AN EXAMINATION OF FOLLOWERSHIP TRAITS IN
IRANIAN SMALL FIRMS PERFORMANCE

SARA ALIABADIZADEH

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management
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BY
SARA ALIABADIZADEH

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Sara Aliabadizadeh

November, 2009
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative research was to determine if there is a significant relationship between followership roles in relation to levels of organization performance by using followership traits. Surveys were completed by 208 employees from different kind of organization, which included the completion of the related questionnaire designed with four parts. First part is related to organization performance, second part is about followership specific roles, third part is about holistic personality type and the last part related to the power of followership.

This research provided findings indicating that a significant positive relationship exists between followership roles and the organization performance. Of specific interest is the effect witnessed between the followership role and followership traits with higher reported levels of organization performance.

By knowledge of dispersal of data which is gathered from questionnaire it is possible to analysis the data with correlations and multiple regression method.

Based on the current study's findings, organizational structures that are designed to enhance followership, especially as it relates to helping followers achieve exemplary status, might be expected to promote higher levels of organization performance.

Suggestions concerning further research on the subject of followership are offered.
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1.1 Introduction

Much research has been proposed to explain the contribution of followership. Although the literature covers a wide variety of such research; this research will focus on the meaning of followership's role in organizational performance by looking at followership traits, which are clearly evolving.

Today, especially in modern democracies, the pyramid has been turned on its head; leaders are answerable to their followers. The popular idea, known as servant leadership, seeks to extend this theme to leadership generally. In politics, leaders depend on their followers to get elected. But in many small businesses and heavy industry, the boss still rules with an iron fist (McCrimmon, 2007).

Complexity reigns for followership and leadership today, just as it does in all walks of life. The bottom line is that there are still conventional, obedient followers in some industries and simple groups, while followers have more of a partnership role in other organizations and, in some contexts, followers actually show more leadership than their bosses. Leadership is no longer a position at all, but an occasional activity. No one can dominate a complex, knowledge-driven group simply because no one has a monopoly on good ideas. Someone who is a follower one minute, therefore, could take the lead the next minute. Although the literature presents followership traits in a variety of contexts, this paper will primarily focus on their application to followership traits in Iranian small firms.
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