



LEADERSHIP AND ITS THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT:

In this paper, an attempt is made to discuss what is leadership, how a leader becomes, what are qualities contributing to emerge leadership in the background of various theories. The very purpose of the attempt is to draw an elaborative picture of leadership in the light of theories. Today leadership is widely recognized in all spheres of human life by replacing institutions and issues.

KEYWORDS: *elaborative picture, human life, institutions and issues.*



INTRODUCTION

As Rajini Kothari stated, "Today there is too much stress on leadership and little stress on issues and institutions".¹ It indicates that leadership has assumed greater significance in a changing scenario. Leadership needs to be understood politically, that is as a political process, which involves at least three critical aspects²:

MEANING:

1. Leadership implies the organization or mobilization of people and resources (economic, political and other) in pursuit of particular ends
2. Leadership must always be understood contextually, occurring within a given indigenous configuration of power, authority and legitimacy, shaped by history, institutions, goals and political culture
3. Leadership regularly involves forging formal or informal coalitions, vertical or horizontal, of leaders and elites, in order to solve the pervasive collective action problems which largely define the challenges of growth and development.

The notion of leadership connotes images of powerful, dynamic individuals who command victorious armies, direct corporate empires or shape the course of nations. We have many definitions which look into different angles.

¹Dr. S.S. Patagundi, Rtd. Professor of Pol-Science, KUD, Quoted in his key note address in a state level seminar held on 10-12-2013 at Belagavi

²www, *Conceptions of Leadership* by Heather Lyne de Ver, pp.3-4

Barnard Bass, one of the prominent scholars of leadership, has described leadership as a “universal phenomenon”. He further defines leadership as “an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perception and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change-persons whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. It should be clear that with this broad definition, any member of the group can exhibit some amount of leadership and the members will vary in the extent to which they do so”.³ Jacobs and Jaques define leadership “as a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose”.⁴ Chemers has given a definition of leadership that would be widely accepted by the majority of theorists and researchers. To him “leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”.⁵

“Leadership is influencing people –by providing purpose, direction and motivation-while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization”⁶. It is the interpretation of Department of Army 1999. According to Bass and Stogdill “leadership appears to be a working relationship among members in a group, in which the leader acquires status through active participation and determination of his or her capacity to carry cooperative tasks to completion”.⁷ Ordway Tead defines, “leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate towards some goal which they come to find desirable”.⁸ Jago defines “leadership is both a process and a property. The process of leadership is the use of non-coercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of the members of an organized group toward the accomplishment of group objectives. As a property, leadership is the set of qualities or characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to successfully employ such influence”. Further, he also explains that leadership is not only some quality or characteristic that one possesses or is perceived to possess, it can be something that one does. It therefore can describe an act as well as a person. Leadership does not involve the use of force, coercion or domination and is not necessarily implied by the use of such titles as manager, supervisor, or superior⁹. Nye states “leaders as those who help a group create and achieve shared goals. Some try to impose their own goals, others derive them more from the group, but leaders mobilize people to reach those objectives. Leadership is a social relationship with three key components- leader, followers and the contexts in which they interact”.¹⁰ Dwight Eisenhower argued that leadership is “an ability to get people to work together, not only because you tell them to do so and enforce your orders but because they instinctively want to do it for you. You don’t lead by hitting people over the head; that’s assault, not leadership”.¹¹

Nadesan R.A. argued that “there is no doubt that high performance leaders do possess certain personal qualities and attributes that enable them to reach those positions, but evidence also suggests that they have high levels of emotional intelligence”.¹² “Leadership is not an abstract essence. It is a function, an influence, a relationship...Leadership can be judged good or bad only in terms of goals”.¹³ “Leadership is a means by which one person induces others to behave or not to behave in a certain

³ Ibid, p.4

⁴ *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, p. 378

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ordway Tead, *The Art of Leadership*, p.20

⁹ www, *Conceptions of Leadership* by Heather Lyne de Ver, p.6

¹⁰ Ibid, p.7

¹¹ Ibid, p.7

¹² R.A. Nadesan, *The New Indian Express* (edex), Monday, October10, 2016

¹³ Robert J. Blakely, *Strategies of Leadership*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1959, p. 239 Jack

manner".¹⁴ Leadership also involves mobilising, organising and directing people to achieve desired goals. Leadership in its psychological dimensions connotes changing the life style, of culture and attitude of masses. Leadership symbolises status and power gives it a character of an elite.

