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THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UNITED ARAB EMIRTES – THE EMPLOYABILITY OF ACCOUNTING GRADUATES: NARROWING THE GAP BETWEEN EMPLOYERS' EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Online leadership is a function that lawmakers esteem as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. The desire for swift change ensured that society representatives, who might take the requisite actions, were appreciated. Leaders who have been dithering or not acting have faced a greater degree of COVID-19-related problems in the field. The COVID-19 pandemic shocked many organizations, which has an impact on shifts in organizations' working culture. The position of information technology has proved to be the approach preferred to sustain corporate success. The key goal of this research is to discuss online leadership challenges and opportunities. The research focuses mostly on small and medium-sized businesses worldwide. A qualitative methodology is used to challenge informants dispersed by computer technology mediation in many world regions. A significant finding in this paper is that many organizations are not ready to cope with this situation, so that the position of online leadership is very successful in maintaining organizations and that leaders will adapt their leadership style by learning about society and by overcoming the obstacles that they face to become an Internet leader. We often find that woman leaders appear to be preferable to men as the online representative, particularly regarding information technology and the usage of social networking. This paper concludes that leaders who can resolve the obstacles and take advantage of resources to implement strategic advantage tactics can create online leadership.

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 provides a variety of opportunities for evaluating, understanding, and studying leadership. The coronavirus pandemic is a complex and diverse issue that involves various mechanisms, including public, economic, social, technical, time, emotional, and environmental ones. When these open processes reshape boundaries and opportunities, both mechanisms become entangled, creating a slew of new variables. This extraordinary dynamic allows one to apply a holistic strategy and take nuanced decisions. During the initial attack of the COVID-19 pandemic, several politicians denied the seriousness considering the fact that it was likened to a battle. Suitable political intervention did not suit their rhetoric which led several academics to witness a leadership problem in a health crisis (MUSTAJAB et al., 2020; Papadopoulos, Baltas, & Balta, 2020; Shafi, Liu, & Ren, 2020). Around the same period, though, there were realistic and modest politicians who treated the disease seriously. They responded quickly and worked with the public properly. As a result, it managed to handle the dissemination of the infection to some point, creating unusual synergy between agents and supporters. Today, the COVID-19 attack is alarming the globe, having a far-reaching influence and presenting a significant danger to many areas of life, including health, the climate, governance, and security. With regard to wellbeing, the WHO has shown that COVID 19 is a pandemic that has attacked almost every country in the world. In terms of the economy, it also led to numerous casualties as a result of the suspension of manufacturing, revenue and the temporary layoff of several organizations. Moreover, COVID-19 has often transformed the efficiency of an enterprise, for example by working with staff from home (WFH), remote organizational monitoring and oversight by executives traditionally performed only by major organizations, such as Google and Microsoft. This disease, though, is a shock treatment for many companies and a practical lesson for developing strategic edge tactics and foreseeing possible challenges in the future. More investments are required to resolve this virus, especially health sector investments, although other effects, such as the global economy, and this virus is harmful to all socio-economic groups, would be affected (Sidhu, Rai, Khaira, Kaur, & Issues, 2020). Moreover, several countries are now continuously locking up with the word lockdown while being considered not the only option and having a rather deadly economic and social effect (de Carvalho et al., 2020), even though they believe there are a wide variety of means of restoring the economy, but nothing is done to restore the health and secure citizens' lives. Therefore it is very critical, once again, to strengthen support and expenditure in health under very unique circumstances today and to undertake evidence-based research that can further boost economic and health (Rodela et al., 2020).

