

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF NON-WESTERNISED & EASTERN LEADERSHIP MODELS

## Abstract

The author through this research paper tries to explore some of the non-westernised and Indian models of leadership that emanated from time to time. It focuses on the fact that there are many accomplished business leaders who are yet to discover their own leadership styles and signatures. Despite the learning from so many leadership theories and models from USA, UK and other western countries, several corporate commanders continue to face difficulties in managing the institutions and enterprises. Over the years, our leadership consultants have been trying to study the leadership styles of the industry captains and are engaged in several assignments with these leaders to enhance their organisation's capabilities and competencies. Increasingly, the author is of the opinion that majority of industry leaders' efforts are mainly revolving around the western leadership models. More so, as our industry captains are not exposed to the eastern, non-westernised leadership models and continue to practice on because of the way they have evolved their thoughts and beliefs being influenced by western leadership models. It is time for them to leverage upon the eastern leadership models and to lead effectively during their lifetime. If they can seize these opportunities, their influence will continue to grow for the generations to come. Maybe it is the desire of our industry leaders to make a lasting impact on the world that drives so many of us to want to lead. To our business leaders the dissensions are often marked through various modes of agitations be it strikes, lockouts, and labour agitations and many a times it is declared as a sick industry, appealing to BIFR. The author who has

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been a senior HR practitioner, in multinational companies and currently a faculty member in a university, is of the conviction that our business leaders need to relook into their respective leadership styles from time to time rather than blaming their own team members stating that they are laggards, irresponsible and disobedient. The author is of the opinion that understanding and revisiting the eastern leadership theories, models and the changing contemporary trends will help our business leaders to come out with an approach and right kind of leadership style to create harmony and industrial peace. Through this research paper the author has tried to establish relevance of comprehending the eastern leadership theories and models recognising the influence of organisational climate and cultural moorings. Besides, the author has tried to articulate and recognise the varied and diverse thoughts and thinkers on non-westernised and eastern business leadership models. This research article articulates the evidences where the eastern and non-westernised leadership concepts and models really works and has been shaping the world for hundreds of years.

**Design/ methodology / approach:** Based on literature review and the contemporary work done, the most critical need today in business leadership is a new kind of leader: authentic leader- and thus revisiting the key tenets of eastern leadership theories can provide a framework in scrutinising the leadership qualities and capabilities. The various exercises involved in exploring and revisiting the leadership strategies as has been enumerated in different eastern leadership theories and models are outlined in this paper that can be used in developing and inculcating a new culture for leader development and leadership readiness.

**Findings:** Revisiting the eastern / non westernised models can pave a new pathway towards the understanding of leadership practices and is reflected as a measure to think through and investigating the existing leadership pipeline in an enterprise revolving around the scope of this work.

**Practical implications:** The research paper can facilitate the budding Managers and the emerging leaders of the enterprises achieve the mission critical goals to sustain and succeed in uncertain business environment leveraging through the ancient roots to global routes – unleashing the unlimited potential.

**Originality/Value:** This is an original piece of work and the solutions mentioned can be of great value not only for the scholars but also for the Organisational behavioural scientists , practicing HR professionals and Organisational Development experts more in terms of identifying, nurturing and developing vibrant business leaders and thinkers who will shape the organisations of tomorrow.

**Keywords:** Leadership readiness, leader development models, lessons, leadership effectiveness, & systems.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Varied and numerous are the definitions of leadership that has been offered from time to time. However, the author is of the conviction that leadership is all about plugging into the minds and hearts of the people. It is creating a spark and rallying the followers around to an exciting vision of the future. It revolves around upping the quality of imagination of the organisation. It is an art to uplift a spirit of intellectual ferment and constructive dissent so that the role holders are not bounded by the status quo. Besides, it is about developing a highest level of commitment, without compromising on quality that would set the team apart, now and in the future.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

To begin with ,the author has tried to identify the linkage of eastern mythological aspects with leadership and could explore the following dialogues from the epic Mahabharat that Bhishma Pitamah shared with Arjuna about the qualities of a King as a leader, “ He is the best of kings who has the wisdom, who is possessed of liberality, who is ready to take advantage of the weakness of his foes, who is conversant with what is bad for his subjects, who is prompt in action, who has his wealth under his control, who is not vindictive, who is high minded, who is not irascible by disposition, who is not given to boasting and who vigorously peruses to completion all works commenced by him”.

