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Effective Organizational Leadership in Indian Context

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Trend in Leadership Studies in India

Leadership studies, during initial decades of post-independence India, were dominated by studies of business families and the patriarchs heading these families, primarily by business historians and sociologists. These studies were descriptive in nature, describing the entrepreneurial journey undertaken by these families. Subsequently, during the sixties and the seventies, academic scholars from the USA got inquisitive about if participative/democratic leadership style (vis-à-vis authoritarian style) would be as effective in the Indian context as in the US context. This research agenda was driven by the academic scholars from the USA supported by scholars in India who were deeply influenced by the western thoughts and academic traditions.

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Findings of these leadership studies were mostly inconsistent, and hence, confusing. Such results encouraged scholars to take up indigenous-emic studies to develop native understanding of leadership in India and also to identify effective leadership style for the Indian context. All these efforts led to conceptualization of leadership concepts such as Nurturant Task Leadership (NTL) by Sinha (1980, 1995), paternalistic leadership (Guptan, 1988), consultative managerial leadership (CSML) (Kalra, 2004), *Sannyasin* and *Karmayogin* leaders (Bhawuk, 2008, 2011), *lokasamgraha* (doing good for the society at large) as a leadership approach (Bhawuk, 2019) besides many others, and are claimed to be effective in Indian context.

This chapter presents a detailed review and synthesis of leadership studies in India and sets agenda for future academic research. It also delves into alternate profiles of effective leaders in the Indian context; why leadership development efforts have not been as effective as it should be in grooming leaders in spite of having access to rich academic research insights; how leaders in India learn to lead; what organizations need to do to groom effective leaders and finally presents themes for future leadership research in the Indian context.

Themes of Leadership Studies in India

The focus of leadership studies in India has evolved over time in response to the way corporate India has evolved. As indicated above, initially, when business families dominated corporate India, the focus of leadership studies were primarily on business and industrial houses and the patriarchs of these houses. Most of the studies were descriptive, presenting the evolutionary account of these entrepreneurial leaders and business houses.

Subsequently, when these business families welcomed management scholars/professionals from the USA to professionalize their businesses, during the Sixties and the Seventies, the leadership studies were primarily guided by the inquisitiveness to examine the efficacy of participative/democratic leadership in the Indian context vis-à-vis authoritarian one (e.g. Meade, 1967; Meyers, 1960). Participative style was then found

to be effective in US context and Western scholars assumed that given the authoritarian nature of Indian society, authoritarian leadership style rather than participative one would be effective in Indian work context (e.g. Meyers, 1960). These studies were driven by academic scholars from the USA with the active support of scholars from India, who were positively influenced by the Western thought process and ideas.

The third group of leadership studies was influenced by the desire by a few Indian scholars to have a native understanding of effective leadership in the Indian context. These indigenous leadership studies conducted during and after 1980s were triggered by two things. First, there were inconsistencies in the findings of various leadership studies conducted in 1960s and 1970s. Secondly, academic community acknowledged the influence of cultural contexts (amongst others) on the effectiveness of leadership. Hence, many academic scholars started working on leadership style that is effective in the Indian cultural context. Scholars conceptualized culturally appropriate leadership approaches which they claim to be more effective in the Indian set-up as compared to pure participative or authoritarian leadership, as presented by the scholars from the west.

Thematically speaking, leadership studies in India can be clustered into three groups. The first group of descriptive studies is about the evolutionary account of business families. The second group of studies focused on examining the efficacy of participative/democratic leadership for the Indian context. Third group of studies includes indigenous leadership studies.

Descriptive and Evolutionary Account of Business Families

The industrial activities in 1947 were limited primarily to textiles, open field coal mining and an Iron and Steel factory (Sinha, 2001, p.429). Much of these business activities were in the hands of a few business families, operating in multiple industries. The Tatas were into electric power and heavy industry, especially steel and locomotives, whereas the Birlas were in cotton textiles and jute, manufacturing of

textile machinery, bicycles and cars. The Walchands though initially confined their operations to construction works and shipping, subsequently they moved into engineering and sugar industries. Other leading business families like the Dalmias, the Jalans, Singhanias, the Goenkas (Sir Badridas), the Thomases and the Thapars likewise ran a miscellany of enterprises. There were a few other business communities of lesser industrial significance, such as the Punjabis, Sindhis, Muslims and Bengalis. Some of the new breed of entrepreneurs who emerged post-independence were members of trading and money-lending castes such as the Chettiars of South India (Lamb, 1956).

