

EAST MEETS WEST: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP STYLES IN CANADIAN AND JAPANESE WINE INDUSTRIES

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—Abstract —

Due to the ever-evolving markets, conventional organisations are required to be more embracing of the constantly changing facets of the environment in which they operate, and therefore they need to be highly adaptable if they are to keep abreast. This study sought to determine the leadership styles that prevail in companies in the wine industry in Canada and Japan, and how these leadership styles affect the overall organisational effectiveness. A qualitative research approach was followed. Individuals from Canada and Japan (N= 11) were video interviewed to create an innovative web-hosted collection of multimedia cases. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and were conducted in the mother-tongue of the participants. The captured data were transcribed and verified with the participants to ensure accuracy and scientific rigour. This study uncovered autonomy and delegation, empowering, casual, inclusive, collaborative, passionate and driven, as well as goal-oriented, as the largely prevailing

leadership approaches that ensure organisational soundness in Canada and Japan. Other sub-themes that emerged to lesser extents were also noted in this paper.

Keywords: Leadership, employee satisfaction, organisational effectiveness, wine industry

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is an array of leadership styles that can be adopted in business, some of which are of greater positive effect than others, contingent on the appropriateness of their application per situation and particular point in time (Chestnut, 2017). In order to strategically and effectively achieve the objectives of a business, it is crucial that an organisation has in place one of the most important tools towards the accomplishment of these goals, that being sound leadership (LaMarco, 2018). Good leadership has the ability to strengthen workforce productivity and maximise business outcomes, while poor leadership will often result in the compromise of anticipated business prosperity and jeopardise the accomplishment of critical business outcomes (Silverthorne, 2017).

This study investigated the different leadership styles that mostly prevail among businesses of different sizes and sectors within the wine industries of Canada and Japan. While some cases showed great similarity in leadership perspective between the two countries, some of the findings were also very unique and riveting, which made the contribution of this study even more significant. In the sections that follow, the researchers discuss the leadership styles that they had expected to prevail according to the literature, the research design employed in this study, the findings of this study in accordance with what the researchers expected, and the unique leadership sub-themes that emerged outside the researchers' expectations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brief background of Canadian and Japanese leadership styles

The wine industry is an important economic contributor in both Canada and Japan. In both countries, wine producers and retailers are important sources of employment and in many cases export revenues. They are increasingly important

for attracting tourists and serve as mainstays in the efforts of many regions to have citizens 'buy local'. As a result, companies operating in wine industries garner a great deal of attention. Much of this attention is from government and the media seeking to ensure that these companies succeed. Well understood is that at the heart of these companies are owners or key decision-making executives. Learning about how these individuals lead or can become better leaders is a topic worthy of consideration. A starting point is to consider some of the different ways we understand leadership.

From the literature, Canadian leaders are considered to be less autocratic and friendlier towards their team members, while still being expected to take critical strategic decision when called for (Seth, 2016). This implies that instead of dictating the way in which things should progress within the business, Canadian managers are rather embracing of the viewpoints of their subordinates and allow them to approach them concerning their roles and responsibilities within the business. The Canadian manager may not always be the most competent in his own capacity, but what is mostly required of them is the ability to effectively coordinate a team towards the accomplishment of organisational objectives (Warburton, 2017).

The pervasive Japanese leadership style is recorded to be driven by innovation, collaboration among team members and collaboration between different management levels and their subordinates, not only focused on problem-solving, but also on profoundly understanding problems encountered, in order to derive unparalleled and enduring solutions (Cultural Candor, 2017). The Japanese leadership style is emulated by several first-world countries, as it is considered to be superior. The Japanese leadership style embraces inclusion of every individual involved in any process towards objective accomplishment. Executive business officials mostly delegate work and allow autonomous operation, then towards the final stages, coordinate all efforts made by team members throughout the process (Lewis, 2016).

2.2. Leadership types

Autonomous/laissez-faire leadership: In the last two decades or so, more and more organisations have been embracing the concept of responsibility devolution to more than just those incumbent in managerial positions, which has apparently resulted in higher levels of organisational performance (Brauckmann & Schwarz, 2014). While autonomous approaches to leadership may not always be the most

appropriate, where applicable, it has proven to induce greater benefits than detriment. A study previously conducted showed, for instance, that Eastern and Germanic Europe are much more receptive to autonomous leadership due to the benefits it accrues (Sims & Quatro, 2015).

