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LEADERSHIP
INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

ANSWER TO THEORY QUESTIONS

Answer 1

Main features of the three leadership styles are mentioned below:

Charismatic

Charismatic leadership theories focus on the behaviors which allow such leaders to have exceptional influence over their followers (Yukl, 1999). It emanates from the followers' belief that the leader has special skills or talent (Weber, as cited in Barbuto 2005, p. 28). Charismatic leadership engages followers' self-concepts in the interest of the organizational mission spelt out by the leader (Shamir, House & Arthur 1993). However, Klein & House (1995) contend that charisma resides in the relationship of a follower and a leader. It requires a charisma-conducive environment where followers are open to charisma.

Transformational

Transformational leadership involves behaviours which transform and inspire followers to perform better than expectations and focus on the organizational good, rather than individual interest (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber 2009, p. 423). It is executed through individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation (Hernandez et al. 2011), and charisma (Bass 1990). This style appeals to higher order needs, and, cumulatively, results in a purposeful, committed, and innovative outlook towards management and results (Moynihan, Pandey & Wright 2011).

Transactional

Transactional leadership focuses on exchange of rewards which are based on performance (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber 2009). It is based on economic principles. The leader recognizes followers' needs, and monitors whether the follower is playing his role or not (Hernandez et al. 2011). Transactional leadership is difficult to practice when the leader does not have control over rewards and punishments. Contingent reward, management by exception (active and passive), and laissez-faire are the characteristics of transactional leadership (Bass 1990).

One key difference between the three types

Transactional leadership appeals to lower order needs as it is only based on economic principles. Charismatic leadership is more focused on emotional appeal, the relationship

between leader and follower, and identification of the followers with the leader. Transformational leadership is more focused on inspiration and intellectual stimulation of the followers (Bass 1990; Klein & House 1995; Yukl 1999; Barbuto 2005).

Answer 2

Yukl (1999, p. 290) highlights the omission of important behaviours for transformational leadership in existing literature. He argues that at the dyadic level of analysis, theories should include inspiring, developing and empowering behaviours. Inspiring refers to making the work more meaningful, developing relates to increasing the skills and confidence of the followers, and empowerment (power sharing) is achieved by allowing the followers to voice their views and providing them with discretion. At the group level, behaviours which facilitate agreement about objectives and strategies, and mutual trust and cooperation, and those which help to build group identification and collective efficacy should be included. At a broader, organizational level, the analysis should include transformational behaviours of articulating organizational vision and strategy to the followers, guiding and facilitating change, and supporting learning.

Answer 3

Yukl (1999, p. 289) highlights the ambiguity in theories about transactional leadership. The author points out that while transactional leadership is defined as a process of leader-follower exchange, the theory only includes various types of leader behaviors without an underlying theme or commonality. Theory does not establish a strong link between the exchange process and the transactional behaviours. Furthermore, contingent reward behaviors such as praise and recognition are relatively personal, and have elements of transformational leadership as well. Also, the reason for including passive management in transactional leadership is not clear because passive management does not involve any exchange. The scale items do not clarify how the performance problems are dealt with by the leader, and contingent punishment, which may have an exchange process, is not measured clearly. Regarding active management by exception, the scale items for monitoring are related to intrusive and controlling behaviours, and there is no elaboration of how the mistakes are corrected by the transactional leader. The reason for including active management by exception is also not explicit, and monitoring behaviors include elements of transformational leadership as well.

PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF LEADERSHIP

Answer 4

From studying the literature on leadership theories, it is evident that there is no one theory which covers all the aspects. Complexity of human personality and behaviours makes it more difficult to summarize leadership behaviours in overtly simplistic terms. The dynamics of group interactions and behaviours make the matter even more complicated. Theories on charismatic and transformational leadership are not mutually exclusive, and it is difficult to imagine leaders who do not practice transactional behaviours. I believe that traits of the leader, openness of the follower to be led, the relationships between a leader and a follower, and the overall organizational situation and environment are important determinants which determine the style practiced by the leader. All these elements combine to form a system within which leadership exists and develops.

