

Chapter 8

Current Trends in Practicing Leadership: Evidence From the *Harvard Business Review*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a growing body of theoretical and practical studies conducted on a variety of subjects under the multifaceted leadership concept. In this chapter, the authors first explain recently discussed concepts in the Leadership Quarterly by category (leader, contingency, outcome, and leadership development) and subcategory (traits; leader-subordinate interaction, leadership style, organizational; leader, followers, organizational), explore current leadership trends at practice by analyzing Harvard Business Review articles, and then compare them. The essential objective of this chapter is to explore the current trends emerging from real business life in comparison to theoretical development in the leadership field and to highlight common concepts coming from the theory and practice of leadership. From this aspect, this chapter may provide a basis for comparative leadership studies and contribute to the related literature and practical studies. The strength of this study is to present a comparison between current theoretical and practical leadership trends by conducting a content analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Leaders play a pivotal role in organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Leadership process is defined as setting a common goal and leading others to attain this goal, possessing competencies to accomplish the pursuit of organizational success. The purpose of the chapter is to explore the current trends emerging from real business life in comparison to theoretical development in the leadership field and to highlight common concepts coming from the theory and practice of leadership. Within the framework of this study, 362 articles were examined in the peer-reviewed journal, Leadership Quarterly (LQ) along with Harvard Business Review, Turkey (HBR). HBR magazine was selected since the articles published in the magazine include real examples from practice in which global cases about leading people and present experience and case studies are introduced. Even though the concepts covered in HBR are popular at practicing leadership, it is important to analyze current theoretical shifts and changing perspectives in the literature to define our theoretical background.

Content analysis was utilized to construct the categories in the existing literature that are aligned with popular textbooks related to leadership practice and theory. Three different textbooks written by Daft (2007), Yukl (2013) and Northouse (2016) were used for this purpose. The study revealed 4 categories and 9 subcategories. Mostly cited category was trait subcategory in leader category. 314 articles were written in relation to leader traits and qualities in LQ within the years of 2012 and 2018.

Within the scope of the chapter, we will first discuss the current trends in theory. For this purpose, we will examine 362 related articles published between the years 2012 and 2018 in LQ. Then, we will analyze the HBR articles in relation to the leadership process including leadership development, emotional intelligence, managing teams, human resource policy, employee development, managing teams, etc. We will then correlate the findings in theory to the practice by analyzing the data we gathered in HBR. The purpose is to reveal the distribution of the leadership concepts in both practice and theory.

A REVIEW OF RECENTLY DISCUSSED CONCEPTS IN THE LEADERSHIP QUARTERLY

As mentioned in the introduction, the current study aims to explore the practices in the leadership field and compare them with the concurrent theoretical discussions. For this objective, we have selected HBR articles published in Turkey to see the current practical trends including the last six years since it has been published

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