Empowering leadership: The style of leadership through empowerment fundamentally emphasises the essence of identifying what interests employees/subordinates the most, what their strengths and abilities are, and how these can be harnessed in a manner that renders them more effective than before (Fletcher, 2018). Leadership that empowers employees not only creates the most favourable conditions under which these employees may thrive while increasing self-esteem and work productivity, but also creates a sense of confidence in them concerning their leaders (Bantu-Gomez, 2015). Leaders who empower their subordinates are often deemed as more effective and supportive than leaders who do not make such an investment in their employees.

Casual leadership: Sometimes, leaders who adopt a more laid-back style of leadership are stereotyped as lazy or complacent. While in some instances this proves true, many casual types of leaders achieve greater outcomes than those who are on the sterner (and sometimes coercive) side, as they are often able to maintain calmness in entropic situations (Knights, Grant & Young 2018). Considering that any environment where people must work together is prone to conflict and inter-person abrasion, a business environment would not be immune to this and as such would benefit from a leader who is able to keep his cool and maintain order in the midst of possible anarchy (Monroe, 2018).

Inclusive leadership: An inclusive approach to leadership mostly creates synergy between leaders and their subordinates, as well as harmonious associations among employees through the liberty that these leaders afford their employees to make contributions that are welcomed and considered as significant (Silverthorne, 2017). Subordinates tend to personalise the overall vision and mission of the organisation when they believe that they are making a substantial impact towards the achievement of daily objectives, while those who feel excluded by their leaders are more likely to be somewhat complacent due to estrangement from the core business objectives (Fletcher, 2018).

Collaborative leadership: In the absence of detrimental conflict, a team effort towards the accomplishment of objectives often reduces the time taken to complete tasks, as well as the strain that otherwise would have been on specific individuals (DeWitt, 2017). Leaders who adopt a collaborative leadership style

mostly thrive on fostering workplace environments where consensus, cooperation and coordination prevail, all in an effort to build solid working relationships, firstly among employees, and also between themselves and their subordinates (Fein, 2017).

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 Research approach

A qualitative research approach was followed. This choice of approach was mainly informed by the nature of the study as it sought to gain the leadership perspectives of those in managerial roles within the Canadian and Japanese wine industry cases that were analysed. Considering the relatively small population of top management personnel in the wine industry in these two countries in general, and also considering the elaborate type of information sought by the researchers, it was more methodologically feasible to conduct a qualitative inquiry.

3.1.2 Research site

Ten businesses operating in the beverage industry in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia and a wine importer/retailer located in Tokyo, Japan are the research sites for this study. Six of the businesses are family businesses; two of the businesses are owned by shareholders through an innovative share offering made available to the public. The remaining nine companies have private ownership. Of the Nova Scotia businesses, seven are wineries, one is a malt house, one is a cidery and one is wine tour bus operation. Of the wineries, two produce more than 5 000 cases of wine annually. More detail regarding these businesses can be found in Table 1 below.

Eighteen wineries were in operation in Nova Scotia in 2018 along with 94 grape growers tending to 658 grape-bearing acres. These wineries sold 500 000 nine litre equivalent cases of wine and the industry as a whole provided 900 jobs. Many of these jobs were the result of the 112 000 tourists who visited the wineries in 2017. Wine industry tourism has generated \$43 million in revenue for the provincial economy and wages of just under \$37 million. Wine and grape industry sales created over \$150 million of business revenue wages of just under \$37 million. Specific types of red wine products include Pinot Noir, Marechal Foche, Leon Millot, Castel, Baco Noir and Luci Kuhlmann. Among white wine,

varieties include L'Acadie Blanc, Riesling, Chardonnay, Vidal Blanc, Seyvl Blanc, Ortega, and New York Muscat. Although traditional European viniferous grapes are grown in Nova Scotia, most are hybrids developed for hardiness and resistance to disease.

In Japan, four prefectures (Yamanashi, Nagano, Yamagata and Hokkaido) are home to most of its over 200 wineries. 75% of these wineries are small, producing less than one-thousand hectolitres on an annual basis. Domestic labels accounted for approximately 30% of all wine sales in the country in 2016. An indigenous white grape, Koshu, is among the most well-known varieties grown in Japan. Over 50% of the population drinks wine at least once during the week, with 7% drinking wine every day. All told, in 2016, almost 40 million cases of wine were sold in Japan. Approximately 50 percent of wine consumed in Japan is distributed through retail outlets, and the remainder is through on-premise channels, including bars and restaurants.

3.2. Sampling

The participants of this study (N=11) were individuals holding high positions of various-sized companies, in different business sectors within the wine industries of Canada's province of Nova Scotia and Japan. Purposive sampling was used in this study; therefore, the willingness, relevance and availability to participate of the participants were considered.