The research-based facts reveal that during the actual war, in a sample of 100 combat troops, about ten percent are courageous, the next ten percent are non-courageous and the eighty percent can be carried out either way. Patton has observed that the successful leadership often leads to pointing the most courageous in the right direction and influencing the remaining to follow.

While reviewing the literature on eastern and Indian leadership, the author felt that one way to understand Indian and eastern leadership models is that we can take a creativity view of Indian history. We can explore clearly three distinct phases during which India as a nation was pregnant with ideas, thoughts and thinkers revolving around creativity and innovation. They can be recognised as Vedic period, Bhakti period and the period of freedom struggles and movements. While the Vedic periods comprised several sages, the pioneering work done by Guru Nanak, Sri Chaitanya, Rahim, Kabir and Tukaram during bhakti period followed by Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Gandhi during the freedom struggle is worth citing. And today slowly, the knowledge era is on the anvil. Studies reveal an integrative synthesis that indeed provided a platform for intellectual churning.

Prof. J.B.P Sinha through his intense studies and research could identify several areas with varied shapes and shadows of indigenous ideas of eastern philosophies on leadership and Management. These views revolve heavily upon three traditions of knowledge that includes the wisdom from the ancient India, the folklore of people from time to time and above all the transnational system and principles of leadership.

One of the scholars who had a major contribution of Indian Management is Prof. S.K. Chakraborty. Through his intensive studies and research, he could demonstrate the direct linkage and applicability of vedantic and ancient leadership concepts and contexts. Dr M.B.

Athreya could also draw upon the ideas from Vedanta and demonstrated their day to day utility in leadership and management concepts through his consulting assignments. Further, Swami Jitatananda through his scholarly work puts forward his pioneering views on Indian Ethics and issues on leadership in modern management. Prof. Subhas Sharma uses an eclectic approach and after scanning and scrutinizing various ancient Indian literature could develop the conceptual models of leadership that is applicable in today's corporate concepts. While Dr Siddharth Shastri of Banasthali University argues for the need of applying Indian ethos and leadership, Ipsita Bansal could identify the significance of leadership and Management concepts from ancient Indian psycho-philosophic thought for the present day organisations.

### III. THE SEARCH AND THE QUEST

What then is the leadership? Is leadership a trait of army Generals who through their strategic manoeuvring outwit their opponents? the politicians who convince and channelize the decision-making process of the electorates? Or an individual who takes control of a crisis? As a matter of fact leadership implies the ability to exercise judgement to work in a concentrated manner towards the generation of wealth for a company. The business leaders must use their heads, think beyond their grade and must behave as a leader and not as a wage earner.

A leader must make the common man do uncommon things. A leader transforms knowledge into economic results, building a reservoir of leadership within the organisation. Probing deep the author is of the opinion that a leader is a person who accepts challenges: the challenge of the ever increasing inflationary spiral, the challenge of training and skill creation, the challenge of financial discipline and cost consciousness and ultimately that of a corporate growth. A leader must practice in built personal discipline. Not talk ill of others which results in misunderstanding and inhibits the teamwork. Besides, a leader must be a shock absorber. Disagreement does not mean disclosure. In the end the fundamental decisions a leader makes are the decisions of character.

Increasingly, it is in this context the author has tried unfolding the studies on Eastern leadership. It becomes evident that essence of Indian ethos is deeply ingrained in all the eastern leadership models. Delving deep to the works done by the Eastern research scholars, the author could explore the work done by Punnett and Shenkar (1996) wherein they have shared many a review of research of eastern leadership theories. Both Punnett and Shenkar could scrutinised the Japanese models of leadership specifically the performance Management theory of leadership where the leaders are categorised by their unstinted efforts to view the performance of their team members mainly revolving around performing and sustainability functions. Besides, they also highlighted the Nurturant Task (NT) leadership model propounded by J.B.P Sinha.