In the post-independence era, for instance in 1951, 12 business houses dominated corporate India: Tatas, Birlas, Dalmia-Sahu Jain, Kirloskar, Shriram, Lalbhai, Walchands, Thapar, Mafatlal, Mahindra, Bangur and Singhanias. Their companies were listed amongst the top 100 companies in 1997.

Sinha (2004) analysed exhaustively the organizational characteristics prior to liberalization. He found two types of organizations: family managed businesses and public sector organizations dominating corporate India at that time. There were few professionally trained managers working for these business families, who often complained about limited autonomy or prospect for advancement. The final authority and ultimate decision-making power was the preserve of relatives of the family head or of the family's close community associates.

Studies conducted during pre-independence period and after independence, indicated that Brahmins dominated the administrative and supervisory occupations (e.g. Gadgil's Poona survey, 1951; Ghurye, 1961; Kassenbanm & Sagar, 1974; Sovani et al., 1954). Kalra's (1976) study on Caste system and achievement values indicated that the Brahmins had higher level of aspirations than other castes. Kalra attributed it to (a) high aspirations of Brahmins contributing to their high need for achievement, (b) importance attached to education, as teaching and learning were supposed to be major duties of the Brahmins and (c) lack of inhibition amongst the Brahmins because of their superior status in caste hierarchy, which helped them to develop positive outlook and confidence.

Many business historians documented and presented evolutionary account of the growth and decline of business families much later (e.g. Gadgil, 1951; Hazari, 1966; Levi, 2016; Piramal, 1998, 2011, 2015; Piramal & Herdeck, 1986; Ray, 1992; Subramanian, 2016; Timberg, 1978; Tripathi, 1981, 1984, 1987, 2004; Tripathi & Mehta, 1990). Many of these accounts were hagiographic in nature and undertaken by journalists (e.g. Karkaria, 2003). Brief delineation of the contributions of Tripathi, Piramal and Lala is worth mentioning here to understand the family business in India, which still is a dominant segment in corporate India.

Contributions of Thomas Timberg to Understand the Marwaris

Thomas Timberg (1978, 2015) has studied in depth the way the *Marwaris* conduct their business. In *The Marwaris: From Jagat Seth to the Birlas*, he had taken a deep dive into how the Marwaris have expanded their businesses with a strong sense of business ethics. Timberg presents their evolution as a business community from the 1600s, when they moved to smaller kingdoms across India as traders, merchants, lenders and bankers. Subsequently, during the British Raj their roles changed, when they formed the ‘great firms’, became “Banians” or guaranteed brokers to British firms. The author shows how the Marwaris as a community adapted to changing realities and gainfully leveraged their extended family network to thrive and prosper.

Contributions of Dwijendra Tripathi to Understand Business Communities

Tripathi and his co-researchers have through several intellectual contributions over decades have enriched understanding of entrepreneurial history of Indian business communities, especially of Gujaratis and other business communities from the Western part of India. *Business Houses in Western India: A Study of Entrepreneurial Response* (Tripathi & Mehta, 1990) unravels the entrepreneurial journey of Gujarat and Gujarati,

besides other business communities in the Western part of India. *The Dynamics of a Tradition: Kasturbhai Lalbhai and His Entrepreneurship* (Tripathi, 1981) narrates the business endeavours of Kasturbhai Lalbhai, founder of Ahmedabad based textile manufacturing industrial house, Ahmedabad. Tripathi (1984) has studied the business communities in India and presented the findings in the title *Business Communities in India*. Tripathi (1991) has presented a historical account of business and politics in India from an evolutionary perspective in the title *Business and Politics in India from a historical perspective. The Oxford History of Indian Businesses* (Tripathi, 2004) offers an authentic understanding of the genesis of modern business practices in India. The author begins with a discussion of the backdrop in 1700: the period that shaped the strategies and structures that characterize the contours of Indian business today. He goes on the detail the aftermath of the imperial crisis; the onslaught of the industrial revolution and its impact in India; the rise of the managing agency system; and the beginning of industrial capitalism. *The Concise Oxford History of Indian Business* (Tripathi & Jumani, 2006) presents the story of the evolution of Indian business from merchants to service providers, focusing on the entrepreneur whose exploits made the transition possible. The authors narrate a historical and evolutionary account of the business methods and families that makes Indian business what it is today in a highly engaging manner. *The Oxford History of Contemporary Indian Business* (Tripathi & Jumani, 2013) provides a comprehensive analysis of the making of modern business and the modern business class, covering the period from 1947 to the first decade of twenty-first century. The book covers a vast canvas—from industrial licensing and planned economy, to the experiments in cooperative undertakings, and the opening up of the Indian economy and liberalization.