3.3. Data collection method

Individuals, from Canada and Japan, were video interviewed to create an innovative web-hosted collection of multimedia cases. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and conducted in the mother-tongue of the participants. The captured data were transcribed and verified with the participants to ensure accuracy and scientific rigour.

3.4. Data analysis

This study made use of thematic analysis. The researchers initially used open, axial and selective coding to derive more elaborate meanings; then, diminished these codes into more specific groups that allowed for the noting of associations

among the data, finally noting the even more concise trends that resulted in the emergent sub-themes.

4. FINDINGS

Table 1 exhibits the themes emergent from the data collected via interviews with various designated individuals of various-size and sector businesses within the wine industry. The table also elaborates on how often these themes and their sub-themes occurred during the data collection process. The main theme, as identified by the researchers, was leadership, from which further originated a number of sub-themes. In alignment with Table 1, the sub-themes that dominated between both countries Canada and Japan were autonomy and delegation and empowering. Autonomy and delegation were observed as the highest frequency of all the sub-themes.

Table 1: Frequencies of Themes and sub-themes

	Country	Themes and sub-themes	Frequency
Theme	Canada	Leadership	42
		Autonomy and delegation	6
		Empowering	4
		Casual	4
		Inclusive	4
		Collaborative	4
		Passionate and driven	3
		Goal oriented	3
		Amicable	2
		Environmentally aware	2
		Non-bureaucratic	2
		Exemplary	2
		Innovative	1
		Optimistic	1
	Japan	Autonomy and delegation	1
		Empowering	2
		Supportive	2
		Knowledge driven	2

Theme: Leadership

The fundamental theme of this study was leadership, and all the sub-themes that were identified in order of frequency from the highest, with some sub-themes falling under the same frequency as others, were, autonomy and delegation, empowering, casual, inclusive, collaborative, passionate and driven, goal-oriented, amicable, environmentally aware, non-bureaucratic, exemplary, supportive, knowledge driven, innovative and lastly, optimistic.

Sub-theme: Autonomy and delegation

Participants from both Canada and Japan felt it idyllic that leadership encompasses the distribution of responsibility and allowance of team members to operate as per substantially individual discretion. This finding is proven by these responses:

I am not the kind of guy that wants to drive the boat, I have no interest in being the one who is driving the ship and telling people to get on and off. (Case 11, Owner-manager, Canada, male, small, public company, non-family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Another participant stated:

... so that hopefully it animates them and they do things in their own way. (Case 8, Owner-manager, Japan, male, small, private, family business, retailing, retailer).

Sub-theme: Empowering

Participants from both Canada and Japan also considered empowering and equipping employees in what they need to do as a crucial factor relating to sound leadership. These responses support this:

One of the things that I took from that is trying to find people who have an inherent passion for what we are doing and then giving them as much freedom to utilize their own approach and strengths. (Case 8, Owner-manager, Japan, male, small, private, family business, retailing, retailer).

Another case recorded:

So it is a very flat inline type of management with full empowerment for people to be able to determine the best way to get the job done. (Case 4, Owner, Canada, male, medium, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Sub-theme: Casual

While this sub-theme only emerged from the Canadian wine industry, it was to a considerable extent and within the second highest frequency group. Participants were shown to believe that a more relaxed and non-coercive type of leadership enhances effort and productivity among employees. This view can be evidenced by the following:

It is pretty laid back for the most part (it needs to be). There are a lot of stressful situations that come up in the winery and it is the best way to deal with it. (Case 7, Employee-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Another perspective was:

I try not to take things too seriously and I try to keep things with the rest of the employees pretty light and casual. (Case 1, Employee-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Sub-theme: Inclusive

This sub-theme was also one of the second most prevalent in this research, although only emerging in the Canadian wine industry, there showed to be coherent views that the workforce mostly responds best to a leadership style that makes them feel involved and their views regarded. These statements substantiate this:

I preferred to get people involved in strategy development out of the gate and it is situational for certain because people need a little more involvement and face-to-face time in the early stages... (Case 5, Owner-manager, Canada, male, medium, private, non-family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Furthermore:

I would like a ship that's driven by a lot of people, I'd like to be a co-pilot if you will, because I think that's best for the company in the long run is to be able to be run with redundancies. (Case 11, Owner-manager, Canada, male, small, public company, non-family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Sub-theme: Collaborative

This sub-theme was also identified as one of the second highest in frequency, although it occurred only in the Canadian wine industry. Various cases revealed that a team effort is a much more effective approach to leadership than that which insists on carrying out responsibility single-handedly. The quotes below back this view:

I like to be very much to be the collaborator. (Case 6, Employee-manager, Canada, male, small, private, non-family business, accommodation and food service activities).