Daniel Goleman¹⁵ talks about the relationship between leadership and emotional intelligence in his article "What makes a leader?" He writes about qualities which make a great leader. First, basic and most important is self-regard. High self-regard can be described as a realistic assessment of strengths and weaknesses combined with a healthy sense of acceptance, equanimity and capability. The next emotional intelligence quality which is significant for effective leadership is empathy. The high performance leader is not only in regular touch with his own feelings but has the ability to readily empathise and understand the feelings of those around them. In other words, this ability of a leader to step into the shoes of the other person, helps him gain perspective and a deeper understanding of others, improve communication and identify problems before they escalate. Another factor that high performing leaders exhibit in large measure is a significantly high level of optimism. Having a positive attitude and outlook in spite of setbacks and being resilient is what optimism is all about. Leaders who are optimistic have a supreme belief in other abilities, of course too much optimism is as detrimental as too little.

Research results till date indicate that nearly 90 percent of high performance leaders have high emotional intelligence when tested while poorly performing or borderline leaders have relatively low levels of emotional intelligence. A lack of emotional intelligence is what limits some people in their ability to manage themselves, manage others, or manage situations. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence skills rise above any situation. They don't let other people push their buttons, and they connect with others more effectively. According to Hogan and Kaiser (2005) "Decisiveness, competence, integrity, vision, modesty and persistent, etc., are important psychological factors that make a good and great leader"¹⁶. Raymond Cattell speaks of "16 traits. These are: (1) commitment, (2) loyalty, (3) self discipline, (4) strong work ethic, (5) creativity, (6) ability to learn from mistakes, (7) principle, (8) passion for something greater, (9) trust, (10) honesty, (11) tenacity, (12) openness, (13) patience, (14) responsibility, (15) courage and (16) confidence etc., these make a great leader".¹⁷ Van Wort also distills the leadership qualities or traits. These are: "1) self confidence, 2) decisiveness, 3) resilience, 4) energy, 5) need for achievement, 6) willingness to assume responsibility, 7) flexibility, 8) service mentality, 9) personal integrity, 10) emotional maturity, 11) determination, 12) sociability, and 13) intelligence"¹⁸.

David P. Hanna, in his book 'The Seeds of Leadership', writes "The leaders are personally committed to a worthwhile vision, often times sacrificing their personal references and comfort for it. Their vision becomes a compelling, common purpose for all those who have an important stake in the organization's success because fulfilling it improves their quality of life. True leaders have followers, not just subordinates."¹⁹ He further explains leader's ultimate success is tied to his or her ability to deliver results. Leaders have not survived in any age unless they achieved some critical and expected results. The measure of leader's personal effectiveness is the amount of trust they build with others. Leaders are the caretakers of the interests and wellbeing of their subordinates and the purpose they serve. The successful leadership represents vision, enlightenment, devotion and action. The most important aspect of leadership is self-awareness. The person who knows his self knows the world. Great leaders are not men born with extraordinary talent; rather, they are ordinary men who have the extraordinary ability to stand by their convictions and beliefs. They spend their lives to serve a cause, and make the cause the supreme goal of their life. The leaders will try to understand the issues and the

¹⁴ W. Duncan, *Organizational Behaviour*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1978, pp. 211-212

¹⁵ R.A. Nadesan, *The New Indian Express* (edex), Monday, October 10, 2016

¹⁶ www.how to be a great leader

¹⁷ www.eight theories of leadership.com

¹⁸ www.traits of leader

¹⁹ V.V.Ramani, *Leadership in 21st century*, Ed, ICFAI Press, Hyderabad, 2005, pp.21-22

necessary requirements and integrate the values, experience, knowledge and vision to attain success. A leader requires flexibility to transform himself in anticipation of the changes, and more importantly, transform the people with visionary insight and direction.

Bass²⁰ also identifies other dimensions of leadership as:

1. Leadership is the focus of group processes;
2. Leadership as personality and its effects;
3. Leadership as the art of inducing compliance;
4. Leadership as the exercise of influence;
5. Leadership as an act or behavior;
6. Leadership is a form of persuasion;
7. Leadership as a power relation;
8. Leadership as an instrument of goal achievement;
9. Leadership as an emerging effect of interaction;
10. Leadership as a differentiated role;
11. Leadership as the initiation of structure; and
12. Leadership as a combination of elements.

REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES:

There are various theories which provide us a deep insight into different styles of leadership and theoretical framework. Understanding of following theories enables us to know leadership and its various forms or models.