While providing a systematic analysis of various leadership models, Singh and Karunes (2000) highlighted about the Indian contributions to the leadership literature. Singh and Karunes mentioned about the work done on leadership by Bhandarkar and Singh (1990-1995) that deals in the context of Indian model of transformational leadership. They also highlighted the work done by Dr Subhas Sharma (1995) on the model of enlightened leadership.

As a matter of fact, there are theories and models revolving around leadership that has been put forward from time to time by the Indian scholars and thinkers. Let us delve through some of these eastern leadership models.

- 1. Vjigshu Model of Leadership:** Perhaps one of the oldest models of leadership which is proposed by Kautilya. The very theme of this model revolves around two key words that is Vijaya (victory) and Ikshuk (desirous). The model suggests that be it the king /leader must have a dogged determination of achieving victory. Kautilya while mentioning the context of “how to manage a kingdom” came out with this view and highlighted that a leader must have an unflinching faith in himself and must be driven by the pragmatic approach and a dynamic fervour. While propounding his views on Vjigshu model, Kautilya came out with the four-fold strategies. They are Persuasion (Sam) , economic incentive (Dam), the power division (Bhed) and the punishment (Danda) as instruments to achieve the objectives of lokasangraha( welfare of the world) . It is to be highlighted that in this model of leadership Kautilya suggested that power (Danda) cannot be utilised for self – interest but only for the enlightened collective interest.
- 2. Nurturant -Task Leadership Model (Sinha):** In 1980, J.B.P Sinha came out with a model of leadership, where the corporate commander is both task oriented and nurturant . The nurturant dimension of a leader reflects the ability of the leader taking care of the team members, being accessible, approachable and considerate. This nurturance is contingent on the task performance. It may be noted that the leader becomes benevolent if the team member is dedicated, sincere and committed to his tasks. It is observed that in this leadership model that paternalistic approach is an integral part of the leadership process.
- 3. OCTAPACE Model (Uday Pareek):** In 1981, Pareek who pioneered in designing various OD interventions came out and coined OCTAPACE model. This model stands for openness, collaboration, trust, authenticity, pro-activity, autonomy, confrontation and experimentation the eight traits/ capabilities also represent the leadership values or attributes. Thus, the OCTAPACE model of Pareek can always be interpreted as a leadership model.
- 4. Karta Model of leadership:** Bhandarkar and Singh has done a pioneering work in 1990 as they came out with a model of leadership that views the leader as “Karta” better described as the authority figure of an extended and joint family. Karta as a head basically facilitate the participation of workers in Management. The karta is available to the team for various inputs, guidance, counselling and for conflict resolution purpose. The karta considers the enterprise as one and an integral family. Thus not by cajoling and admonishing, the Karta on the contrary prefers to solve the problems amicably by putting a hand on the shoulder and advice to the team mates.
- 5. Four Steps Model of Enlightened Leadership:** One of the pioneering works of eastern leadership model was undertaken by Dr Subhash Sharma in 1995. Dr Sharma could identify four steps in the leadership model and termed them as Robot, Manager, Leader and Enlightened leader. In this leadership model, Dr Subhash Sharma highlighted about the competencies of a leader who demonstrates enlightenment. These competencies are:

- HOPE (Higher order purpose of existence) is the magic mantra by dint of which the leader harmonizes vision, mission, values and positive management approach.
  - Yang and yin qualities that an enlightened leader combines and thereby create eco-systems and vibrant organisations through people.
  - Adversity and catastrophe are an integral part of the business environment. An enlightened leader demonstrates her/ his capabilities to navigate through such hostile and volatile environment.
  - Be it radical and sea change situations, an enlightened leader always responds to the best of ability.
  - Application of both the leadership and Management metaphorically represented by VEDA (Vision, enlightenment, Devotion and Action) is practiced by an enlightened leader.
  - Finally, in enlightened leadership we find an integration of skills, values and wisdom.
6. **Yin- Trinity Model of Leadership:** In 1996, Dr Subhash Sharma came out with a leadership model known as Yin -Trinity model of leadership in which he talks about three Hindu goddesses namely Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati where he tried symbolising wealth, power and Knowledge. This model highlights that the Head of the organisation must ensure a judicious utilization of wealth, knowledge and power and must justify its use for the welfare of the organisation and society. With the concept of the women empowerment evolving fast in the corporates, this model of leadership may emerge and have a deep impact as a leadership model of future. The very theme of this model is to discard the male-domination aspects conceptualised by various practitioners and scholars time and again.
7. **Mother Leadership Model:** This model was proposed by Banerjee in 1998: Banerjee conceptualised a holistic model of leadership that basically to a self-realised leader who is endowed with a long-term perspective that ultimately accentuate sustainability and promotes values. While this model tried to imbibe all the existing leadership styles be it as visionary leader, wisdom leader, missionary leader, intuitive leader, In essence, it is an integrative model of leadership based on the metaphor of Mother. Accordingly, in its formulation, it has tried the absorbing the Nurturant -Task leadership. Today the environmental concerns are the top priority and thus this metaphor is an evocative metaphor for the new paradigm in leadership. In 1998, Gustavsson, considers the idea of Mother leadership as a new idea that may help the short sighted leadership develop to a broad and all-encompassing leadership wisdom.

Incidentally in 1980 Rao came out with a maternalistic approach to Management where he suggested the symbol of a 'Mother' and its relevance in organisational development and work-ethics. Rao justifies through his works, a work place that revolves around a systems context. Rao's endeavour has been to justify the relevance of 'Mother' metaphor, Banerjee tried exploring beyond the work ethics and suggested it more in the context of leadership readiness where every leaders actions must be preceded by thought and the clear vision of the objective horizon.

**Workshop Model of Leadership:** Chatterjee in 1998 came out with this model. Chatterjee believed in the philosophy of "Gita" and this leadership model takes its roots

from the concept of karmayoga. The workshop model of leadership considers “work as worship”. Chatterjee through this model tried propounding that when work is done in the spirit of workshop, the quality of work undergoes a metamorphosis. As a result, even ordinary work is transformed from a mere chore to an extraordinary reality. In this model there are four roadmaps that takes the leader towards workshop. These paths are discipline, righteousness, sacrifice and Transcendence. In this model the transcendence is defined as a ‘state of realisation in action’. Workshop creates conditions for the effortless effort and the leaders practicing workshop become the inspirational model. Chatterjee cites the example of Gandhi, Vivekananda, Aurobindo and others as the practitioners of the workshop model of leadership.

- 8. Wisdom Leadership Model:** S.K. Chakraborty proposed the model of ‘ Wisdom Leadership’ in 1999 which has a linkage with the ancient ‘ rajrishi’ model of model of leadership .Chakraborty believed that this model has a touch of ‘rishi’ or the touch of sacredness in all its actions. While proposing this model, Chakraborty observed,” This line of leadership development has continued unbroken from Mythology to History, to the present times, from king Janak to Buddha, Ashoka to Chandragupta, Vivekananda to Gandhi. Chakraborty considers the rajrishi concept as quintessential Indian model of leadership. To justify his argument, Chakraborty could provide empirical evidence in the form of dialogues with the leading corporate leaders and he finds many of them practising the ‘Rajrishi’ model in one form or other. However, the problem with such dialogues is that at times, people in senior positions tend to give socially desirable answers. Hence sometimes it is extremely difficult to make firm conclusions about the true nature of leadership, In spite of such limitations, the ‘Rajrishi’ model as a concept remains a useful benchmark for the leaders. Since ‘Rajrishi ‘is an embodiment of ‘wisdom’ , Chakraborty refers to this model as ‘ wisdom leadership’
- 9. Contribution Model of Leadership:** In the year 2000, Singh came out with this model of leadership as the core of leading. He proposed that every person is known by his contributions. Anup Singh suggests the ten commandments better known as 10Cs . This includes creativity, character, courage, cause, control, competence, communication, care and coaching, creativity and collective management. However, it was observed that all these commandments quite often suffer from internal contradictions such as contradiction between ‘control’ and ‘creativity’.
- 10. Responsible Leadership:** Bhatta in 2000 came out with the concept of responsible leader and there by 24- hour of leadership. It is rooted in the ancient concept of leaders’ responsibilities towards his people/ followers. Thus, a leader pays his entire attention to properly lead his/ her people. The leader is in round the clock duty and is not confined to fixed timings.. The leader is round the clock manager and not just cannot afford to be a manager for fixed and specific time. Going through the works of Kautilya, it is observed that he has prepared a 24-hour timetable for the king. Bhatta projected a model of leadership based on ‘Ashokan model’ as illustration of ‘accountable leadership’ . Drawing upon the panch tattva concept, Bhatta suggest the qualities of responsible leaders in consonance with five elements. According to him Sky/ space represents creativity and innovation, earth represents the emotional stability, fire represents energy/ power, water represents purity and sanctity. These are also essential qualities of responsible and responsive leadership.



