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Enhancing the Development of Leaders to Support Globalization

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Abstract

An emerging issue in the field of training and development is the increasing demand of global leaders for organizations to compete in the global market. While models have been created to assist with the development of global leaders, researchers have found that many organizations prefer not to integrate these models into their training unless there is an immediate need. We reviewed the literature to understand globalization, leadership models, how organizations can enhance leadership development to increase their competitiveness, and the effects of global leaders on employee performance. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted global leadership development and caused greater challenges to organizations. Organizations should enhance their current training models so that leaders can develop the skills needed to navigate a post-pandemic work environment and match the fresh mindsets of employees. Reflections and suggestions are made regarding the future of global leadership development.

Keywords: globalization, global leader, leadership development

Enhancing the Development of Leaders to Support Globalization

In a world inhabiting eight billion people, humans have invented multiple alternatives to keep everyone interconnected. Through the inventions of trains, cars, planes, phones, computers, and the World Wide Web, the transmission of information, goods, and services can now be completed quite quickly. With the never-ending advances in technology, organizations have expanded globally. A company could have their main headquarters based in the US, regional offices all over Europe, factories in Asia, while they use products shipped from South America. As organizations expand to newer regions around the world, those who are in leadership positions find themselves facing the intimidating challenges of the global trade. How well can organizations train and develop their own leaders to learn the necessary, broad skills to be able to interact on a global scale? This paper will address the current training and development models for global leaders and their effectiveness on both an employee level and an organizational level. The paper will then focus on the effects of leaders and globalization because of the COVID-19 pandemic while exploring recommendations that may enhance established training and development models.

Global Organizational Leadership

Organizational leadership is defined as setting goals that will meet or exceed an organization's needs while managing and motivating employees to reach those goals (Tokar, 2020). To some, the concept of leadership could be visualized as an authoritarian figure whose role is to have the final vote when making decisions. According to Antonacopoulou and Bento (2018), today's chaotic world does not allow such a leader to be successful in their role. Their "leadership-as-learning" development model humanizes the role of a leader as a figure who takes challenges as they present a fresh perspective, while being open to learning from others, even if those they are learning from are in non-leadership roles (Antonacopoulou & Bento, 2018). A leader who develops using this model will strengthen their emotional intelligence, learn humility and empathy, and will be able to recognize the work and dedication of other individuals. With this "leadership-as-learning" model, leaders will see themselves as guides who are available to assist, not superiors who demand and look down upon others. Dennett (2018) believes leadership training and development courses should focus on leaders building twelve key competencies: systemic thinking, anticipatory thinking, critical thinking, being fair, cooperation and collaboration, participation, empathy,

interdisciplinary work, communication, planning innovation projects, evaluation, and ambiguity. Dennett (2018) describes each competency as being the key to producing positive outcomes of a successful leader and a successful organization that can compete on an international level. While leaders can be made through training and development, Heath, Martin, and Shahisaman (2017, pp. 134-135) explain that some leaders have higher intelligence competencies that separate them from other leaders. More successful leaders have a higher IQ, emotional intelligence (EQ), cultural intelligence (CQ) moral intelligence (MQ), digital intelligence (DQ), gender intelligence (GQ), and global intelligence (GQ). These leadership competencies highlight how well-rounded an individual is and their potential to be a successful global leader (Heath, Martin, & Shahisaman, 2017; Mendenhall, Weber, Arnardottir, & Oddou, 2017).

Globalization

Globalization in terms of organizations refers to the use of technology to make the world more connected for communication and for trade of goods and services (Kolb, 2021). An advantage of globalization is the exposure throughout the international market that organizations can greatly benefit from. On the contrary, a disadvantage of globalization would be the immense pressure and competition that arises from such exposure. For example, over the last couple of years, there has been an increase in streaming services, each competing for subscribers. These companies benefit from the global market as they can reach a wider audience and make a larger profit, but leaders of these companies face the challenge of figuring out the best way to beat their competition. Companies must have effective leaders who are creative, innovative, and able to adapt to rapid change to stay competitive in the global market. Leaders must be able to predict when there may be radical changes in the global market depending on current trends and they need to be prepared for how to manage any potential issues ahead of time (Hashmi, & Ahsanullah, 2018, p. 231).