GREAT MAN THEORIES:

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century's, "great man" theories dominated leadership discussions. "Great man theories assume that the capacity for leadership is inherent- that great leaders are born, not made. These theories often portray leaders as heroic, mythic and destined to rise to leadership when needed. The term "Great Man" was used because, at the time, leadership was thought of primarily as a male quality, especially in terms of military leadership"²¹. According to Hollander and Offermann, "The concept of "great man" suggests that leaders possessed special inherent traits or characteristics that allowed them to ascend above others and enhanced their ability to be leaders"²². Nineteenth century philosopher Thomas Carlyle²³ wrote "the history of the world is but the biography of great men" (1841) in which the view was linked. In short, this theory asserts that the attributes or traits of effective leaders were seen as inborn and permanent, and they applied to various circumstances. Later, Francis Galton²⁴ expounded on this concept in Hereditary Genius (1869), where he argued that reputation flows from hereditary.

Traits and Attributes Theories:

Later, the great man theory led to hundreds of research studies that looked at personality traits, physical characteristics, intelligences, and values to differentiate leaders from followers. According to this theory, the emergence of leadership is the result of certain personal traits possessed by a leader. A personality trait is one of the important determinants of leadership development. This theory states that persons who possess the traits of leadership are presumed to be psychologically better adjusted to display better judgement and engage themselves in economic, political, and social activities. Only those who have such traits would be considered potential leaders. Luthans argues that "the earliest theories,

²⁰ www, *Conceptions of Leadership* by Heather Lyne de Ver, pp.4-6

²¹ www, *great man theory of leadership*

²² *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.378

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

which can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans, concluded that leaders are born, not made".²⁵ Ralph Stogdill²⁶, was the first researcher to summarize the results of these studies, has examined 124 studies to determine the characteristic differences between leaders and followers. He came to two major conclusions. First, Stogdill found slightly higher intelligence measures for leaders, as well as positive relationships between leadership and adjustment, extroversion, and dominance. However, he failed to find traits that were universally associated with leadership and could be reliably used to predict who might be an emerging leader. Stogdill concluded that "a person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits".²⁷ Richard Mann²⁸ (1959) also came to the same conclusions that although individuals with certain characteristics were more likely to be successful leaders, leaders were not altogether different from followers. As a result, later researchers erroneously concluded that personal traits and attributes alone could not be used to predict future leadership success.

It continues until the publication of a meta-analysis carried out by Robert Lord, Christy de Vader, and George Alliger (1986) that such traits as intelligence and personality regained favor with leadership researchers. Their article reexamined the relationship between personality traits and leadership perceptions and emergence. Lord and his colleagues argued that "prior research on trait theories was misinterpreted as applying to leader effectiveness when it actually applied to the relationship between leader traits and leader emergence. Using meta-analytic techniques, their results supported social perception theories where several traits were expected to be related to leadership perception".²⁹ Specifically, they found that intelligence, masculinity-femininity, and dominance were significantly related to followers' perceptions of their leaders' effectiveness. Shelley Kirkpatrick and Edwin Locke (1991) found that "successful leaders' traits include drive, the desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability, and competence".³⁰ Later it led to the beginning of the study of leadership as a behavioral phenomenon.

This theory argues that leadership is the outcome of certain amount of traits. John Adair has listed certain inborn qualities such as, "initiative, courage, and intelligence and which together predestine a man to be a leader. By the exercise of will power, itself seen as an important leadership trait, or by the rough tutorship of experience, some of these qualities might be developed".³¹ Worchel and Cooper review the literature on traits and leadership under three categories viz. physical attributes, personality factors and acquired traits. "Firstly, physical traits emphasize the size and strength of appearance of a leader. Secondly, there are two traits related to personality that seem to stand out typifying the leader. The first is intelligence. The leader in most groups is somewhat more intelligent than the followers. Second trait that paves the road for individual's rise to leadership is oratory. Lastly, the acquired trait that seems to be very important in determining who the leader is and it will be the status. Most of the leaders in the world obtained their positions partly as a result of being born into the right families".³²

Behavioral Theories:

In this approach, the emphasis is laid on the actual behavior and action of the leaders and not on their traits or characteristics. It argues that strong leadership is the result of effective role behavior. Particular behavior will make a good leader. "Behavioral theories of leadership are mainly based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born. Rooted in behavior, these theories focus on the actions

²⁵ Luthans Fred, *Organizational Behaviour* (5th edition, Singapore: McGraw Hill book Company, 1989, p. 457

²⁶ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.378

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid, p.379

²⁹ Ibid, p.379

³⁰ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.379

³¹ Adair John, *The Skill of Leadership* (Westmead: Wildwood House, Ltd., 1994) p. 5

³² Worchel S. and Cooper J., *Understanding Social Psychology* (Homewood III: The Dorsey Press, 1976) PP. 361-366

of leaders not on mental qualities or internal states”³³. After World War II (1939-1945), researchers emphasized the observable aspects of leadership in order to differentiate not only the nature of leadership and leader activity but also the behavioral patterns of effective leaders. “A research program at Ohio State in the 1940s attempted to measure leadership behavior as group members described the behavior of a leader. John Hemphill (1950) quantified 150 behavior descriptors that were incorporated into the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), which is still used as a measure in leadership research.”³⁴ With the limitations of behavioral approaches for explaining why some leaders are more effective than others, leadership researchers shifted their focus away from what leaders are toward developing a better understanding of what leaders actually do, and how such behaviors relate to leader effectiveness. The inconsistencies in the theories led to the emergence of contingency approaches.