Leaders, therefore, need to adapt to different styles of leadership based on the situation, culture and the organizational environment. However, since individual traits do play an important role, each leader can be expected to have one dominant style at all times. Deliberate variations may alter leadership behaviour only up to a certain extent. I also believe that the style of a leader may change with his level of experience and maturity. Political, cultural and economic environment may also lead to some changes in behaviours. For example, in a labour surplus market, the transactional or authoritative leadership style may be more prevalent and accepted. In other fields, such styles may not be welcome, and charismatic and transformational behaviours may yield the desired outcomes for the leader and the organization. Leadership style in government organizations may be more mellowed compared to the private sector. As argued by Chemers (2000), it is important to establish authority by appearing competent and trustworthy, and image management adds to charisma. Further, a leader needs to understand the subordinates, and guide and motivate them with his skills and abilities to work towards achievement of organizational goals. To summarize, I believe that leaders need to be transactional (albeit to a limited extent), charismatic and transformational at the same time. Transformational leadership, with inherent elements of charisma, is likely to be more impactful and can result in a stronger long-term relationship with the followers.

TABLE OF ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW INFORMATION

Answer 5

The interview transcripts are included in appendix A.

Answer 6a

Table of analysis of the interview is presented below. This is primarily based on the leadership style characteristics mentioned in Bass (1990), Klein & House (1995), Yukl (1999) and Barbuto (2005).

Interviewee A

<u>Keyword / phrase</u>	<u>Leadership styles</u>
<i><u>The leader he likes is...</u></i>	
Optimistic	Transformational, Charismatic
Confident	Transformational
Shows hands-on how the problem can be solved,	Charismatic (steps in during crisis)
Supports out-of-the-box solutions	Transformational (intellectual stimulation, encourages creativity)
<i><u>The leader he does not like ...</u></i>	
Focuses on incentives	Transactional style
Has - negative attitude....focuses on finding faults	Opposite of transformational and charismatic style
Does not stick to his opinion and changes very quickly.	Lack of persistency - Opposite of charismatic style. Not decisive – opposite of trait theory
In meetings...Promises appear unbelievable	Public impressions are not good - Unlike what is required for charismatic leadership
<i><u>A good leader</u></i>	
depends on personality.... and his qualities	Charismatic leadership and traits theory
Cannot command respect if his personality is not strong.	Charismatic leadership and traits theory
Has ‘inspirational powers’	Transformational leadership

Interviewee B

<u>Keyword / phrase</u>	<u>Leadership styles</u>
<i><u>The leader he likes is...</u></i>	
self-made man	Inspirational – Transformational
Has confidence in his abilities.	Transformational
he has knowledge	Expert power – Charismatic
and understanding	Traits – cognitive ability
finds solutions and guide employees	Intellectual stimulation - Transformational

<i>The leader he does not like is...</i>	
self-centered	Generally considered a negative trait
..shirks work, lies to his boss in front of me.	Dishonesty – Opposite of Trait theory
known for dishonesty in conduct	Dishonesty – Opposite of Trait theory
I do not like him at all.	Not likeable - Opposite of Trait theory
<i>A good leader</i>	
in-born, but ... can be developed with training.	In-born to certain extent – Trait theory
...lead by example	Transformational

Interviewee C

<u>Keyword / phrase</u>	<u>Leadership styles</u>
<i>The leader he likes is...</i>	
Visionary, big plans, long-term	Transformational, Charismatic
‘we’ attitude	Stimulating teamwork – Transformational
Works hard	Considered a good trait
Always around to help	Ability to step in – Charismatic
Does not hesitate to put in money	Risk taking - Charismatic
<i>The leader he does not like is...</i>	
uninspiring,	Opposite of transformational
self-centered, no desire to serve	Considered a bad trait
does not connect with the local populace	Lacks expressiveness with the group - Opposite of charismatic
Proud	Lacks warmth - Opposite of Charismatic
<i>A good leader</i>	
a good personality	Trait theory
Intellectual ability	Transformational
goal which inspires followers to get motivated	Transformational & Charismatic
Commitment is required	Resilient / persistent – Trait
Dithering is detrimental	Decisiveness –Trait
immorality in behavior is detrimental	Conscientious – Trait

INTERPRETATION OF INTERVIEW INFORMATION

Answer 6b

The interviewees refer to a combination of transformational and charismatic styles. They consider the inspirational element, whether through proper conduct or a visionary approach, as one of the main considerations for a good leader. However, elements of charisma, supported by proper traits is one of the bases of the transformational leadership. Transactional leadership is perhaps not so popular amongst the interviewees.

