got the same characteristics as others. Therefore, different situations ought to be handled in a unique manner since every situation has its own characteristic, circumstances and background. Academics have built upon the extensive research of Lewin (1935) and identified three mix of leadership styles based upon the descriptive model of leadership climate. (Miltnerberger, 2011)

Situational leadership is a leadership theory that merges both the directive and supportive dimensions, and each of the dimensions described by the theory need to be applied appropriately according to a given situation. Leaders operating under the Situational Leadership theory need to assess their employees by the way of evaluating their commitment to accomplish a certain task effectively and efficiently. Situational leadership implies that the leaders need to modify the degree of supportiveness and directness to their subordinates according to the given situation of subordinates and their exhibited level of motivation. This type of Leadership

demands that leaders vary their behaviour and leadership style according to their subordinate’s commitment. (Kindle, 2009) Situational leadership is the mixture task behaviour, worker commitment and relation behaviour. Studies have shown that the success of a situational leadership style is correlated to the combination mix of these three components that should be assimilated; it should allow openness between leaders and his subordinates in addition to ensuring independence and competence in employee’s decision making. A situational leader attempts to identify the characteristics of his followers in order to comprehend which leadership style to use with his team members. (Farmer, 2012)

Moreover, situational leaders are seen to handle problems innovatively and much faster, by providing the appropriate guidance and task support for their subordinates in order to accomplish the set goals successfully. According to some studies (Cnaff & Wright, 2013), this is positively and significantly correlated to the subordinate’s productivity.

Blake and McCanse’s Leadership Grid (1991) revolves around the Managerial Grid developed by Blake and Mouton (1964). Blake and Mouton (1978) stated: The Grid represents scenarios when interpersonal communication is ineffective, and steps to make it effective. Blake and Mouton (1964) stated that the purpose of the organization was seen synonymous to the profit the organisation was making and goods production. But the main assets that are the people form the essence of the organisation, through which the organisational objectives can be achieved. Thus leadership style is an important area to be focussed on and improved.

**OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

This paper intends to analyse the extent to which the different leadership styles (as enlisted in the situational leadership model ) i.e. Direct (A) , Coaching (B) , Facilitating (C), Delegation (D) are applicable in an organisation across the various levels of supervisors. Further the leadership style of the various supervisors (as indicated by a subordinate response survey) was compared with the self-Perception of the leadership style using a separate self perception survey.

**DATA AND METHODOLOGY:**

Primary data has been collected from one of the largest ERP vending companies located in New Delhi. Five supervisors working across different levels in the organisation were asked to fill a self-perception leadership style based questionnaire. (Annexure 1)

Their respective subordinates were asked to fill a separate questionnaire, indicating the leadership styles of their supervisors, based on a similar set of questions that the supervisors were asked above. (Annexure 2)

Total score for each type of leadership style (A, B, C, D) was calculated for each of the supervisor and the subordinate response. Point graphs were made corresponding to the 4 styles. For comparison purposes, the supervisor point graph and his respective subordinate’s point graph was plotted in the same figure. (Annexure 3)

Point graphs were used to conduct a graphical analysis to understand the discrepancy in the supervisor and their subordinate responses.

