Comparative Analysis of Humor Research Among Chinese and Foreign Leaders Based on Knowledge Graph

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Abstract

In recent years, leadership humor research has flourished, but reviews focusing on leadership humor research mainly use qualitative research methods and less quantitative methods. In view of this, this paper selected 36 related documents in CNKI database from 2015 to 2020, and 59 related documents from 1999 from WOS core database to 2020. With the help of visual analysis tool CiteSpace software, the results show that the field of humor research lags behind foreign countries, and the researchers and research teams with high yield and high influence. Finally, according to the shortcomings of leadership humor research at home and abroad, the future research direction of leadership humor is proposed from the perspectives of research methods, research topics and research level.

Keywords: leadership humor, visualization, knowledge map, comparative analysis

1. Introduction

With the continuous progress of modern humanized management concept, people pay more and more attention to the workplace positive and harmonious atmosphere, how to create a good working environment for employees, so as to arouse their enthusiasm for work, improve their work attitude, behavior and performance, etc., become the focus of contemporary scholars and leaders. Leadership humor, as an unconventional leadership behavior, abandons traditional dogmatic management, and aims to relax employees in "laughter" (Mesmer-Magnus, 2012), create a relaxed and pleasant organizational atmosphere, and establish a positive organizational culture. As a result, many leaders began to incorporate humor into their daily management activities as an effective management strategy (Dampier Walton, 2013), and more and more scholars in the field of organizational behavior began to explore the potential role and mechanism of leadership humor.

Reviewing the research origin of leadership humor, since the 1980s, foreign scholars began to discuss the potential utility of humor as a management tool (Duncan, 1982), and found that proper use of humor helps to motivate employees, improve creativity, and help reduce stress and threats in the workplace (Barbour, 1998); Martin in 2003, further refined leadership humor into self-enhancing, affiliative, aggressive, self-defeating humor, to identify the difference of leadership humor in the workplace. With the deepening of research, many foreign scholars began to explore the function mechanism and effect of leadership humor from different perspectives (Tremblay et al., 2016; Wang, 2017). China Shi Guanfu (2017), based on the mature theories of foreign leadership humor, explored the effect of leadership humor on the creativity of employees in the Chinese situation. Subsequently, scholars have also explored the impact of leadership humor on employees' attitude, behavior and performance (Gao Jie et al., 2019; Jiang Ping, 2020), but overall it is still fragmented research.

In the face of rapid growth of leadership humor research results, further analysis and comparison of Chinese and foreign research progress in the field, to better grasp the basic connotation and stage characteristics of leadership humor, predict the development trend of leadership humor and hot issues, and promote the development of leadership humor related theory and practice are of great significance. Based on this, this study to CNKI and WOS core database leading humor related research literature as a sample, through the CiteSpace software author distribution and external distribution, keywords, hot word cluster research hot description, the external

characteristics of Chinese and foreign leaders humor research and evolution, evolution path, etc.

2. Research Design

2.1 Data Source

The data sources of this study are divided into two parts: foreign and domestic. Domestic literature is from CNKI database, after data screening and low correlation literature exclusion, a total of 36 Chinese literature articles were distributed in 2015-2020.Foreign documents came from WOS core database, and "1999-2020" was selected, and duplicate and weak related documents were removed, and 59 foreign documents were finally obtained.

2.2 Analysis Method

This study uses bibliometry for analysis, which is a research method, using mathematics, statistics and other research methods, to quantitatively analyze the connection, development process and structure relationship between literature, so as to explore the knowledge structure, change law and frontier hot topics of research in a certain field. This paper mainly uses CiteSpace software as a visualization tool to measure and analyze the humor research field of Chinese and foreign leaders, including:

1). Statistics on the number of articles, explaining the overall output of papers in the field of humor of Chinese and foreign leaders;

2). Analysis of the core institutions. Through the statistical analysis of the author's institutions, the scientific research strength of the research institutions in the field of leading humor research can be directly mined;

3). Keywords occurrence. After sorting out the keywords with high word frequency in leadership humor literature, the hot evolution law of leadership humor research is found;

3. Comparative Analysis of External Characteristics of Chinese and Foreign Leaders

3.1 Comparative Analysis of Publication Trends

The change of literature volume is an important indicator to measure the research level, research level and future development trend of a certain field. The analysis of the sample literature can reflect the overall research situation of the humor of Chinese and foreign leaders. According to the literature collected from CNKI database and WoS database, the statistical trend of publication year and number of publications are shown in Figure 1.