Diversity and Inclusion: Its Importance to Global Leaders

Without leadership training and developmental programs, how is an organization expected to grow? Due to organizations evolving, there will always be change. Change causes differences in operations, which need to be assessed to ensure that the organization continues to be competitive. When there is a lack of a diverse population, there is risk of a stagnant organization. A homogeneous team would refer to most individuals having the same life experiences and backgrounds. This would often mean that they have similar ways of thinking. By leaders prioritizing diversity, new employees with different perspectives open the door to innovation and success. Bonsu and Twum-Danso (2018) states the importance of "cross-cultural leadership" regarding globalization and recognizes that leaders are slow to adopt this leadership style within their organizations. Developing leaders incorporating this style means they must learn to be culturally sensitive. Leaders should have the skills and knowledge to interact with others of divergent backgrounds respectfully. Globalization allows leaders to communicate with individuals based in other countries, and also their own team may be very diverse. Understanding more about diverse cultures will allow leaders to increase employee satisfaction and job performance. Those who facilitate leadership training should emphasize the importance of leaders mastering one-on-one conversations and thinking of their subordinates as individuals with different experiences, thoughts, and ideas. Leaders should refrain from thinking of their team as a group of homogeneous employees who are the cogs of the organization. Diversity and inclusion are important in terms of developing leaders for globalization. Diversity brings different ideas to the table through a variety of perspectives. Inclusion is also crucial as every individual should have the opportunity to play an active role in the organization. According to Kuknor and Bhattacharya (2020), inclusion in the workplace largely depends on managerial behavior through their support and trust. When leaders do not support employees by being inclusive, it ultimately leads to lower production rates, lower employee motivation and satisfaction, and higher employee turnover rates. As a result, if global leaders are unable to build rapport with each of their employees, the consequences that could arise would be costly for the organization.

Global Leadership Model

Becoming a global leader is not an easy task. Story's (2011) global leadership model indicates that there are three necessary steps in becoming a global leader: having a global mindset, developing a

self-authored identity, and developing an adaptation worldview. This global leadership model can measure the development of global leaders and predict how successful they will become. The leader must be up for the job at hand, must have the mindset to conquer any challenge, have self-confidence and a respectful perspective of other cultures. Story (2011) indicated that leaders cannot effectively lead if they are not capable of understanding cultural differences. Organizations have current issues dealing with cultural sensitivities every day to the point where training is becoming an annual requirement. When dealing with globalization, leaders will collaborate with a plethora of individuals with diverse backgrounds. Leaders may develop an understanding of cultural differences, especially through experiences, and how to appropriately conduct business without biases or prejudices. *Psychological capital* (Story, 2011) on global leadership development states that those who have hope efficacy, resiliency, and optimism will be more successful throughout their journey as a global leader. A strong global leader must be able to believe in themselves and remain resilient no matter what. The development of a global leader will take time and will not happen overnight. For the proper development of a global leader, an organization must invest time and money into adequate training (Story, 2011).

Global Leaders' Influences on Employees and Organization

Consistent leadership training and development is crucial in creating effective global leaders. A transformational leader, who exhibits an idealized influence and an attractive behavior with role-modeling, evokes awareness among the followers of value congruence with the leader (Tung, 2017; Lewis, Boston, & Peterson, 2017). Leaders influence their followers to perform better through their determination to meet or exceed the needs of the organization. Global leaders need to be creative and open-minded when it comes to motivating employees. To keep up with globalization, leaders must shift their style of management to maximize the productivity and creativity of their own employees (Bonsu & Twum-Danso, 2018). This could be done in the form of providing incentives or by recognizing/praising employees for their hard work and dedication (Turner, Baker, Schroeder, Johnson, & Chung, 2018). A helpful suggestion for global leaders to motivate their employees and boost morale is to outline the path toward growth of the organization. Leaders who have vision but not passion will find it difficult to motivate their followers (Dennett, 2018). If leaders fully immerse themselves in believing that they will reach their goals, employee motivation increases and so does job performance. Leaders who know what their goals are but are indifferent about whether those goals are reached, causes lower employee motivation, employee satisfaction, and job performance. Global leaders not only have a positive effect on employee morale, but they also have a positive effect on the organization as a whole. Organizations experience higher profits, ROIs, employee satisfaction, job performance, and a lower employee turnover rate.