It focuses on behavioural patterns of leaders and emphasizes what the leader does and how he behaves in carrying out his leadership work. According to this theory, an individual who displays an appropriate behavior will emerge as the leader in whatever group situation he is. McGinnies summarized that “leadership is the result of effective role behavior and it is shown by a person more by his acts and behavior than by his traits”.³⁵ According to Tennenbaum, “the behavioural approach emphasizes what the leader does in leading. An important contribution of this theory is that a leader neither behaves in the same way nor does he takes identical actions for every situation he faces. One is flexible to a degree, because one feels that one must take most appropriate action for handling a particular problem”.³⁶

Situational Theories:

“According to situational theory, leadership is affected by a situation from which a leader emerges and in which he works. In other words, the situation-the group, the problem and its environment- will affect the type of leadership”³⁷. An important aspect of this theory is the interaction between the group and its leader and the people tend to follow the person who is capable of fulfilling their desires. The main trust of the situational theory is that the leadership style may be effective under one situation and ineffective under the other. It emphasizes on the circumstance in which leader-follower interaction takes place plays a major role in the process of leadership. Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard³⁸ (1969) developed situational leadership model. According to Luthans “the situational approach was initially called zeitgeist (a German word meaning ‘spirit of the times’); the leader is viewed as a product of the times and the situation”.³⁹ Luthans laid emphasis on the circumstances which contribute to the emergence of leadership. In the same way Koontz and O’Donnell have also found out that “a large number of studies have been made on the premise that leadership is strongly affected by the situation from which the leader emerges and in which he operates”.⁴⁰ Cooper and McGaugh have summarized the situational theory as follows: “At a particular time, a group of people has certain needs and requires the service of an individual to assist it in meeting its needs. Which individual comes to play the role of leader in meeting these needs is essentially determined by in chance, that is, a given person happens to be at the critical place at the critical time”.⁴¹ Stogdill also states that “the traits or skills required in a leader are largely determined by the situation in which he is

³³ www, *theories of leadership*

³⁴ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.379

³⁵ McGinnies C. Elliott, *Social Behaviour* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970) p. 228

³⁶ Quoted by Terry G.R., *Principles of Management* (Homewood III: Richard D. Irwin, Inc, 1977) p.422

³⁷ www, *situational theory of leadership*

³⁸ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.379

³⁹ Luthans Fred., *Organizational Behaviour* (Singapore: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1989) p. 456

⁴⁰ Koontz H. and O’ Donnell C., *Management: A systems and Contingency Analysis of Management functions* (Tokyo: McGraw Hill Kogakusha Ltd., 1976) p. 592

⁴¹ Worchel S. and Cooper J., *Understanding Social Psychology* (Homewood III: the Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 367

to exercise leadership".⁴² As this theory asserts the leadership is affected by a situation from which a leader emerges and in which he works. In other words, the situation-the group, the problem and its environment-will affect the type of leadership.

Contingency Theories:

F.E. Fiedler's⁴³ (1967) contingency theory of leadership model proposes that leader's effectiveness is a function of the match between the leader and specific situation factors, including position power, task structure, and leader-member relations. Fiedler's model differentiates between task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership styles, but also measures ratings of the person with whom employees are least able to work (LPC scale). Fiedler found that the effectiveness of the leader-follower interaction was contingent upon the factors of leader-follower relationship, task structure, and leader position. If these factors were all high or all low, it was determined that a task-centered leader would be most effective. Further, Fiedler argued that leaders cannot adjust their behavior to changing circumstances. If a leader's style is not appropriate for the specific situation, the leader will not be successful.

Path-Goal Theory:

It is based on the idea that it is the leader's responsibility to clarify the path, remove obstacles, motivate his or her followers, and provide feedback to achieve goals while setting guidelines on how to accomplish those goals. It also examines the contingency of the leader's effectiveness at increasing a subordinate's motivation along a pathway leading to a certain goal. "House proposed three areas that would affect the path-goals relationship: the task, the characteristics of the followers, and the nature of the group to which the followers belong".⁴⁴ Further, this theory hypothesizes that certain subordinates will respond better to directions when a task is unstructured than when a task is structured. The response is contingent upon differences in both the individual and the task. More importantly, understanding the effects of the nature of the task should influence how leaders behave.