**GRAPHICAL ANALYSIS:**

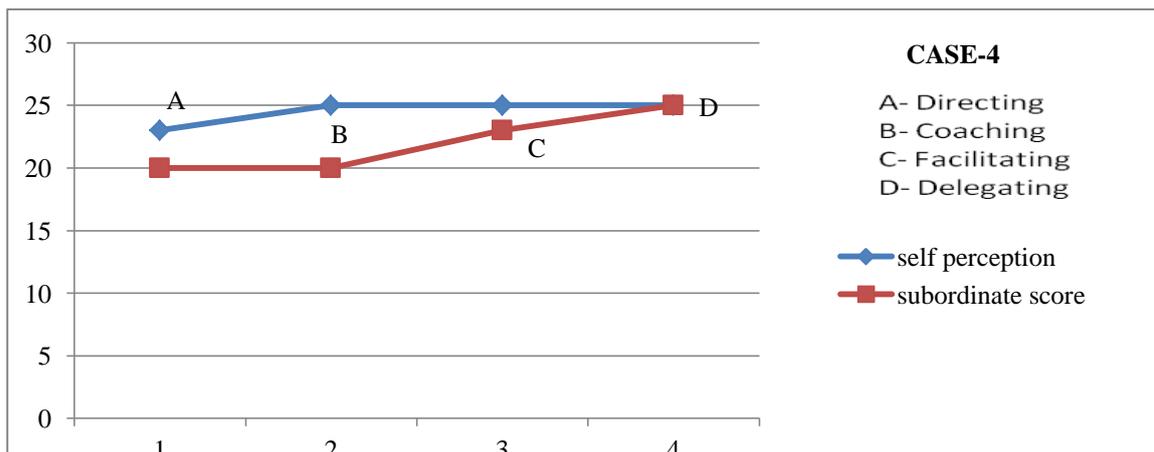
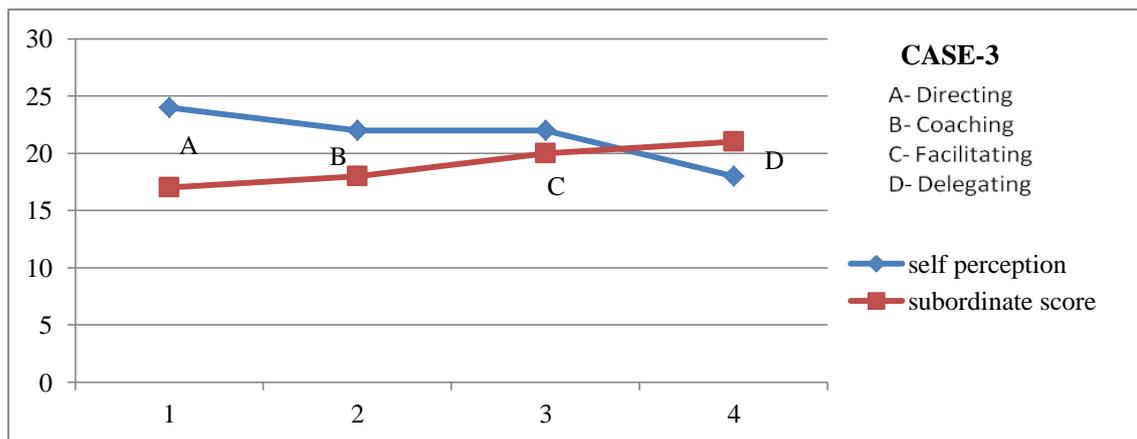
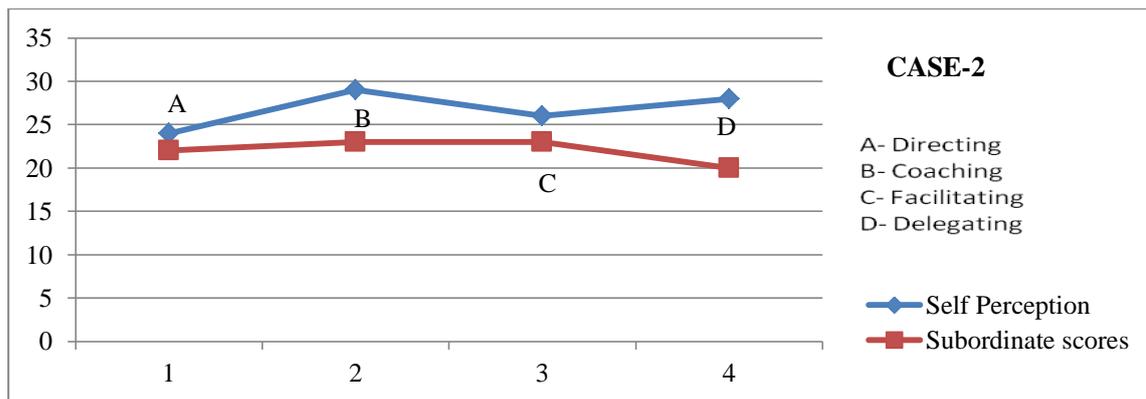
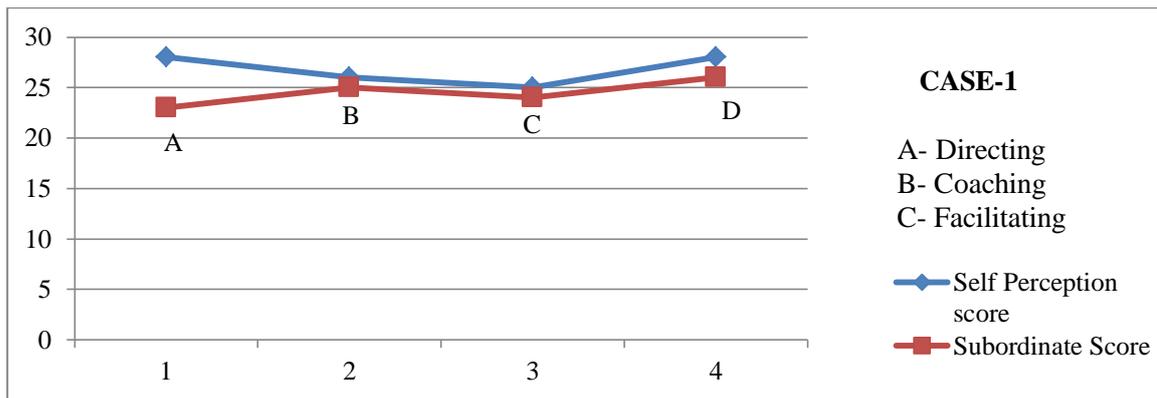
Supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
Directing	28	24	24	23	18
Coaching	26	29	22	25	16
Facilitating	25	26	22	25	18
Delegating	28	28	18	25	19
Subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
Directing	23	22	17	20	19
Coaching	25	23	18	20	14
Facilitating	24	23	20	23	14
Delegating	26	20	21	25	15