Contributions of Gita Piramal to Understand Business Leaders

While Dwijendra Tripathi focused his attention on business communities in India, Gita Piramal focused her attention on business leaders. Piramal

(2015) has studied life histories of business leaders such as Kamalnayan Bajaj, the founding architect of the Bajaj Group. In *Kamalnayan Bajaj-architect of the Bajaj Group*, she has narrated how Kamalnayan set up the Bajaj group against the backdrop of turmoil due to partition, famine and other resource constraints, including license-raj in the thirties and forties. In *Business Maharaja*, Piramal (2011) has unravelled and narrated the success stories of eight business leaders in a very authentic and honest manner. In another contribution, Piramal (1998) in *Business Legends* has profiled four business legends of pre-independence era namely G.D. Birla, Walchand Hirachand, Kasturbhai Lalbhai and J.R.D. Tata. She has also presented authentic accounts of lives and times of these leaders in a highly engaging and sensitive manner. *Smart Leadership: Insights for CEOs* (Piramal, 2005) is about twelve CEOs who have set new benchmarks for growth and performance in their respective industry in the process and how they succeeded in a ferociously competitive, rapidly changing and fluid business environment. Gita Piramal and her co-author Jennifer Netarwala have drawn insights from the lives of these leaders and narrated what others can learn from their struggles in some of the core aspects of leadership: decision making, building teams, nurturing talent, managing change and an unwavering focus on growth. It offers practical tips on transforming business.

Contributions of R.M. Lala in Understanding Tata Group/Leaders

R. M Lala's contributions towards the understanding of the Tata Group are profound. *Beyond the last blue mountain: A life of J.R.D. Tata* (Lala, 1993), for instance is the biography of J.R.D. Tata, that narrates how J R D Tata pioneered aviation in India, and presided over the development of the country's steel, cement, truck and vegetable oils industry. *The Creation of Wealth: The Tatas from the 19th to 21st Century* (Lala, 1981), on the other hand, offers an inside and authentic account of how the Tatas have been taking the lead as industrialists and entrepreneurs to have made significant contributions in areas like factory reforms, labour and social welfare, medical research, higher education, culture and arts

and rural development. It also presents how Ratan Tata had to deal with the leadership challenges post-1992 era of economic reforms.

The Heartbeat of the Trust (Lala, 1999) narrates how Sir Dorabji Tata Trust evolved over time to make significant contributions to society at large. Lala recounts the struggle for finances, of survival under control regime, the evolution of humane labour practices and so on. *For the love of India: The life and times of Jamsetji Tata* (Lala, 2003) is a biographical account of the life and significant contributions of Jamsetji Tata that includes ideating about institutions such as Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, Tata Steel plant, Jamshedpur, the Taj Mahal hotel in Mumbai and so on.

Frank Harris (2014), in *Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata: A Chronicle of His Life* narrates the life of Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata in an objective and detached, yet in a fascinating manner. A recent contribution on the Tata Group has been made by Shah in his magnum opus *The Tata Group: From Torchbearers to Trailblazers* (2018) was published on the occasion of the conglomerate's 150th anniversary. While Lala's work focused on the Tatas up to the early 1990s, this book captures the learnings during the two decades thereafter, when the group became India's most globalized conglomerate with a presence in 150 countries. The book elaborates the leadership of JRD and Ratan and also explains how the Tata Group combined international best practices with Indian values, and blended the capitalist spirit with socialist primacies in leading Tata companies like TCS, Tata Steel, Tata Motors, Titan, Tata Chemicals, Tata Power, Voltas, Tata Global Beverages, JLR, Tetley and many more.

