Chapter 14
Followership and Leadership in Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Republic of Bulgaria

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ABSTRACT

Good leaders need followers. Without great followers, leaders would become schizophrenics sitting in their offices talking to themselves. Can a person be defined as good leader if he does not have any people to believe in him, to follow his example, to trust him? Followership is a process when the person has the capacity and willingness to follow the leader when having some target. In other words, being a good follower means having the skills, the abilities, and the desire to follow the leader in achieving the goals. The chapter aims to define what is followership, how it is related to leadership, especially in business organizations such as medium-sized enterprises. Thus, followership can be perceived as a mutual process in which the leaders and followers interact, help each other to reach the aims on individual and organizational level. The importance of followership to the leader will be analyzed followed by author's recommendations for the future and a conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

Followership is very important for the leader. In order to be successful as a leader, he needs followers. They help the leader in achieving organizational goals, they support and struggle with the leader. In order to attract them, as Robbins & Judge (2013) say, the following four steps process is a must. At first, the leader must articulate, attract them to the vision. Then the vision statement oriented at the future of the company needs to be presented to the follower. Its role is very important as it makes follower more confident. Thus the leader should be confident and believe in the goals so that he can transmit them to the followers he has. The followers need good leader as example so that they try to reach him by imitating and being courageous (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Followers are part of the organizational success. Followers affect an organization's performance level, behavioral expectations, teamwork, and innovation

for continuous quality improvement. Followers who deem their leader as effective demonstrate increased organizational commitment, work performance, proactive work behaviors, work habits, and productivity (Porter, 2016). Types and characteristics of followers are presented as well as models integrating leaders to followers have also been discussed in the chapter.

BACKGROUND WITH LITERATURE REVIEW ON FOLLOWERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Followership has been perceived as a passive part of the relationship between leader and manager. Our main research hypothesis is that:"Followers are active and they retain in the organization if satisfied with the relationship with their leader". In this regard, the chapter presents followership as new approach to leadership, types of followers and its importance for the leader.

The chapter is organized in the following way. At first, we conduct literature review on the topic of followership. We present its evolution as an approach historically. After that we present its main characteristics and types of followers. The hypothesis is tested in a survey conducted among IT companies and the factors that retain followers in the organization. Leadership can be defined as influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect mutual purposes. Mutual purposes are coming from the common enterprise as leaders and followers do together leadership. The followership comes from the word follow. In this regard, Ford and Harting (2015) perceived that it has passive meaning, such as being a follower is related to subordinate to the leader. The word followership is associated with negative meaning as with passivity and dependence (Hoption, 2014). They have been referred to as "drab powerless masses" (Burns, 1978) and "sheep" (Dixon & Westbrook, 2003) as cited by Hoption, (2014). In her study she suggested that followers in organizations acknowledge negative stereotypes as part of their identities. Given the empirical studies linking selfesteem, self-efficacy, and positive affect to work performance, as well as evidence for stereotype-threat (Hoption, 2014), awareness of and identification with negative follower stereotypes likely impedes effectiveness. Therefore, followership education should work towards countering negative follower stereotypes and preparing students to excel in follower roles (Hoption, 2014).

The origins of followership are linked to religion as it can be seen from Table 1.

As it can be seen from Table 1, religious, military, sport especially collective ones are looking for followers that are obedient, can be easily manipulated, ordered. The meaning of followership in the sense used by these institutions is a negative one, as it is being obedient, passive.

Table 1. Institutions with followership orientation

Traditional Institutions of Followership	Followership Foundation	Consequences of a Void in Followership
Religion	Discipleship and stewardship, service to others	The religious beliefs would not spread and the institution would collapse.
Military	Adherence to Chain of Command and following orders	Authority would not prevail, orders could be questioned and discipline would dissipate.
Politics	Party Loyalty	Political ideologies and strongholds would be eroded and crumble.
Sports	The team above self	Teams would not excel only individualism would exist.

Source: Blackshear, P. (2004).

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