From the perspective of the number of papers published by humor research of Chinese and foreign leaders, foreign literature was in the initial period from 1999 to 2015, and the number of literature was small. In 2016, foreign literature showed a rapid growth trend, and then showed a steady growth trend. Until 2020, the number of literature showed a rapid growth trend. The growth trend of Chinese literature is different from foreign literature. The number of Chinese literature has been showing a rapid growth trend from 2015 to 2020. In 2018, the annual publication volume of Chinese literature surpassed foreign literature. This phenomenon shows that the humor research heat of Chinese leaders is increasing and is in a state of gradual and in-depth development.
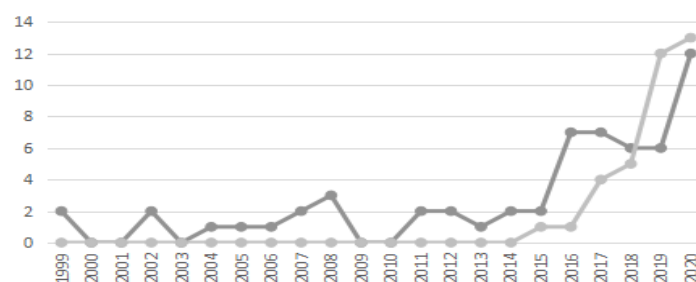

Figure 1. Distribution of humor research literature for Chinese and foreign leaders

3.2 Comparative Analysis of Research Institutions

As can be seen from Figure 2, from the perspective of cooperative network relations, there are 27 nodes and 6 connections in the map, and the network density is 0.0171. There is no big difference in nodes, indicating that the gap between Chinese universities is relatively small and the distribution of research institutions is relatively scattered. But there are also a small number of partnerships, such as those between Nanjing University and Nanjing University of Finance and Economics. On the whole, the cooperation between research institutions is

low and the connection is poor. The network of cooperative institutions is mostly formed within universities or in the same region. Cross-regional cooperation is lacking, and the academic exchanges and cooperation between institutions need to be strengthened. In the distribution map of foreign institutions, there are 119 nodes and 142 connections, and the network density is 0.0202. The size of nodes in the distribution of research institutions varies greatly, indicating that the distribution of scientific research forces is unbalanced, and there are obvious marking points in the network.

Figure 2. Distribution of leadership humor research institutions

4. Analysis of Humor Research Hotspots of Chinese and Foreign Leaders

4.1 Leadership Humor Keyword Occurrence Analysis

As shown in Figure 2, in the map of humorous keywords of Chinese leaders, there are 90 nodes and 165 connections from 2015 to 2020, and the network density is 0.0412, indicating that there are more common times between different keywords. From the visual map of leadership humor and the high-frequency keyword statistics of Chinese leadership humor research (see Table 1), the highest frequency of keywords is "leader humor", which appeared 18 times, followed by "humorous leadership", "leader-member exchange", "employee creativity", "humor" and "positive emotions".

In the humorous keyword map of foreign leaders, there were 343 nodes in 1999-2020, 1287 connections, and a network density of 0.0219. This article on the frequency more keywords (see Table 4), concluded that foreign leaders in the field of humor presents the following characteristics: 1). On the research object, the core of leading humor research is humor, therefore, "Leader humor", "Workplace humor" and "humor" frequency is relatively high, among them, the most frequent is "Leader humor", 36 times. With the development of leading humor research, the current scholars are no longer limited to taking a single humor behavior as the theme, and the research subjects are gradually diversified, including "Leadership", "Humour style". 2). In terms of research topics, existing literature mainly studies the role mechanism of leaders 'humor on employees' attitude, behavior and performance by improving employees' emotions, cognition and relationships. 3). In terms of research methods, Mesmer-Magnus (2012) used meta-analysis to clarify the relationship between leadership humor and employee attitude, performance and leadership efficiency in the workplace.

Table 1. Statistics of Chinese and foreign leaders

Chinese leadership in humor research	Frequency	Centrality	Foreign leadership in humor research	Frequency	Centrality
Leader humor	18	0.68	Leader humor	36	0.16
Humor leadership	8	0.35	Leadership	24	0.13
Leader member exchange	7	0.27	Workplace humor	22	0.00
Employee creativity	7	0.33	humor	21	0.10