Contributions of H. McDonald to Understand the Ambanis

McDonald (1998) in his book titled *The Polyester Prince: The Rise of Dhirubhai Ambani* presents a fascinating account of Indian textile tycoon Dhirubhai Ambani—the story of a rising capitalist group in post-independence India. *Ambani & sons* (McDonald, 2010), on the other hand, is an account of Reliance group since 2002, when Mukesh Ambani and Anil Ambani led the group in 2002 after the death of Dhirubhai Ambani including the family feud between both.

Synthesizing the Studies on Family Business in India

Family businesses in India are owned and managed by founders' family. Most of the successful family businesses in India today have their origin in pre-independence India, which has evolved over time adapting to the changing and ever evolving business environments. There have not been many systematic academic studies on the management and organization of family businesses. Understanding of family businesses are based on anecdotal accounts, personal experiences or biographies of leaders and studies on business communities mostly by D. Tripathi and his co-researchers. Patriarchs of family businesses in India have forged, nurtured and leveraged their relationships with government and politicians, which have helped them to tide over crises from time to time. However, it has also brought disrepute to the way businesses are conducted in family-owned and managed entities and are labelled as 'crony capitalism'.

Leadership Studies Shaped by Western Thoughts and Led by Western Scholars

In the sixties, business families in India needed professionally qualified managers and were recruited by many for their managerial talents irrespective of one's community. They also approached scholars from the west for guidance. Western scholars became interested to understand organizations and leadership. They wanted to investigate whether management concepts developed in their parts of the world would be applicable in Indian context. The dominant thought process was as Indian society was traditional, the culture would primarily be authoritarian in nature (Lewis, 1962). Western scholars assumed that participative leadership would be effective in every cultural context. Hence, they conducted series of studies on the effectiveness of participative leadership in Indian context.

Meyers (1960, p. 166) noted, "many Indian top managements are relatively authoritarian in their relationships with lower management and with labour". Ganguli (1964) found the superior-subordinate relationship predominantly to be midway between the bureaucratic and the

autocratic. Many leadership studies conducted during this phase (e.g. Meade, 1967; Cascio, 1974; Ganguli, 1964; Meyers, 1960; Thiagrajan & Deep, 1970; Punekar & Savur, 1969) supported the notion that Indian culture is authoritarian; therefore, a task-oriented authoritarian leader was argued to be more effective in Indian context. Most of these studies conducted during this phase, given the intent, were replicative in nature (Sahay et al., 1994) and were guided by western concepts, theories, models and tools (Sinha, D., 1972). They focused their investigations to validate participative and democratic leadership styles.

Cascio (1974) in his comparative study of seven cultures found that most of Indian managers satisfied in such decision making process where the subordinates were uninvolved and passive. Only one-third of the Indian subordinates preferred participative approach to decision making with their superiors. Organizational scholars in India, in the absence of indigenous perspective, subscribed the western perspective on organizational leadership.

The argument that Indians prefer and perform better under authoritarian leadership was challenged by a group of scholars (Kalra, 1988; Sinha, 1980; Sinha & Sinha, 1974). Sinha (1980) disputed the view that Indian culture is truly authoritarian in character. Kakar (1971a, 1971b, 1972) worked extensively to understand the nature of authority relationship in Indian work context. Studies conducted by J.B.P. Sinha and his co-researchers on Indian mindset and effective leadership in Indian context are significant.

J.B.P. Sinha's Contributions on Indian Mindset and Effective Leadership

Sinha's work on unravelling the complexity of Indian mindset is worth understanding as it influences the effectiveness of any leadership style. Equipped with both Hindu-agrarian and Anglo-Saxon worldviews, Indians tend to display duplicity in their behavioural disposition. Indians also manifest high discrepancy in their beliefs, preferences, action orientations and high sensitivity to contextual cues (Sinha et al., 2010) as they rarely demonstrate a purely individualist pattern of behaviour and

intention. Their behavioural response depends on the situational characteristics (Sinha et al., 2002). Sinha's (2014) *Psychosocial Analysis of Indian Mindset* offers insights into the complexity of the Indian psyche. Chapter twelve on psycho-social analysis of Indian Mindset by Agrawal and Pandey extensively presents the findings of J.B.P. Sinha on Indian mindset.