Normative Decision Model Theory:

Vroom and Yetton⁴⁵ emphasized on increasing followers' involvement. The leader's method of including followers is contingent upon such constraints as time, talents, and resources. Another important aspect of the model is to what extent the support of followers is critical to successful outcomes. The implications of this model are that leaders who possess an awareness of their subordinates' involvement can improve the decision-making process.

Transactional Theories:

Edwin Hollander and Lynn Offermann⁴⁶ (1990) have developed this model and explained transactional models focus on the follower's perceptions of the leader's actions. These models describe a process-oriented exchange between leaders and followers. The concern for process stems from the social exchange between leaders and followers as a function of effectiveness. These models emphasize persuasive influence instead of compelled compliance. Hollander "in its context coined the term idiosyncratic credit which means as a tit-for tat exchange. He further explained that leadership was a social exchange transaction between leaders and followers where "legitimacy" was the currency of the exchange"⁴⁷. For the successful transaction, the leader must provide direction, guidance, and technical

⁴² Stogdill Ralph, "Personal Factors Associated with leadership, vol. 25, (1948) Washington, heldref Publicatio, 1948, pp35-71

⁴³ www.leadership-central.com

⁴⁴ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.380

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.380

⁴⁷ Ibid

knowledge, as well as recognition of followers' inputs. In turn, followers increase their receptiveness and add legitimacy to the leader's influence.

New-genre Theories:

"New-genre refers to theories that have dominated leadership research since the 1980s, including charismatic, inspirational, transformational, and visionary leadership. These approaches emphasize symbolic leader behavior, visionary and inspirational messages, emotional feelings, ideological and moral values, individual attention, and intellectual stimulation".⁴⁸ Charismatic and transformational leadership theories have turned out to be the most frequently researched theories since the early 1990s. Hollander and Offermann described transformational leadership "as an extension of transactional leadership, but with greater leader intensity or follower arousal".⁴⁹ The study of transformational leadership is rooted in Max Weber's (1946) notion of a leader. In this theory, leaders are seen as active transforming agents, changing the outlook and behavior of the followers. Avolio and Howell⁵⁰ (1992) in their factor analytic studies have recognized four key components of transformational leadership: (1) charismatic leadership or idealized influence; (2) inspirational motivation; (3) intellectual stimulation; and (4) individualized consideration.

Transformational leaders act as role models to their subordinates. The use of power is a last resort for a transformational leader. They motivate and inspire subordinates by providing meaning and challenge through emphasis on team work. Inspirational motivation leads to internalization. Leaders ensure an open exchange of ideas by allowing mistakes, soliciting new methods for problem solving, and evaluating followers' processes rather than just situational outcomes. The leader acts as a coach, teacher, and mentor for each subordinate, providing individual attention and feedback, both positive and negative. In this theory, leaders are seen as active transforming agents, changing the outlook and behavior of the followers.

Max Weber also provided a well-known "tripartite typology of leadership-A) traditional, b) legal-rational, and c) charismatic style".⁵¹ Weber emphasized on the charismatic leadership. He explains that charismatic leadership is a form of influence based on follower perceptions that the leader possesses certain enviable characteristics. Weber argues that charisma can occur when a leader with certain qualities emerges during a crisis to propose a new vision. Charismatic leaders exert enormous power and influence over followers, especially followers searching for direction or for guidance during times of crisis. Robert House explains that "charismatic leaders tend to be self-confident and achievement-motivated; they also desire to assert influence, and they possess strong convictions".⁵²

Authentic Leadership Theory:

Authentic leadership theory is also one of the latest new-genre approaches to leadership developed by Gardner, Avolio and Walumbwa.⁵³ This theory holds that high levels of leader self-awareness, self-regulation, and transparency, among other things, will increase the leader's positive effects on their followers.

CONCLUSION:

Thus, leadership is a multidimensional phenomenon which needs special attention to understand it. There is no unanimity among the thinkers. It is very difficult to draw a conclusion. With regards to theoretical framework, we have many theories but none is ultimate. The successful leadership depends upon many factors rather than one.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.381

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ *International Encyclopedia of the Political Science*, Vol-5, Sage Publication, 2011, p.1409

⁵² *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition, Vol-4, Gale Publication, 2008, p.382

⁵³ Ibid, p.382