An Empirical Study on the Relationship between a Sense of Humor and Management and Organizational Behavior

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초 록

최근 유머는 전략경영의 주요 요소로 부상되어 왔다. 실제 많은 학자들이 유머와 경영 및 조직행동간의 관계에 대한 많은 관심을 가졌다. 그러나, 실증분석 자료는 미흡하다. 이에 본 논문은 유머와 다양한 리더십 요소 관계를 입증하기 위하여 설문조사를 하였다. 표본은 5개국의 170명의 관리자를 대상으로 임의 추출하였다. 본 논문은 기본적으로 유머와 리더십 요소간의 관계 분석을 목적으로 하고 있으며, 설문조사를 바탕으로 인과 및 회귀분석을 실시하였다. 분석 결과는 모형의 설명력은 다소 낮고, 반 이상의 설명변수가 통계적으로 유의하지 않은 것으로 우선 설명될 수 있다. 그러나, 나이, 자유 또는 불간섭 원칙에 준한 지도력, 그리고 아시아 국가의 리더십 등은 통계적으로 유의하였을 뿐만 아니라 모형의 모든 설명변수의 방향이 경영학적 관점에서 적합하게 구현되었음을 확인할 수 있었다.

키워드 : 유머, 전략경영, 리더십 형태

ABSTRACT

Recently, a sense of humor has been emerging as a crucial factor in strategic management. In practice, many academic practitioners have been greatly interested in the relationship between humor, and management and organizational Behavior. Through various surveys, this paper confirms the relationship between the use of humor and the characteristics of leaders. The target population consisted of 170 managers from several different countries. The paper basically analysed the link between the leader’s various characteristics and the use of humor based on causality and regression analysis. The conclusive result illustrates that its explanatory power is very low, but three independent variables including age, laissez faire (free reign) leadership and Asian nationality in the group are significant in a statistical point of view. These independent variables were meaningful in business management perspectives.

Keywords : Humor, Strategic Management, Leadership Style

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I. Introduction

Recently, a sense of humor has been emerging as an increasingly crucial factor in corporate management. The reason is that it can make a contribution to settle hostility feeling, reduce criticism level, loosen the tension, and promote morale. In addition, it can be helpful to communicate smoothly in a complicated case. According to Harvard Business Review (2003.9), predominant officers, generally, make use of positive and neutral humor, and officers with a distinguished sense of humor take higher incentives.

In practice, quite a few academic practitioners have been greatly interested in the relationship between a sense of humor and management and organizational Behavior. Bass (1990), Clouse & Spurgeon (1995) and Shamir (1995) had an interest in the impact which a sense of humor has on leadership. Furthermore, Goldstein (1976) and Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan (1994) studied the leader’s ability to effect change in his or her followers. Many organizations, such as Southwest Airlines, Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream and Sun Microsystems, attribute higher levels of employees’ commitment, cohesiveness, and performance to their leaders’ use of humor in the corporate culture (Hof, Rebello, & Burrows, 1996; Katz, 1996).

In this manner, a wide range of case studies regarding the importance of a sense of humor in strategic management, particularly leadership, leader’s ability etc. have been carried out. Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap (1990: 255) argued that a sense of humor “has the potential of providing significant insights into management and organizational behavior.”

However, relatively little research using descriptive method, has examined the relationship between the use of humor and a leader’s characteristics or leadership style. Therefore, the paper strived to examine whether or not certain characteristics of a leader, such as leadership style, gender, nationality/culture, age, and organizational structure, are related to the use of humor by the leader in the workplace. The results of the paper may provide useful information for organizations to improve their business environment, recruitment and employee