Sinha (1974) found that participative management was of limited effectiveness and may be effective when organizations went through change in Indian organizations. When organization stabilizes and reaches an equilibrium phase, there was a reversal and one of the possible reasons for the reversal could be attributed to the surrounding 'authoritarian' societal culture. In a dependency prone, high power distance hierarchical societies such as India, a manager with participative style may be viewed as incompetent and weak. In some cases, participative leadership were viewed by the followers as abdication of responsibilities, which is considered a sign of weakness. In some other cases (Kalra, 1988; Sinha, 1976), both job satisfaction and employees' morale were found to be positively related to authoritarian style of leadership.

Sinha (1995) has reported that in the Indian context, participative leadership is not viewed positively by subordinates. They perceive such as leadership style as abdication of authority and responsibility on the part of the leader and a sign of weakness. Hence, in many cases such a style contributes confusion, anxiety and tension amongst the subordinates. Sinha (1980, 1995) instead conceptualized a culturally contingent leadership style, the nurturant task (NT) leadership model, which has been found to be effective. High NT Leaders create synergistic organizational culture, whereas weak NT Leaders create a soft organizational culture that is less productive as it is prone to external manipulations by government, union and other stakeholders, and thereby, deviating from organizational goals.

Sinha and his co-researchers (Sinha et al., 2010) revealed that Indians working under an "enabling" reporting manager, tend to be motivated to perform, come up with innovative ideas and share the same with the team, transparent and open with respect to sharing feelings and views with the reporting manager and colleagues. An enabling manager believes in empowerment, and hence, involves subordinates by making them

participate in discussing ideas, encouraging team members to contribute and nurtures them by offering help and guidance, supporting ideas. Indians, when led by such enabling leaders, tend to be sensitive to the needs of peer group without losing focus on the goals. They try to balance both by working diligently, availing of challenging opportunities and remaining optimistic even in adverse situations. On the other hand, employees working under disabling reporting managers tend to carefully evaluate how they can serve their self-interests. They may say what persons in the position of authority (powerful, in that sense) want to hear. “Disabling” reporting manager tends to be “autocratic, expecting personal loyalty, sycophancy and compliance from the subordinates. Such manager is driven by the need for power”.

Kakar’s Contributions on Authority Relationship in the Indian Work Organization

Kakar’s (1971a) study on authority in social relations in India revealed that the main source of the authority which conditions its acceptance is traditional-moral rather than the rational-legal, person and individual competence. Kakar also found that arousal of guilt and emotional rewards as the two chief means of exacting obedience to the superior’s wishes. Indian culture is more of a *guilt* culture (Kakar et al., 2002, pp. 137–140).

It was also found that the ideal superior behaviour which made the subordinate anticipate the superior’s wishes or accept them without conscious questioning was a benevolent one. This kind of superior enforced compliance to his wishes by the provision of emotional rewards or by the arousal of guilt. Though both the autocratic and the benevolent superior models exist in other areas of social relations in India, it is the benevolent superior who is held to be the most effective one.

Kakar (1971b) has mentioned that the dominance of the parental ideology in Indian organizations, especially in the form of assertive superior behaviour which is high on task control and low on emotional affiliation. The authority relationship in work organization context is characterized by a high degree of control of subordinate task performance

by the superior (Kakar, 1972), which means “nurturant” superiors would likely to exact greater obedience than “assertive” ones, since the former are more likely to regulate behaviour by emotional rewards and later by punitive means’ (Kakar et al., 2002, p. 138). Kakar defined ‘nurturant’ as ‘active submission, without a high degree of conflict in the subordinates’. Kakar (1978, p. 125) also observed that what an Indian is ‘sensitive to (or concerned with) are not the goals or work and productivity that are external to the relationship, but the unfolding of emotional affinity’.

