

Cognitive Style a Predictor of Managerial Effectiveness: Study of Public and Private Sector Bank Managers in India

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Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the relationships between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness among different managerial levels of various public and private sector bank's of National Capital Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India. Data was collected by using Cognitive Style test for Field-dependence and Fieldindependence developed by Witkin (1959) and Index of Managerial Effectiveness test devised by Walter W. Hudson(1993). A sample of 300 bank managers of senior, middle and junior level positions from three public and three private sector banks of National Capital Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India was taken for the study."Both the public and private sector bank managers exhibit higher tendency of field-dependence among the senior managers in comparison to the middle level managers who have relatively greater inclination towards field-independence. Junior level managers of both the public and private sector banks are the highly inclined towards field-independence tendency in comparison to middle and senior level managers. As F-ratio was found significant so Duncan's multiple comparison of means test was used to examine significant differences among cognitive style means of different groups. The comparisons were made at 0.05 level of significance. The results of Duncan's multiple comparison of cognitive style means of public bank managers revealed that junior managers and middle level managers differ significantly in their means from senior managers but junior managers did not differ significantly from middle level managers. In case of private sector managers the entire three groups differ significantly in their cognitive style means. Both the public and private sector bank managers exhibit poor tendency of managerial effectiveness among the senior managers in comparison to the middle level managers who have relatively higher degree of effectiveness in management in comparison to senior managers. Junior level managers of both the publ

Index terms— Cognitive style, Managerial Effectiveness, Field-dependence and Field-independence.

1 INTRODUCTION

a) Cognitive style cognitive style is described as the way individuals imagine, perceive, distinguish, recognize, think and remember information. It is a persisting habitual pattern of perceptual and intellectual activity. With the help of cognitive styles an individual acquires knowledge (cognition) and processes information (conceptualization) (Kirton, M.J., 2003). Cognitive styles are linked to mental behaviors, habitually applied by an individual for problem solving, and generally to the way that information is obtained, sorted and utilized. Cognitive style being the recurring perceptual and intellectual pattern of personality can influences attitudes, values and social interaction. Social and cultural system provides people with a range of cognitive styles that are appropriate for different cognitive tasks in different contexts(Riding, R.J., and Cheema, 1991). The styles of individuals and of

2 B) MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS

41 groups can be placed on a continuum between a global style and an articulated style. People who use a global
42 style tend to view the world holistically; they see first a collection of relationships and only later the fragments
43 and parts that are related. They are said to be field dependent. By contrast, people who use an articulated style
44 tend to break up the world into smaller and smaller pieces, which can then be organized into larger chunks. They
45 also tend to see a sharp boundary between their own bodies and the outside world. People using an articulated
46 style are said to be field independent (Witkin, H.A., Moor, C.A., Goodenough, D.R., and Cox, P.W., 1977). The
47 preferred cognitive style of an individual often varies from task to task and from context to context. People who
48 use articulated styles for some tasks also use global styles for other tasks. In fact, they may bring a range of
49 different styles to bear on a single task.

50 2 b) Managerial effectiveness

51 Managerial effectiveness is manager's ability to achieve desired results. How well managers apply their knowledge,
52 skills and abilities in working with, guiding and directing others determines whether they can meet relationships
53 between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness among different managerial levels of various public and
54 private sector bank's of National Capital Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India. Data was collected by
55 using Cognitive Style test for Field-dependence and Fieldindependence developed by Witkin (1959) and Index
56 of Managerial Effectiveness test devised by Walter W. Hudson (1993). A sample of 300 bank managers of
57 senior, middle and junior level positions from three public and three private sector banks of National Capital
58 Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India was taken for the study." Both the public and private sector bank
59 managers exhibit higher tendency of field-dependence among the senior managers in comparison to the middle
60 level managers who have relatively greater inclination towards field-independence. Junior level managers of both
61 the public and private sector banks are the highly inclined towards field-independence tendency in comparison
62 to middle and senior level managers. As F-ratio was found significant so Duncan's multiple comparison of means
63 test was used to examine significant differences among cognitive style means of different groups. The comparisons
64 were made at 0.05 level of significance. The results of Duncan's multiple comparison of cognitive style means of
65 public bank managers revealed that junior managers and middle level managers differ significantly in their means
66 from senior managers but junior managers did not differ significantly from middle level managers. In case of
67 private sector managers the entire three groups differ significantly in their cognitive style means. Both the public
68 and private sector bank managers exhibit poor tendency of managerial effectiveness among the senior managers
69 in comparison to the middle level managers who have relatively higher degree of effectiveness in management in
70 comparison to senior managers. Junior level managers of both the public and private sector banks are very much
71 effective in managerial efficacy in comparison to middle and senior level managers. F-ratio was found significant,
72 so Duncan's multiple comparison of means test was used to examine significant differences among managerial
73 effectiveness means of different groups. The comparisons were made at 0.05 level of significance. The results of
74 Duncan's multiple comparison of mean revealed that all the different categories of manager's i.e. junior managers,
75 middle level managers and senior managers differ significantly in their managerial effectiveness means.