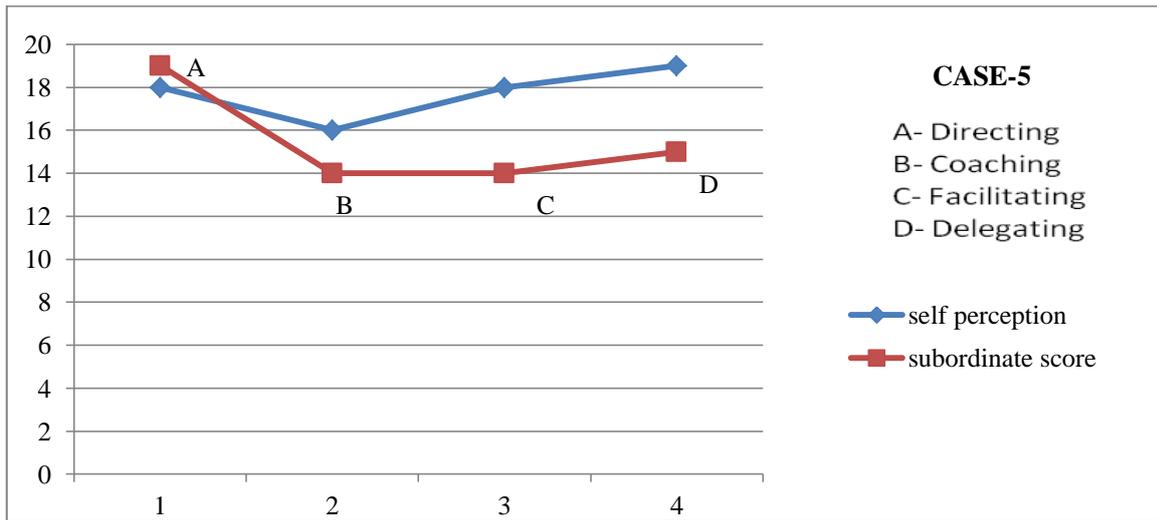
The above table 1.1 consists the total score on each type of leadership style for Supervisors 1 to 5.

Table 1.2 consists of the total score on each type of leadership assigned by the subordinates to each of the supervisors 1 to 5.

The scores have been calculated by summing up the scores of the relevant questions in the questionnaire for each type.

Following section consists of the relevant graphs, based on the above cumulative data.





**MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSION:**

There was a clear discrepancy between the subordinate scores and the scores indicated by the supervisors self-perception questionnaire, as clearly seen in each of the above five cases.

- The four styles had approximately similar level scores for all supervisors, indicating the managers follow all four styles with varying degree, coaching and directing dominating the others in most cases.
- Overall the supervisors in SAP, perceive themselves to follow/want to more of a delegation approach, whereas the subordinates believe that in most cases either coaching or direction approach is followed without giving them the power of decision making.
- In some cases, the supervisor and the subordinate graphs represent diametrically opposite scenario, while in others its converging in the same direction.
- In case 1, the subordinate’s response is in coherence with the supervisor’s perception of his leadership style.
- For instance, in Case 2 and case 3, where the leader perceives himself to be more delegating , his subordinate views him as a more directing leader as compared to the other categories.
- Whereas, in Case 4 both the graphs move in the same direction, that is the leader correctly perceives himself to be more of a delegator , as verified by the score of his subordinate.
- In case 5 however, the graph of the leader follows a different trajectory that the rest. Here the graph shows that the leader considers himself to follow more of both - Direction and Delegation style, both of which are diametrically opposite to each other. This result was obviously not duplicated by the subordinate response, who considered him to follow direction style of leadership. This could be due to Personal Bias of the supervisor in filling the self-survey.

**IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

As we saw, in most of the cases the leaders over perceived themselves to be more of delegators and believed they supported their staff by delegating them the responsibility and authority. Whereas, in all of these instances the subordinate response suggested that they exhibited the direction style of leadership more. While no one leadership style is good or bad , it has been shown through some previous studies that subordinates prefer a delegation style of leadership more in an organisation .(Helle, Jens, Maria et al, (2017))

This provides useful insights for top managers that what they might perceive was delegation role is being viewed by subordinates as more of a direction role involving less motivation factors from the leader’s side. The supervisors might actually need to redefine their job role to suit this leadership style which is preferred by the employee and match it with their own perception of playing the delegation leadership role.

Proper communication and dialogue between the supervisors and subordinates is required to discover the gaps and understand the lack, so that necessary training can be given to the manager to lead their subordinates in the desired manner and to make sure the subordinates receive what they are trying to deliver

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