Dayal’s Contribution on Effective Leadership and Organization Design

Dayal’s (1999) study revealed that effective leaders were found to have common characteristics that included acquiring knowledge from variety of sources, using this knowledge in their work and life, and seeking feedback. Leaders, through action, convey (a) credibility that is practicing what they profess; (b) courage in dealing with problems; and (c) confidence and a strong sense of personal responsibility. They are easily accessible, have a strong urge to succeed and they involve people in accomplishing the task. Dayal, on the basis of this study, identified three emergent leadership styles namely: the entrepreneurial, the professional-bureaucratic and the people oriented. Entrepreneurial leader focuses on assets creation and aggressive organizational growth, whereas professional/bureaucratic leader emphasizes on setting high-performance goals and process. Finally, people-oriented leader emphasizes on the development of people through empowerment and consultative processes. Employees are groomed to develop necessary organizational systems and processes.

Dayal (2000) found that the entrepreneurial and the bureaucratic leader styles strengthen the feelings of dependence amongst the subordinates, who get used to doing what they are told. These styles may also inhibit team working and hence ineffective in Indian context. Dayal (2000) has argued that people-oriented leaders would be most effective in Indian context.

Satish K. Kalra Contributions to Leadership Research

Kalra (1988) made a distinction between subordinates accepting authoritarian leadership style of their leaders 'with liking' and 'without liking'. Findings of his study showed that comparatively bigger number of Indian executives were inclined to accept authoritarian behaviour from superiors in the sense of 'acceptance without liking' than reported in comparable studies of American executives. However, professionally qualified executives were found not to be comfortable with authoritarian leadership.

Kalra and Gupta (1999) have found that effective leaders in Indian context tend to be high on supportive, patronising and paternalistic; moderate on prescriptive and low on task obsession. Effective leaders in Indian context are neither highly task obsessive nor authoritarian. Patronizing in the Indian context is associated with taking care of subordinates and hence is viewed positively.

Consultative Style Managerial Leadership (CSML), as conceptualized by Kalra (2004), is characterized by the managers' ability to make decisions by involving the subordinates in getting their suggestions/ideas with or without any discussion on them and with the manager having the sole discretion of either accepting or rejecting any idea with or without giving any reason or logic thereof and thus making the final decision by himself and by giving the subordinates a feeling of being heard. Consultative style leadership is based on underlying assumption that individual has the potential to think, offer relevant and useful suggestions and ideas. The role of the leader is to motivate and encourage them to do so. Kalra argues that CSML fits with the average Indian's psyche, which is dependency prone, feels comfortable in hierarchical structures, looks for support/ approval from superiors and even being heard by the boss gives him a feeling of acceptance.

Other Conceptualizations of Leadership in Indian Context

Guptan (1988) has conceptualized the idea of paternalistic leadership that he argues to be effective in the Indian context. Guptan's conceptualization of paternalism refers to the relationship between a father figure

and a large joint family where the father figure goes beyond merely professional relationships and is concerned about all aspects of an individual's life. Chakraborty (1987) drew on traditional Indian wisdom to argue that in Indian context, a leader, instead of being analytical and technical should be synthetic and spiritual by inculcating a sense of duty and sacrifice in his followers. Khandwalla (1988) conceptualized pioneering-innovative (PI) model of leadership, which is characterized by commitment to pioneering novel and sophisticated technologies, products and services, high risk taking and emphasis on creativity and adaptability. He argued that such an approach to management and leadership is a modern outgrowth of an entrepreneurial tradition of India.

Study of Effective Indian CEO (Spencer et al., 2007)

Leadership study jointly conducted by Public Enterprise Selection Board, Bharat Petroleum Corporate Limited and Hay Group by Spencer et al. (2007) identified four broad areas of competencies amongst the best CEOs in India. They are: (a) socially responsible business excellence; (b) energizing team; (c) managing the environment; and (d) inner strength.

Socially responsible business excellence category of competencies is related to underlying traits that help the leader make effective business decisions in order to determine when to invest and in what, what risks to take, and which innovations to adopt. Energizing team category of competencies is about one's ability to engage the energy and thoughts of all the employees to work together towards the common goal. Managing the environment is about how the leader is responsible for managing the boundaries between the enterprise and the surrounding environment. Indian leaders, compared to the leaders from many other western countries, tend to spend more time and energy in managing relationship with governmental agencies and the media. Indian executives tend to be bolder in seeking out information using personal contacts and network. Finally, inner strength category of competencies provides moral compass for both the leader and the organization. These competencies, that include executive maturity and transcending self, guide both

the leader and organization to take difficult decisions. This study also revealed four unique competencies of Indian leaders namely: (a) single minded focus on growth; (b) adapting ideas and technology to Indian conditions; (c) entrepreneurship; and (d) working to make India great.