Effective management is described as possessing a high spirit that exceeds their staff's zeal, so that trust is a perfect way to lead and has a strong target to welcome them into the future. However, effective leadership is difficult, particularly in those days, so leaders must adapt to the modern world. For example, technology has evolved in this modern era, and a leader must learn information technology to apply it to his or her employees. Online leadership is a term that blends the ability of a person to push or influence people who lead him/her to achieve the company's goals with "online" for matters relating to technology, the Internet, and the digital world as a sign of "leadership." Online leadership is a form of leadership that combines the concept of leadership with current technological advancements. Moreover, what are the threats and prospects for the management of their organizations

during the COVID-19 pandemic? Limiting social events and advice on work from home would definitely influence corporate success and leadership. Consequently, it's critical to look at how leaders are dealing with these issues and how they want to foster internal development and leadership opportunities across the COVID-19 pandemic. This is interesting to investigate in greater depth, as it will undoubtedly contribute to leadership philosophy and further leadership research, and on-line leadership testing.

Research Questions

The present study is confined to bring insights into following research questions:

RQ1   What are the challenges in online leadership during COVID-19 Pandemic?
RQ2   What are the opportunities online leadership got during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the current transition, online leadership's function is no longer a desire but a need for large and medium-sized businesses to maintain their presence and performance to cope with industry rivals and non-competitive challenges such as natural disasters, conflicts, and unusual events that can disrupt their operations establishments (MUSTAJAB et al., 2020). Theories and concepts about the current model of leadership continue to grow, as leadership is a matter of concern for many academics, and numerous leading research has contributed to the development of values and theories in a practical or theoretical manner, such as online leadership (Dikmen, KINA, Özkan, İlhan, & research, 2020), from 1990 to 2020. However, there are currently studies on each online leader's role, particularly those that illustrate leadership style, difficulties, communities, training, growth, and advice as leaders who must transition into the new digital era (Spoorthy, Pratapa, & Mahant, 2020; Van Wart, Roman, Wang, & Liu, 2019).Moreover, a successful leader is definitely someone who can build competitive advantage tactics and impact others in the company by his or her ability, management and spiritual skills to further enhance the efficiency of the organization, irrespective of his or her style, the contrast between the conventional management and online leadership (CP & Susanto, 2019).

Furthermore, an online manager must be willing to create different links in order to collaborate and develop shared confidence, and inspire staff to appreciate the performance of the use of information technology. Web. Online. Leadership and IT are multidimensional fields which can contribute to the organization's success if the leaders of the organization develop trust in the organization's diversity (Savolainen, Lopez-Fresno, & Ikonen, 2014). Despite leaders' loss of confidence, electronic organizational governance becomes a tactic aimed at providing the people with more efficient services (Singh, 2018). Online leadership as a modern model definitely has several problems because virtually all operations are practically done and controlled by machines, where leaders do not often encounter workers of an organization, and it is rather significant for the success of the company (Al-Ghaili & Al-Harethi, 2019). But that may be a strategic benefit for those companies who have previously supported information technologies, but what about other organizations, including small to medium-sized businesses? Completely, e-leadership in the perspective of SMEs is a modern concept that SME leaders must possess and in which they must harmonies information technologies with market and sales models; (Belitski & Liversage, 2019)See, then (Ibrahim, Yaakob, & Yusof, 2018). However, this

phase of transition takes a long time, particularly in developed countries (Avolio, Sosik, Kahai, & Baker, 2014), while SME actors may use several of the e-commerce sites in the world at the moment. Moreover, online leadership has become a culture to boost the efficiency of the enterprise for big companies but for small- to medium-sized organizations, online leadership is a modern knowledge to which they must learn to develop strategic advantage tactics for all their restrictions, in order to match themselves with the needs of the company (Avolio & Kahai, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

The research is performed with a qualitative methodology aimed at examining online leadership challenges and opportunities for 50 informants from SME leaders who are prepared to be challenged by us through google questionnaires. We do it because direct and face-to-face interviews cannot be conducted because of government policy on the implementation of large-scale social restrictions, this, though, would not make the data collection phase any easier, despite the constraints we have on time and on internet, that sometimes interfere with the process of questioning. In addition, interviews have been carried out in an unstructured fashion to digest deeper data and be more open to raise questions from informants, so that the topics discussed begin to grow and become deeply understandable regarding analysis issues and issues. An interview was automatically recorded via a video call or Zoom and filmed in video format, the interview time is on average 50 minutes per informer and we often re-interview if relevant information is to be examined.