Another perspective was:

So that I am, so that my presence, or the presence of any single individual is not critical to the success of the company, and to achieve that, I think it, my leadership style is more to try to bring the right people into the room together, and to be a kind of mediator of ideas, and ultimately be firm and fair about what the process is of selecting the ideas to go with. (Case 11, Owner-manager, Canada, male, small, public company, non-family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Sub-theme: Passionate and driven

This sub-theme emerged in the third highest frequency group in this study, although it was only noted in Canadian wine industries. Some of the participants felt that leadership should truly display the drive, focus and passion towards the work that the organisation fulfils daily. The ensuing statements validate this:

You really need to be focused and driven. (Case 7, Employee-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Similarly:

There is a passion behind what we do in our business. (Case 1, Employee-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Sub-theme: Goal-oriented

This sub-theme was also in the third highest frequency group in this study; however, also only depicted in the Canadian wine industry. The general coherence was that good leadership is the ability to set goals and devise the best methods towards accomplishing them. These statements support this opinion:

I believe in establishing accountability systems and developing a plan and working a plan... (Case 5, Owner-manager, Canada, male, medium, private, non-family business, manufacturing, retailing).

And:

So, the idea is to set the objectives for my senior team to execute them. (Case 9, Owner-manager, Canada, male, small, private, non-family business, manufacturing).

Sub-themes: Amicable, environmentally aware, non-bureaucratic, exemplary, supportive, knowledge driven

The afore-listed sub-themes occurred to a lesser extent than others and in the fourth highest or second lowest frequency group. These sub-themes represent the views of participants from both Canada and Japan. These views were that good leadership does not always have to be imposing or unreasonably stern, but rather friendly and approachable. It was revealed that considering the nature of the industry, it is also important to take the physical environment and its wellbeing into consideration. Furthermore, it was uncovered that a less structural or hierarchical leadership approach thrives best and that some of the best leaders are often those who can lead by example. This study also unearthed the importance of leaders providing support to their employees, which encourages greater effectiveness, as well as the importance of acquiring the pertinent knowledge to get ahead in the particular industry within which the business operates. These verbatim quotes support these findings:

Our style is, we are in the tourism industry, agri-tourism, with our three guest cottages and the vineyard and the winery, so our style is very open and very friendly and we belong to all the tourist associations. (Case 2, Owner-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

And:

My wife and I are partners, and we are doing it as environmentally sound as possible. (Case 2, Owner-wine maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Another perspective:

But from my other business interest that I have and the other companies I am involved with my approach to business is a flat form of management style. (Case 4, Owner, Canada, male, medium, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Another view is:

I am really trying to be hands on as much as possible I would not expect any of my employees to do anything that I would not do. (Case 3, Owner-wine

maker, Canada, male, small, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

Also:

One of the ways the woman who works with me, she is on this trip to Nova Scotia with us right now, one of the strategies is just to provide the best support for her own personal wine development as an expert in Canadian wines amongst others. (Case 8, Owner-manager, Japan, male, small, private, family business, retailing, retailer).

And finally:

It is funny, once you have responsibilities you start to look for insights. These days a lot of business podcasts are really helpful for that. (Case 8, Owner-manager, Japan, male, small, private, family business, retailing, retailer).

Sub-themes: Innovative and optimistic

These two sub-themes occurred least frequently in this study; however, they are still noteworthy. The findings suggested that a creative and embracing attitude to change is imperative to sound leadership. It was also found that it helps to be positive minded when it comes to the abilities of employees as well as general operations of the business. This is substantiated by the following:

We are a new company that is just starting up so I guess the corporate culture is going to develop. (Case 4, Owner, Canada, male, medium, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

And:

Everyone who works for me is a problem solver not a problem identifier. (Case 4, Owner, Canada, male, medium, private, family business, manufacturing, retailing).

5. DISCUSSION

The basic objective of this study was to determine, by means of the analysis of various cases, the different viewpoints that different designated individuals have within the wine industries in Canada and Japan, concerning leadership. The 15

diverse sub-themes in this study were derived from the main theme of leadership and categorised within five frequency groups. These sub-themes occurred to varying extents, some larger, some peripheral and some much lesser, but still noteworthy and unique to this study.