76 those results effectively, if they can, their achievements are poised to help the organization gain a competitive
77 edge against competing organizations heading into the future (Robbins SP, 1988).

78 A manager should have a combination of technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills that can make him an
79 effective manager, according to theoretical models of management, technical skills include specialized training,
80 skilled performance of specific tasks, expertise in a specific field or industry and the ability to apply specialized
81 knowledge to tasks and objectives (Shermon G. 1999). Interpersonal skills include the ability to work well with
82 others, motivate workers, resolve conflicts, delegate roles and communicate objectives clearly (Howell JP, DE
83 Bowen, PW Dorfman and S Kerr, 1997). Conceptual skills are broader and more self-actualized. They include
84 the ability to see the organization in the context of its industry, the ability to understand how each part of the
85 organization functions as a whole, the ability to visualize, imagine, think, remember and process information for
86 future course of action based on current organizational and industry trends, the ability to analyze and diagnose
87 complex situations and the ability to understand the interrelationships at work in the organization (Zhang, L.F.,
88 & Sternberg, R.J., 2006). Middle and senior management is responsible for identifying the core competencies
89 of the organization and making sure those competencies are complemented by its managers and its overall
90 workforce. It is up to senior management to strategically place a manager in the department where the skills
91 and competencies will reflect the current and future needs of the organization in order to effectively achieve
92 results that benefit the organization in the short-and long-run. In the long run, managerial effectiveness has the
93 potential of creating efficiencies that create a sustainable competitive advantage against competing organizations
94 and increase opportunities for future enterprise. It also fosters individual growth in the manager, followers and
95 generates shareholder value for the organization.

96 Managerial effectiveness is gauged by the results a manager achieves. Results are generally believed to be
97 influenced by the factors like how individuals imagine, perceive, distinguish, recognize, think and remember
98 information (which is considered as cognitive style). A good manager must make workteams of like minded
99 people having common working styles so that team members may feel more comfortable while working with one
100 another in order to achieve positive results and organizational goals.

101 If we compare all these factors of managerial effectiveness such as ability to work well with others, motivate
102 workers, resolve conflicts, delegate roles communicate objectives clearly, ability to see the organization in the

103 context of its industry, the ability to understand how each part of the organization functions as a whole, the
104 ability to visualize, imagine, think, remember and process information for future course of action based on current
105 organizational and industry trends etc. with the elements of cognitive style such as the way individuals imagine,
106 perceive, distinguish, recognize, think and remember information there seems to be lot of similarities.

107 **3 c) Need for Study**

108 Cognitive style is a key concept in the areas of psychology, education and management. If a student has a
109 cognitive style which is similar to that of his/her teacher, the chances that the student will have a more positive
110 learning experience. Likewise, team members with similar cognitive styles likely feel more positive about their
111 participation with the team (Kirton, M, J., 1976). While matching cognitive styles may make participants feel
112 more comfortable when working with one another. Working together in a team with positivity and comfort are
113 the key factor for maximization of organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Because of such an importance
114 of cognitive style as a predictor of critical managerial and organizational work outcomes, it has always been a
115 variable of interest.

116 Cognitive style has been extensively studied as a function of many antecedents. But it has not been covered
117 as an antecedent with managerial effectiveness especially among managers of banking sector of National Capital
118 Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India. There has not been sufficient research to investigate the relative
119 importance of different facets of cognitive style in predicting managerial effectiveness. So far, little has been
120 done about whether there is a genuine relationship between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness among
121 different managerial levels of bank managers working in various public and private sector banks of National
122 Capital Region (Delhi) and Haryana state of India.

123 The banking sector in India is facing the transition phase in current globalization and localization environment.
124 The restructuring and blending of certain services in the banking sector have affected the efficiency and mindset
125 of managers working with these banks. Managers in the banks may be having different cognitive style and
126 respective managerial effectiveness. So in such a transitional state of banking sector working Managerial
127 Effectiveness depends on a number of factors like individual's perception, personality, superior subordinate
128 relation, working style, trust facilitation, way of thinking & processing information and surrounding organizational
129 climate (Sternberg, R.J., & Zhang, L.F., 2001). Most of these factors of managerial effectiveness are element
130 of cognitive style also, so there might exists a relationship between Managerial Effectiveness and cognitive style
131 which should be investigated and understood. and restructuring there is need to find out the relationship between
132 the cognitive style and managerial effectiveness of managers working at different levels and the difference between
133 the identified relationships. To fill the above stated voids in knowledge, the main objective of this study was
134 to investigate the relationships between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness among different managerial
135 levels of bank managers working in various public and private sector banks of National Capital Region (Delhi)
136 and Haryana state of India. The study also aimed at investigating and comparing the differences of the identified
137 relationships between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness among different managerial levels of bank
138 managers working in various public and private sector banks of National Capital Region ??Delhi) A sample of
139 300 executives from both the public and private sector banks (150 executive from public sector and 150 executive
140 from private sector) working at various positions of junior level (50 executive), middle level (50 executive) and
141 senior level (50 executive) of management was taken on the basis of availability of executives working in the above
142 stated banks as a non randomized sample. Group-wise details of sample size are already given in the research
143 design.