RESULTS

This study produced exciting results in the form of obstacles and opportunities offered by company leaders, in particular in the areas of education and small and medium-sized businesses that have impact on organizational success. We may also explore how online leadership is debated in more detail in the findings and discussions from the viewpoint of small and medium-sized businesses. It was addressed earlier that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the society, efficiency, and leadership of the organization. We noticed some recent results relating to new e-leadership challenges and opportunities in preventing the dissemination of COVID-19 at present, which are intended to provide a foundation for more studies to explore the traits, dimensions, and hypotheses of online leadership more closely.

Figure 1 Leaders Worry Assessment

Online Leadership Challenges:

Culture Adaptation of Organization

As a character and feature of an organization, the company's culture is unquestionably a guideline for achieving its goals. Still, the current conditions have caused certain businesses to drop the criteria for achieving objectives, with advice to save their organizations in crisis times. However, many companies need to change their work, client management and even leadership to the current ethos of the organization. Adaptation and learning of the company are also essential considerations for leaders in handling all shifts, paying particular consideration to managing their staff and managing the gears of this enterprise. Leaders must still have the capacity to handle all of that, while adopting the organization's new culture requires time to improve efficiency of work or does not even impact productivity of work, and virtually every informant acknowledges that he or she must follow the organization's culture even while finding it to be only temporary.

Communication Skills

Leaders definitely ought to be able to communicate. These qualifications are very helpful for working with individuals both within and outside the organization. For on-line leadership, media such as computers and the Internet would definitely need to be communicated electronically or remotely, the contact mechanisms would certainly vary directly from the communication mechanism. Besides that, when performing virtual and digital research, some informants claim that it is very different, that they have a lower degree of confidence as opposed to physical contact when they can personally sense the other person's reaction and connection, as well as the reciprocal respect that comes from each other.

Ethics in social media and information technology:

At this time, contact mediation has a variety of possibilities when combined with technological

and software advancements. The organization's representatives have taken advantage of the advancements in networking and coordination in this digital technology enterprise. Through social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp Messenger, and Zoom Meeting, connections should adhere to the same communication ethics as other forms of communication. Direct contact, in which representatives cannot communicate without constraint, is somewhat different from communication through social media. Digitalization practitioners would need to gain expertise in computer technologies in addition to leadership skills. Since there are so too many small and medium-sized businesses, the representatives of small and medium-sized businesses said they need to know a lot about production and internet delivery applications. Furthermore, interesting trends are found in the representatives of small and medium-sized companies, where women have more IT expertise than men. This is because woman leaders deal with digital technology mediation more often, such as gadgets, iPads, laptops, devices than males, so female leaders have greater opportunity to educate about and utilize information technology individually.

Business Management Strategy

Because of the constraints of economic and social operation that must be enforced to create innovative methods of operating their enterprises, such as the distribution of products and buying processes, many small and medium-sized businesses cannot determine their strategic management approach in the current scenario.

Online Leadership Opportunities:

The current environmental conditions (COVID-19 pandemic) positions leaders to deal with environments they have not faced, so that they have to learn from the others about the problem to solve it by observing or asking expert people so they can apply the management strategies of their organization to get a lot of experience to solve it. Small to medium-sized company executives exchange knowledge and expertise on internet purchases and merchandise packaging that can deter the dissemination of COVID-19 to persuade customers. Besides that, social learning has increased organizational leaders' consciousness. They agree that as long as the social divide and regional isolation offer resources for them to share information and knowledge about effective management, they can help one another avoid the issue.

Flexibility

In addition, leaders have the opportunity of being flexible in time and managing the organization whenever and wherever they can follow the agreement of all members of the organization, although leaders have the power to determine their desires, all leaders agree that they usually determines work hours, ways and means of working and division.

Work-Life Balance

Both organizational leaders accept that in the midst of this pandemic, they should take advantage of

quality time with the families, operate from home, monitor the organisation and share family responsibilities with their spouses so that a harmony between work and social life can be achieved.