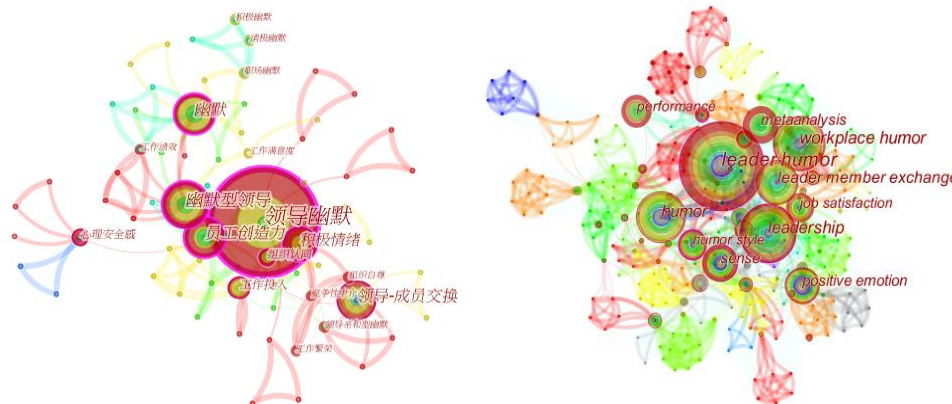| humor	7	0.41	Leader member exchange	18	0.08
Positive emotion	6	0.10	Positive emotion	15	0.07
Job involvement	4	0.22	Sense	15	0.11
Psychological security	3	0.07	Meta-analysis	15	0.08
organizational identification	3	0.04	Performance	13	0.02
Job performance	2	0.03	Humour style	13	0.21

Figure 3. Leadership humor keywords in common distribution

5. Comparison and Analysis of the Core System of Humor Research Among Chinese and Foreign Leaders

Through the above comparative analysis, it can be found that Chinese and foreign scholars share similarities and differ in the research of leadership humor. This section now analyzes the similarities and differences of humorous research between Chinese and foreign leaders.

5.1 High Overlap Degree of Keywords

1). Both at home and abroad pay great attention to the research of the humor connotation of leaders.

Humor is a multidimensional, complex construct that is not suitable for a single generalized definition. As an expansion of the concept of humor, the definition is different due to the differences in research perspectives. In the trait perspective, this perspective focuses on the leaders 'personality traits, which are differences in leaders' habits and abilities in the workplace (Martin et al., 2003). Avolio (1999) based on this perspective proposed humor as an emotion-related explicit manifestation of leaders, which helps to have a positive impact on employees. In the behavioral perspective, this perspective regards humor as a unique way of communication and interaction between superiors and subordinates (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012).Romero (2006) proposed from this perspective that leadership humor is an interesting way of communication that can generate positive emotions and perceptions.

2). More attention should be paid to the relationship between individual emotions and superiors at home and abroad.

Leaders humor behavior can stimulate emotions, and improve the relationship between superiors and subordinates affect staff attitude, behavior and performance, and domestic and foreign research high frequency words are only "positive mood" and "members of exchange" "leader", These keywords reflect the greater emphasis at home and abroad on leadership humor from the perspective of emotions and relationships.

Among them, the research on positive emotions mainly discusses the influence of leadership humor on individual attitude, behavior and performance by stimulating employees' positive emotions. For example, foreign scholars Goswami (2016) discussed the positive influence of leadership humor on employees through positive emotion mediation; Robert (2012) based on the humor wheel model stimulated positive emotional experience and further "infect" and "spread" in the workplace to promote the cycle of positive emotions; Cooper (2018) examined the positive relationship between leadership humor and organizational citizen behavior (2001) based

on the expansion-construction theory .Previous studies in China have also revealed that leadership humor will affect the prosperity of employees (Liu Baoping, 2020), creativity (Zhang Yajun et al., 2019; Liu Yun et al., 2020), and voice behavior behavior (Kang Fei & Li Yanlong, 2019).

The relationship process model proposed by foreign scholar Cooper (2008) acts as the core role of the "cornerstone", The transmission mode of humor and LMX is discussed in detail; Gkorezis (2014) conducted an empirical test and expansion research on this humorous relationship process model, Further arguing that leadership positive humor can improve LMX, Thus weakening organizational cynicism; Robert (2016) conducted a dialectical analysis of the traditional view and relationship process model of leadership humor, Perfecting the relational process model, Provifying that LMX is a path between leadership humor and employee job satisfaction, at the same time, The effect of leadership humor also depends on the quality of leadership staff relationships, These effects are positive when the LMX quality is high, These effects are negative when the LMX mass is low (Robert et al., 2016).The domestic research on the relationship between leadership humor and LMX is basically the same with that of foreign countries, revealing that leadership humor affects employee creativity through LMX intermediary (Shi Guanet al., 2017, Liu Yun, et al., 2020) and intra-team learning (Gao Jie et al., 2019).

Leadership-member exchange relationship as the result of leader and employee interaction, is another common hot spot in the field of humor research leadership humor, existing research mainly analyzes the leadership humor by improving the quality of LMX, and the influence of individual attitude, behavior and performance, and LMX regulating the effect of leadership humor. The relationship process model proposed by foreign scholar Cooper (2008) acts as the core role of "cornerstone", discussing in detail the transmission mode of humor and LMX in detail; China's research on the relationship between leadership humor and LMX is basically the same with that of foreign countries, revealing that leadership humor influences employee creativity through LMX intermediaries (Shi Guanet al., 2017, Liu Yun, et al., 2020) and intra-team learning (Gao Jie et al., 2019).