Answer 6c

This observation is consistent with my beliefs about leadership. I believe that one cannot segregate leadership styles into clearly demarcated slots, especially in relation to transformational and charismatic styles. Charisma is one of the important characteristics of transformational style, and commonly accepted positive traits are also important. Also, transformational approach is preferred for good long-term relations with the followers. Most of the interviewees prefer the transformational and charismatic styles. However, unlike what was evident from the interviews, I believe that elements of transactional style also hold their importance to a certain extent. Some employees may be motivated more by lower needs rather than higher needs, at least in the short term.

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APPENDIX A: ORIGINAL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS.

Interviewee A

- a) **Name one person who you think is a good example of a leader.**

Answer: My manager is a good example.

- b) **Describe one thing about their personality or attitude and one thing about their behaviour that makes them a leader in your opinion.**

Answer: His attitude remains positive and his outlook is always optimistic in any given situation. Regarding behaviour, whenever I take a problem to him, he does not overreact. He remains calm and confident. Shows hands-on how the problem can be solved, and supports out-of-the-box solutions.

- c) **Name one person you have or currently work with who is in a leadership position but who you think does not have the qualities of a true leader. Explain why.**

Answer: The divisional head in my company is not a good leader. Those who report to him say that he has a negative attitude and focuses on finding faults. He does not stick to his opinion and changes very quickly. Even I have noticed in meetings that he goes overboard and promises incentives on sales which appear unbelievable.

- d) **Do you think that leaders are born or made? Explain why.**

Answer: I think that leaders are born. This is because leadership depends on the personality of a person and his qualities. He cannot command respect if his personality is not strong. Leaders need to have inspirational powers otherwise they cannot have a large following.

Interviewee B

- a) **Name one person who you think is a good example of a leader.**

Answer: I like the CEO of my company. It is a small IT company which is already doing well in the local market.

- b) **Describe one thing about their personality or attitude and one thing about their behaviour that makes them a leader in your opinion.**

Answer: He is a self-made man and has tremendous confidence in his abilities. He is able to impress me because he has knowledge and understanding about all aspects of the organization. He uses this knowledge to find solutions and guide employees.

- c) **Name one person you have or currently work with who is in a leadership position but who you think does not have the qualities of a true leader. Explain why.**

Answer: My immediate supervisor is supposed to lead and motivate me, but he is self-centred. He shirks work, and often lies to his boss in front of me. He is also known for dishonesty in conduct while dealing with vendors. However, he is an expert at his job, but all the negatives drown the positivity of his skills and abilities. I do not like him at all.

- d) **Do you think that leaders are born or made? Explain why.**

Answer: I think some qualities can be in-born, but many can be developed with training. If one is told the requirements of becoming a good leader, one can practice those behaviours. For example, knowledge can be gained so that one can guide employees better. One can also be told to lead by example. To me, leading by example is the best way to inspire juniors to follow. Dishonesty puts me off.

Interviewee C

- a) **Name one person who you think is a good example of a leader.**

Answer: I think the owner of the retail outlet where I work is a good example of a leader. It is a small apparel retail outlet.

- b) **Describe one thing about their personality or attitude and one thing about their behaviour that makes them a leader in your opinion.**

Answer: He is a visionary. He has big plans which he shares with all of us sales people. He says that 'we' can make it big if this store is a success. He wants to expand and franchise after a couple of years. This is despite the fact that the business has just started. He works harder than even the sales staff and is always around to help us with difficult customers. He does not hesitate to keep putting in money on store improvements with a view to making it big in the long term.

- c) **Name one person you have or currently work with who is in a leadership position but who you think does not have the qualities of a true leader. Explain why.**

Answer: I think the local politician in my area is quite uninspiring. He appears to be self-centred, and does not connect with the local populace at all. He seems to be too proud about his achievements, and does not have a desire to serve or perform his duties.

- d) **Do you think that leaders are born or made? Explain why.**

Answer: I think that people need a good personality to become leaders. I am not talking about physical appearance only. I think that may help, but people like Hitler, Napoleon or Nelson Mandela have had a huge following despite being not so great as far as appearance is concerned. I think intellectual ability is important. However, what matters is to have a goal which inspires followers to get motivated. People leave their personal issues aside, and work towards achieving that common goal. However, the leader's commitment to the goal has to be greater than that of the subordinates. Any decline in his commitment, or any major dithering, or any immoral behaviour can quickly snap subordinates out of the spell of charisma.