Leadership Study by Cappelli et al.

Cappelli and co-researchers (2010) studied successful organizations in India to find how Indian leaders are unique compared to the leaders from the West. Effective Indian leaders invest in people and take a long-term, internally focused view; make aggressive investment in employee development, despite tight labour market and widespread job hopping; strive for a high level of employee engagement and openness and create a sense of social mission that is served when business succeeds.

These leaders view themselves as architect of organizational strategy and as custodians and keepers of organizational culture. They guide and mentor and act as role models for their subordinates. They motivate and inspire their employees by creating a sense of mission; engaging through transparency and accountability; empowering through communication; and investing in training.

GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavioural Effectiveness) Study

The GLOBE research programme examined the interrelationships between societal culture, societal effectiveness and organizational leadership has defined leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members. The findings of GLOBE study (Chhokar, 1998) have revealed that characteristics such as action-orientation and charisma are salient to be effective as a leader in Indian context. Moreover, relationship orientation is found to be a more important characteristic of effective leaders in India than performance or task orientation. The most effective leadership style in India would thus combine integrity, being organized, an action orientation,

being a self-starter, charisma and a collective orientation; with being a problem solver, a visionary, entrepreneurial and inspirational, in that order. The study also offered pointers on why it could tough to be an effective leader in Indian context. It is due to the co-existence of two sets of seemingly contradictory sets of values—vertical collectivism and individualism (Sinha, 1997, p. 60). India has been placed in South Asian country cluster in GLOBE study, where effective leaders are found to be visionary and inspirational, who are decisive, performance oriented and possess high level of integrity and are willing to make personal sacrifices (Gupta et al., 2002). In addition, leaders who are team builders, collaborative and diplomatic are highly respected. These attributes are congruent with the cluster's high power distance and family-centric societal culture. Leaders are expected to act as patriarchs who guide and help subordinates. Leaders must act and decide in such a manner, which help and develop and sustain the team and family orientations in their organizations. Leaders who are modest and caring and delegate responsibilities to others are also effective to an extent. Authoritarian leaders occupying any position or role are expected to be benevolent and paternalistic and allow for inputs from others.

Indigenous Leadership Studies

As mentioned above, few indigenous leadership concepts have been proposed by scholars. The idea of Nurturant Task Leadership has been conceived by J.B.P. Sinha (1980, 1995) based on his cultural experiences. The idea of *lokasamgraha* as a leadership approach has been proposed by D.P.S. Bhawuk (2019). Bhawuk (2008, 2011) has also identified two unique leadership styles namely *sannyasin* and *karmayogin* leaders found in India, inspired primarily by Indian spirituality.

Araam Culture, Poverty Syndrome and Nurturant Task Leadership

Sinha (2010) has acknowledged that the idea of dependency proneness emanated from his personal experience of Indian culture, which

got crystallized over a series of collaborative studies, which helped him define and operationalize the construct and measure its antecedents and consequences thus developing a theory about it.

Sinha (1980) developed the concept of Nurturant Task Leadership (NTL), which he found was more relevant and effective in Indian context that is characterized by dependency proneness, *Aram* culture (proneness not to work too hard) and poverty syndrome. His observations were: (a) individuals who are prone to high degree of dependency took greater risk if supervisor expected them to do so and helping them to address their needs; (b) the idea of *nitizloka* that parents should shower love on their children up to the age five, discipline them for the next ten years and treat them as friends when they turn sixteen; and (c) cultural pattern of *Aram*.

The NT leader cares for his (or her) subordinates, shows affection, takes personal interest in their well-being, and committed to their growth. The idea of NTL is guided by superior's affection (*Sneh*) for subordinates and subordinates' deference (*Shraddha*) to superior/leader. It is based on the cultural assumption that unconditional nurturance/support turn subordinates into unproductive sycophants. NTL has been found to be 'more congruent with Indian cultural values and behaviour dispositions. The style is essentially paternalistic, drawing heavily on patterns of interaction typifying family dynamics in India' (Sinha, D., 1999) where subordinates are generally dependence prone, status conscious and not too work oriented.

