The Study of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style of Real Estate Industry in China: Based on the Content Analysis of Microblog

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ABSTRACT

The leadership style is highly correlated with the organizational performance, and the appropriate leadership style is essential for the enterprises to handle dynamic changes of management environment. In this paper, microblogs of entrepreneurs in the real estate industry are selected as research objectives to evaluate the entrepreneurial leadership style of real estate industry in China. At first, the article identifies the entrepreneurs’ leadership styles of the State-owned/state-controlled companies and private real estate companies respectively. Then the article analyzes the differences between the two through the business organization paradigm and resource dependence theory. Finally, the article gives suggestions to the companies about how to select the appropriate leadership style.

KEYWORDS
Content Analysis, Leadership Style, Microblog, Real Estate Industry

INTRODUCTION

Appropriate and accurate leadership style is very important to enterprise management (Tubbs and Schulz, 2006). The enterprise which is successful or has a strong practical ability defines leadership style to be an important part of achieving business goals at all levels (Hernez-Broome and Hughes, 2004). As a pivotal industry of China, it is very necessary for real estate enterprises to clarify its industry development characteristics, structure and leadership style.

International researches on leadership styles show its high correlation with organizational performance (Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2002), and also prove that the leadership style plays an important role when enterprises are trying to achieve success under the dynamic changes of management environment (Tubbs and Schulz, 2006; Hernez-Broome and Hughes, 2004; Wart, 2004). The researches on how leadership style affects industry characteristics and enterprise management provide practical guidance and theoretical development, and also promote the domestic related research (Raguž, 2007; Kuo, 2006; Girili and Oraz, 2004). The current domestic academic researches on this field exists a few problems as the follows: (1) Research objects is a bit narrow (mainly focusing on electric power industry) (Zhang and Li, 2011; Lantz, 2013); (2) Research methods are short of innovation (mostly adopting questionnaire form); (3) The academic research on entrepreneur leadership style in the real estate industry enterprises is very rare.

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In this paper, content analysis and comparative research methods are adopted to analyze the data extracted from microblogs of entrepreneurs in the real estate industry.

Through the data analysis of the leadership style in the real estate industry, the article makes effort to answer the following questions: (1) What kind of the leadership styles are adopted in state-owned enterprises (including state-controlled enterprises) and private companies respectively in China’s real estate industry? (2) Differences between the two kinds of entrepreneur leadership styles and the reasons for this phenomenon. (3) The connections between entrepreneur leadership styles and organizational patterns in these two different kinds of companies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Microblog Study
Content analysis is one of the well-developed empirical research methods which combines qualitative and quantitative analysis. Along with the internet popularization and the explosive increase of network information, the information carriers are gradually expanded from the original platforms, such as newspapers, audios, videos etc., to the network platforms, such as WEB server logs, cookies, blogs and microblogs etc. (Mozzato and Grzybovski, 2011). Golbeck et al. (2010) extract 6000 messages of microblogs (Twitter) of members of U.S. congress and find that members of the congress use microblogs as assistance for election and work through content analysis method. Waters R.D. et al. (2011) analyze the communication within non-profit organization members through the research on the information of 200 non-profit official microblogs. Lomicka and Lord (2011) draw a few skills on how to teach foreign languages through analyzing the microblog information of different languages’ students with content analysis. Although the content analysis research method based on microblogs does not have a long history (since Twitter appears in 2007), there are quite amount of researches on it and it gradually has a solid research foundation (Golbeck et al., 2010).

This study chooses SINA microblog as the information carrier, the number of users of which is over 300 million (Twitter has 500 million users). It is China’s largest microblog service provider. Since the study objective in this article are Chinese entrepreneurs in real estate industry, the authors take the SINA microblog as the information carrier, which is different from previous studies which take Twitter as the information carrier. Considering a different language and culture environment, the content analysis based on a local microblog will make the research more clear and effective.

Leadership Research
Humphreys and Einstein (2003) argued that effective leadership in organizational management leads to positive, effective organizational operations and production. A strong relationship between leaders and subordinates contributes to organizational effectiveness and efficiency (Bass, 1990).

In view of its certain abstractness, we can use content analysis method to deal with the leadership research, analyzing second-hand data to explore the hidden information and rules (Schuh, 2006). Hargrove (2009) successfully studied the composition and leadership qualities through the analysis of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton’s campaign speech using the content analysis method and combining with data mining technology in his doctoral thesis. Chiu (2007) studied the meeting minutes of the APEC and PECC’s organization through content analysis and completed his doctoral thesis in the same way. In the academic study of Sam Houston’s leadership style.

We analyze the entrepreneurial leadership style with content analysis method, doing in the way as Martin and Ernst (2005) did: define Leadership Commitment of different grades (different levels of leadership commitment correspond to different leadership styles, see table 3 for a detailed reference) through analysis of the frequency of words used by leaders. The commitment level does not mean the leadership quality. High-level leadership commitment means a relatively tighter leadership style, while low-level leadership commitment represents a relatively looser leadership style (Chiu, 2007;
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