COVID-19: Effect on Globalization and Leadership Development

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of organizations around the world were abruptly disrupted with their day-to-day operations. Not only did this stop organizations from having effective communication with other regions, but it greatly affected trade globally. With the use of technology, global leaders have had to scramble and find alternatives to managing employees and operating international markets. Platforms such as Zoom meetings, Skype, Microsoft Teams, and Webex, have become the preferred communication tools for many organizations as employees have gone remote. The development of leaders was hindered due to the pandemic. Gone were the days of face-to-face training allowing for role-playing, simulations, and real-life practice. As soon as organizations went remote, even experienced leaders had to learn how to manage their employees through a screen. However, after a pandemic disrupts the operation of an organization, it takes time to rebuild and it may not be fully operational as it was before (Shufutinsky, DePorres, Long, & Sibel, 2020). While many leaders may prefer going back to the office for in-person interactions, the pandemic has changed the mindsets of many individuals. Employees may prefer to stay remote full-time, or it may be more beneficial for the organization to become hybrid. It is true that the pandemic disrupted the training and development of leadership to an extent. But, when leaders are put into positions of uncertainty, their previous training, knowledge, experiences, and skills should have prepared them enough to be able to adapt to the situation and continue to lead, manage, and motivate others to meet or exceed the needs of the organization.

Recommended Global Leadership Development Models

Sustainability leadership is an emerging term that multiple researchers use to discuss the type of competencies leaders need to be effective in the future and in response to the significant issues and uncertainties around the world. Fry and Egel (2021) propose a training and development leadership model, Global Leadership for Sustainability (GLfS) in terms of the environment (climate change), society (social problems), and the economy. By using this model, organizations can train and develop global leaders who are socially conscious, compassionate, open-minded, and community oriented. This model further pushes away the notion that leaders should be viewed as those with all the power to make decisions. Instead, GLfS focuses on developing leaders to have the essential skills and global mindset useful for collaboration with employees, building relationships, and creativity (Fry & Egel, 2021).

To adopt these models, organizations can emphasize in leadership training the importance of collaboration, listening, and addressing workplace situations promptly (Rickley & Stackhouse, 2022). Role-playing would be a valuable addition to leadership training to have leaders develop their communication skills and strengthen relationships with employees and clients. To build social awareness, it is important that leadership training and development include volunteering, mentoring, and new work responsibilities.

Leadership Development Programs (LDPs)

As leadership development programs (LDPs) have become more popular, organizations are experiencing challenges developing employees with the necessary skills that are needed for an effective leader (Holt, Hall, & Gilley, 2018). It is believed that these programs, while effective, focus on the general skills of a leader as a one-size-fits-all concept. This is not beneficial as each situation requires a leader to change their leadership style to best manage. Instead, these programs should focus on the more hands-on approach so that developing leaders can obtain real-life experience. Turner, Baker, Schroeder, Johnson, and Chung (2018) explain that LDPs do not consider globalization and the different environments in which leaders may find themselves. Therefore, LDPs need to be redesigned to include the rapid changes occurring throughout the world. To improve LDPs, these courses must be collaborative, and the training must incorporate moments of hands-on practice.

Conclusion

Being a leader is much more than the act of managing others to meet an organization's needs. Organizations can develop training using leadership development models to develop leaders who can manage others around the world through remote means, or within their own office to a diverse team. These leaders will be successful in changing the way they lead depending on the individual as they have gotten to know the diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences of each individual. While the world may have momentarily paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of technology aided organization leaders in maintaining global partnerships and manage employees remotely. It would be interesting to explore how organizations train leaders to interact with other leaders and how decisions are made. With the right development models, organizations can train leaders to their maximum potential. This means that effective training and leadership development programs should provide leaders with the skills needed to adapt to changing environments or with new challenges. These programs should provide leaders with all the tools they need to change their leadership style or to adapt innovative ideas. Global leaders with the necessary skills and growth mindset can stay ahead of the competition, benefit the organization and its employees, and benefit consumers and the economy.

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