A study conducted by Klein, Ziegert, Knight and Xiao (2006) suggested that the effective delegation of responsibility among team members not only enhances the overall team performance towards the accomplishment of set goals, but also promotes confidence in newer team members who may not yet be as established as the rest. This literature significantly substantiates what emerged in the findings of this study. Tress (2017) opines that a leadership style that is empowering plays the role of both intrinsic and extrinsic drive by proliferating the skills and abilities of the employees through the art of equipping them for current and future effectiveness, and also transforming the way they view themselves, while augmenting their confidence in assuming new responsibilities and confronting new challenges. This literature aligns well with the findings of this study.

Western and Garcia (2018) allude to the fact that, while it does not come with disadvantages, the casual type of leadership offers an array of organisational benefits, particularly pertaining to effectiveness, as this style promotes equity, an atmosphere characterised by amiability, and the opportunity for employees' best traits to overtly prevail. Cases in this study also supported this literature. Leadership that is inclusive of all participating team members often encourages creativity in and among team players, while also giving them a sense of ownership over the tasks and objectives being pursued and making them feel useful, thereby solidifying their sense of belonging within the team (Salib, 2014). Several cases in this study also agreed with this finding. Collaborative leadership particularly builds an environment that allows innovation to thrive, by allowing each role player the opportunity to come up with solutions to various challenges and creative methods of accomplishing objectives (Hsieh & Liou, 2016). The findings in this study suggested a similar perspective.

Maiers and Sandvold (2018) postulate that a good leader is hardly concerned with centralising power to themselves, but rather with the fulfilment of the greater vision and mission, as informed by their passion towards these. Muller and Turner (2017) also express that leaders who set concise goals and channel the efforts of their team members towards the accomplishment of those goals, often emerge most effective. This knowledge also agrees with the findings in this study. Katr (2018) describes how it is not easy to embrace instruction from a leader you either dislike or are afraid of, as this often results in tension between leader and

follower; moreover, a sense of apprehension develops in the execution of work, which is why a more friendly and approachable leadership style often does more good. This study also unearthed similar views. Environmental awareness is imperative, especially in business sectors that largely rely on the environment to produce the product(s)/service(s) that the business mainly offers. A lack of environmental awareness can prove detrimental to business (Ramirez, 2017). This study also revealed this factor to be essential for consideration. Hierarchical leadership structures in organisations can often be the cause of miscommunication, a lack of trust, a lack of employee self-confidence, and several other unfavourable factors, and therefore conventional leadership perspectives encourage flat structured leadership that allows employees less cumbersome access to their superiors, as this augments, for instance, trust and effectiveness (Herbst, 2012). This study's findings were also in coherence.

A modern-day exemplary leader would be one who is able to transcend the archaic notion that leaders should not 'get their hands dirty', while rather embracing the unconventional approach of not expecting of their team members what they can or could not do (Kouzes & Posner, 2016). This study also revealed such a vantage point. A supportive leader is one who, despite an autonomous leadership style, will make considerable efforts towards ensuring that their subordinates feel highly esteemed and opportunities for growth and development, both professional and personal, are made available to them (Northouse, 2010). This study concurred with the literature in the findings. Knowledge-driven leadership is when leaders emphasise the importance of insight and pertinent acumens of matters concerning the particular field or industry of business in which they are operating (Zieba & Schivinski, 2015). Such leadership is essential in accruing cutting-edge information that will serve as the organisation's competitive advantage. This is in line with the findings of this study.

5.1. Limitations and recommendations

One of the limitations that were faced by the researcher was a greater willingness to participate from the Canadian wine industry individuals who were approached, than from those in the Japanese wine industry. Another limitation was that, due to a lack of female participants, the researchers may not have been able to truly give a sound reflection of leadership as perceived in the Canadian and Japanese wine industries. Furthermore, since video calls were used to conduct the interviews, connection issues may also have contributed to the lack of participation of other

wine industry individuals from whom noteworthy information could have been collected. The researchers recommend that further inquiries be considered, particularly to ensure the inclusion of more female participants and also the possibility of personally conducted interviews, should financial and other resources permit such an approach.

6. CONCLUSION

The perpetual permutation of global markets has made apparent the importance of ensuring that organisations are led not by individuals or small teams, or in silo-types leadership, but by larger teams led by executives who are able to lobby the participation and involvement of every team player through inclusivity, towards the realisation of the organisation's greater vision. This research provides some valuable insights into the leadership styles adopted by different cultures across the globe, and how these leadership styles enhance organisational performance. This research therefore provides important cross-cultural insights that can be of value for expatriation as well as trade initiatives.

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