**11. The corporate Rishi Model ( Rishi as Re-see) :** Dr Subhash Sharma proposed this model and this model is rooted in the interpretation of Rishi concept as Re-see concept. A ‘corporate Rishi’ is one who can see the things , events and actions in a new perspective in addition to providing a touch of humanness. He/ she is also a self-responsible individual. This model considers knowledge creation in terms of rationality, intuition and revelation in a hierarchical order. The model reveal that rationality is at the lowest step, intuition is the next step and revelation is the third step. Through re-see approach, leaders use their intuition effectively and thus arrive at new interpretations and revelations that lead to radical changes in the organisation and society. The re-see leaders use the radical approach for being always in touch with happenings around them and for envisioning the future. We can also refer to them as “full circle leaders” as they see and re-see the environment through full circle radical visioning approach. Dr Sharma also suggests an integrative synthesis of the ‘modern prince’ and the ‘modern Rishi’ for the corporate leaders. A corporate Rishi combines skills, values and wisdom in an effective manner.

**12. Corporate Rishi as CEO (Creative, enlightened & organic) :** This model is proposed by Dr Subhash Sharma in 2005 and the theme of the model revolves in the concept of corporate Rishi as CEO( Creative, Enlightened and Organic) leader. Such a leader is highly creative, and is enlightened and establishes organic relationships with the stakeholders and displays ecological sensitivity

There are various other eastern models of leadership and the author has tied to project only some of the notable eastern/ non westernised models of leadership.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The author has tried to project and revisit many of the components of a classical view of leadership more with a research-based focus revolving around the traits and behaviours of the leaders from eastern leadership models perspectives and have tried to gauge at different situations how the leaders transform from leader development to leadership readiness. The set of beliefs that emerged from time to time could unfold the contours of classical view of leadership. Ultimately, the assumptions and beliefs of the employees to a great extent drive the leader behaviour. The demonstrated behaviour of the employees shapes the corporate climate and outcomes.

The results measure the outcomes and showcase if the critical business missions are achieved and which indeed is amplified by the behaviours of the leaders. The shared beliefs, values and assumptions becomes visible in an organisation the way the leader gets the work done on a day to day basis and it becomes evident in the demonstrated behaviour of the leader and the led. After all, leadership implies the ability to exercise the judgement to work in a concentrated manner towards the generation of wealth for the company. A leader must make common man do uncommon thing. The various theories and models of leadership would help a business leader transform the knowledge into economic results, building a reservoir of leadership within the organisation. The subtle understanding of the theories of leadership would help the budding managers and emerging business leaders to accept challenges; the challenge of ever-increasing inflationary spiral, the challenge of grass root education and skill development, the challenge of financial discipline and the cost consciousness and ultimately that of the corporate growth.

Let us agree, that in the end the fundamental decisions a leader makes are the decisions of character.

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