5.2 Significant Differences in the Focus Areas

Although the convergence of humor related research among leaders at home and abroad, there are still big differences. Compared with domestic humor research, the research perspective of foreign leaders is broader, which is embodied in the following three aspects:

  1. Research on the humorous effect of different types of leaders

Based on the perspective of function difference, foreign scholars propose different types of leadership humor, including self-enhancing, affiliative, self-deprecation, aggressive and self-defeating (Martin, 2003; Hoption et al., 2013). And scholars have discussed the action mechanism and effect of different types of leadership humor.

Compared with foreign countries, there are few studies on the mechanism and effect of different types of leadership humor in Chinese research. Shi Guanet al (2017) revealed the influence of humorous and friendly humor on employees' creativity based on the perspective of social exchange. Wei Huimin et al (2020) revealed the influence of psychological contract violation and hostile attribution style as the adjustment variable (Wei Huimin and Nong Meilan, 2020)

  2. Explore the interaction between leadership humor and leadership

Evidence provided by foreign scholars shows that humor, as a "lubricant", the effective use of humor can reconcile a certain leadership style to prevent it from becoming extreme, and can also maximize a certain leadership efficiency (Avolio, 1999).For example, Tremblay and Gibson (2016) analyzed the impact of different types of leadership humor on organizations in combination with leadership style. Research shows that the use of humor by transformative leaders can stimulate employees 'positive emotions (Goswami et al., 2016) and improve employees' perception of transformative leadership (Mao et al., 2017).

  3. Lead the cross-cultural research on humor

Although humor is a common tool for communication in modern society (Decker et al., 2011), there are differences in the qualitative and quantitative use of humor in different cultures (Kalliny et al., 2006), and individuals' perception, expression and appreciation of humor are also influenced by the intrinsic value system and behavior patterns of specific cultures. In view of globalization and increasing labor diversity, foreign scholars are trying to explore the comparative study of leading humor behavior in different cultural contexts, deeply exploring the role of cultural factors in the role of leading humor. For example, Wang (2017) explores the differences in the use of leadership humor in two different cultural backgrounds in Australia and China.

6. The Leadership of the Humor Research Conclusions and Future Outlook

This paper takes the leadership humor research papers in CNKI and WOS core database as the source, with the help of CiteSpace visualization tools and bibliometric analysis, through the comparative analysis of the leadership humor research in recent years, the following main conclusions are drawn:

First, with the deepening of national attention to leadership humor, the research results in the field of leadership humor have gradually increased. Second, Chinese and foreign leaders in humor research network density is relatively low, a few scholars reached a solid cooperation, some institutions reached a local regional cooperation, but have not yet formed literature high yield of researchers and research team, but foreign have top research institutions and high influential scholars, this reflects the foreign attention in the field of humor and investment. Third, first of all, the connotation and action mechanism of leadership humor are the core issues of common concern to both at home and abroad. Among them, foreign countries pay more attention to the joint development and cross-cultural role of leadership humor and leadership style, while Chinese research explores the action mechanism of positive influence of leadership humor. This paper believes that Chinese leadership humor research can be improved in the following aspects in the future.

1. Strengthen exchanges among scholars and vigorously build a scientific research cooperation network. At present, foreign leaders and many groups of core authors have been formed in the field of humor research, and the cooperation has the depth and breadth. Therefore, in the future, we should integrate the humorous research power of Chinese leaders to further strengthen and deepen scientific research cooperation, especially the cross-border integrated development.

2. Tracking the foreign frontiers to make up for the research weaknesses. Compared with foreign research, Chinese research lacks diversity and multidisciplinary discussion, and there is still room for expansion, such as distinguishing different types of leadership humor and exploring the possible differential influence mechanism, which is an important development trend of leading humor research (Pundt and Herrmann, 2015), and cross-cultural leaders or employees are increasingly common with increasing globalization and labor diversity, it is necessary for Chinese scholars to explore and expand the universality and difference of leadership humor behavior in different cultural backgrounds.

3. High-level research level and rich research content. At present, the research on leadership humor mainly focuses on the individual level, and lacks the discussion of the effectiveness of leadership humor at the employee organization level. Future research can be conducted on the impact effects at the organizational level of leadership humor. For example, focus on the organizational effects of leadership humor. For organizations, the positive results of relying solely on improving employee attitudes and behavior are limited, and the potential positive effects of leadership humor at the organizational level may be more obvious. Therefore, future research is necessary to explore the outcome variables at the organization level of leadership humor.

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