144 IV.

145 **4 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

146 For data collection all the 300 subjects involved in the study as sample were tested for personality dimension
147 of cognitive style by using Witkin V. Presentation of the scores in ascending order of all the three categories
148 of both the public sector and private sector bank managers clearly illustrate that cognitive style scores are low
149 to high from senior to middle and junior level respectively. Among both the public and private sector bank
150 managers these scores exhibit higher tendency of field-dependence among the senior managers in comparison
151 to the middle level managers who have relatively greater inclination towards field-independence in comparison
152 to senior managers. Junior level managers of both the public and private sector banks are the highly inclined
153 towards fieldindependence tendency in comparison to middle and senior level managers. F-ratio between the
154 groups of public sector banks to be 7.046 which were significant at 0.05 level of significance. Since F-ratio was
155 found significant, it means there exists a major difference between mean cognitive style scores of at least two
156 groups, hence, Duncan's multiple comparison of means test was used to examine significant differences among
157 means of different groups. The comparisons were made at 0.05 level of significance.

158 **5 RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

159 The results of Duncan's multiple comparison of mean revealed that mean cognitive style scores in ascending order
160 were of junior managers, middle level managers and senior managers. Table (1) presents that junior managers

7 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

161 and middle level managers differ significantly in their means from senior managers but junior managers did not
162 differ significantly from middle level managers.

163 F-ratio between the groups of private sector banks to be 8.096 which were significant at 0.05 level of significance.
164 As F-ratio was found significant, it means there exists a significant difference between mean cognitive style scores
165 of at least two groups, hence, Duncan's multiple comparison of means test was used to examine significant
166 differences among means of different groups. The comparisons were made at 0.05 level of significance.

167 The results of Duncan's multiple comparison of mean discovered that mean cognitive style scores in ascending
168 order were of junior managers, middle level managers and senior managers from private sector bank. Table (1)
169 presents that junior managers and middle level managers differ significantly in their means from senior managers
170 but junior managers did not differ significantly from middle level managers. Junior level managers of both the
171 public and private sector banks are highly field independent and have a high degree of managerial effectiveness,
172 where as the middle level managers of both the public and private sector banks are field independent and
173 have a managerial effectiveness. Senior level manager are fielddependent as well as have low degree managerial
174 effectiveness.

175 6 VI.

176 7 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

177 Because of limited resources, sample size taken for the study was very small, if a larger size sample can be
178 managed more exact finding can be deduced.

179 Only two dimensions of relationship between cognitive style and managerial effectiveness are studied, other
180 objectives may be developed and finding can accordingly be worked out.

181 Present study is limited to the two states of Indian banks only, a comparative study may be conducted on
182 international level and finding can be worked out and analyzed to control the cognitive style among managers
and ultimately improving the managerial effectiveness. ¹



Figure 1:

183

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| Banks Groups | Public sector banks | | | Private sector banks | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Junior level manager | Middle level manager | Senior level manager | Junior level manager | Middle level manager | Senior level manager |
| Group No. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| N | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Means | 130.05 | 109.54 | 98.47 | 126.33 | 104.14 | 92.17 |
| F Value | F (4, 170) = 7.046; P < 0.05 | | | F (4, 170) = 8.096; P < 0.05 | | |

Table (1) Shows that mean cognitive style scores of junior, middle and senior level managers of public sector banks are 130.05, 109.54 and 98.47 respectively and mean cognitive style scores of junior, middle and senior level managers of private sector banks are 126.33, 104.14 and 92.17 respectively. Higher the cognitive style scores greater the tendency of field-dependence and lower the scores greater the tendency of field-independence.

Figure 2: Table 1 :

2

| Bank Group | Variable | Public sector banks | | Private sector banks | |
|----------------|----------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| | | cognitive style | managerial effectiveness | cognitive style | managerial effectiveness |
| Junior manager | level | Highly Field-independent | High degree of managerial effectiveness | Highly Field-independent | High degree of managerial effectiveness |
| Middle manager | level | | | | |

Figure 3: Table 2 :

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