DISCUSSIONS

The research results were initially summarized, and we were able to successfully study online leadership challenges and opportunities in the COVID-2019 pandemic. On the other side, the COVID-19 outbreak has certainly influenced several variables, including leadership, employment. The study also proved the effectiveness of online leadership to be one of the developments of leadership theory. The leaders of the organization that make up the study, revealed the challenges and opportunities of online leadership by massive government-determined social restrictions and regional quarantine as they rely heavily on upon, Besides, the first obstacle facing online leadership is that leaders must rapidly accept the ethos of the enterprise since they feel it is important for companies to change and learn from challenges to sustain their presence and success as demonstrated by (Hidayatullah, Eliyana, Hamidah, & Buchdadi, 2020; Salehi, Mirsepasi, & Farhangi, 2015). Secondly, organizational skills are a problem for online executives when, in usual conditions, they need to collaborate more closely through computer management mediation. They must improve their communication capacities themselves, particularly for small to medium-sized business leaders, who must change communication methods with customers, including changing delivery schedules, production plans, and customer service due to working time and time limits.

This also supports the statement put forth Afrapoli, Upadhyay, and Askari-Nasab . Third, leaders are challenged to demonstrate their ingenuity by generating content through social media as intelligence sources today by leveraging small to medium-sized enterprises' social networking capabilities. However, they have limits that need more knowledge, both of information technologies and the usage of social networking, and social media (Khidhir, 2021). Besides, this competition's outcomes are intriguing, including women leaders who outperform men in terms of integrity and IT skills. This is because women submit messages through social networking and spend more time looking for gadgets and mobile devices than men. Fourthly, time control is one of the key virtues for online leaders, as shown by (Znaidi, Sabir, & Institute-Journal, 2019). Besides, with solid time management and a combination of information technology, the company leaders would be able to deal with this challenge and turn into character leaders who operate their organizations regardless of time or location (Abdel-Hussein, 2020). Fifthly, leaders could change their business strategy through the pandemic; the management of this business strategy will inevitably require both leaders and staff to learn and create new skills, as stated by Irawan (2020). Trust is a critical factor for business executives. This is especially important for online leadership, where confidence must be assured and exposed to the public. Leaders of SMEs claim digital job poses an awful challenge for them to maintain the reputation and play a key role in building confidence related to the opportunity to impact the people around them, including employees and consumers. Furthermore, they must enter a joint consensus, even though it is not a requirement from customers, in order to preserve customer confidence. However, in the sense

of confidence, people are more nuanced and have greater roles than information technology, as stated in (DeRosa, Hantula, Kock, D'Arcy, & Management, 2004).

Social learning, which emphasizes how an individual's environments are chosen and adapted by themselves according to their behavior and needs, is an opportunity for online leadership during the first pandemic as it has been conveyed by Chen, Wang, and Hung (2015), which states that most people learn selectively and remember others' behavior. Leaders collect new ideas from those who first solve environmental issues. This is an exchange of knowledge that really helps them develop strategies in the future when they face risks that may arise again due to social learning. The second chance is to achieve the freedom that will allow them to control and monitor the association according to the chief's wishes and the organization's leaders, thereby minimizing conflict in the organization. Hence, there is a solid chance to create harmony between the participants. Thirdly, if administrators are prepared to practice online leadership and overcome all the challenges, they will have a substantially greater chance of maintaining balance in job and life. They often avoid distractions from home that often occur in the office, including noise, crowds, and any other disruption; thus, they feel easier and have more flexible workspaces, enabling supervision and organizational monitoring, along with the responsibility for the responsibilities of their families, and support the findings of (Costa & Tumagole, 2020; Dockery & Bawa, 2020; Gupta, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The study successfully examined and addressed the challenges and opportunities for online leadership in the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we have weaknesses in the conduct of studies under current circumstances under which social limitations and area quarantines render it impossible for us to perform direct interviews and evaluations of informant persons, however this research led to studies focused on online leadership, in which we discussed obstacles and opportunities for online leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also opened up doors for more research in the area of online leadership issues and further results, if undertaken in usual circumstances without limitations and in geographic quarantine.

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