NTL derives the moral superiority from acting for *lokasamgraha*, and not merely maximizing his or her personal gain. The idea of *lokasamgraha*, Bhawuk (2019) argues, forms the implicit foundation of Nurturant Task Leaders (NTL). NTL leaders focus on the general good of the organization and the society.

Bhawuk's Conceptualization of Lokasamgraha as an Indigenous Leadership Approach

Bhawuk's conceptualization of *lokasamgraha* as an indigenous Indian leadership approach captures the essence of "doing good for the society". Bhawuk argues that in Indian context, effective leadership is about focusing on serving others; leadership is about *lokasamgraha*, or, acting to hold people together in harmony. This conceptualization resonates well with Chakraborty's (1987) idea that a leader should act in the service of others in such a manner that his or her individual self expands to encompass the subordinates creating a larger collective self. Leaders and subordinates sacrifice for each other unconditionally, and such interactions transform the leader, the subordinates and the organization (Bhawuk et al., 2009).

Leaders are expected to guide people on the right path to achieve what is envisioned, and in that sense *lokasamgraha* is about leadership. Unlike traditional leadership, which focuses on the leader as a person, *lokasamgraha* shifts the focus to the well-being of the society. The idea of *lokasamgraha* as a leadership approach is based on the premise that not only leaders but also their followers should act so that all their actions are directed towards the greater public good. In other words, leadership is about serving others.

Four Types of Leaders: Sannyasin, Karmayogin, Pragmatic and Legitimate Non-Leader

Bhawuk (2008, 2011) conceptualized and proposed two types of leaders that are unique and indigenous to India, *sannyasin* and *karmayogin* leaders, who are inspired by spirituality. These kinds of leaders are found in spiritual and religious organizations. Indian spiritual and religious organizations are effectively guided and led by active *sannyasin* leaders, who have created various religious and spiritual institutions such as Swami Vivekananda (Ramakrishna Mission), Swami Chinmayananda (Chinmaya Mission) and so on.

A karmayogin leader focuses on work without paying attention to the fruits of the work, which is a concept derived from the Bhagavad Gita. A karmayogin leader pursues *lokasamgraha* or social good in all his or her actions. Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, Gopala Krisna Gokhale and Bala Gangadhar Tilak are exemplars of karmayogin leaders who followed the principles of *lokasamgraha*. Bhawuk argues that such leaders are also found in business organizations. There should be conscious effort to explore if such leaders are effective in business organizations. One needs to identify key behavioural attributes of such business leaders.

Pragmatic organizational leaders, who believe in doing social good and follow the principles of *lokasamgraha*, invest their efforts and energy to direct organizational efforts towards social good.

Bhawuk has also pointed out the presence of legitimate non-leaders holding leadership positions in organizations. Legitimate non-leaders are individuals without leadership capabilities who are thrust in the position of leadership by organization. Technically, they are leaders with legitimate authority but lack leadership quality or fail to exercise leadership.

Drawing Inferences for Organizations: Synthesizing the Findings of Leadership Studies

A leader would be effective if one meets the expectations, psychological and otherwise, expectations of the subordinates/followers. More importantly, the expectations of followers from their leaders are conditioned by the cultural context. When leaders meet the psychological expectations of their followers, they are more likely to be effective in that cultural context. The expectations of followers in Indian cultural context and the expected nature of leader and followers' interactions are unique (Kakar et al., 2002; Panda, 2019). Indians generally long for an authoritative leader, who is strict, demanding but also caring and nurturing. Such leaders are similar to *karta*, the paternalistic head of a typical Indian (joint) family. Sinha (1980) calls such leaders the NT Leaders. The cultural preference for the NT leader is related to a strong desire for

power and dependency needs. The followers want to remain in close proximity to their leaders both physically and psychologically (Nandy & Kakar, 1980; Sinha, D., 1972). Hence, followers tend to display ingratiating behaviour towards their leaders (Pandey, 1981). Leaders, on the other hand, have a tendency to seek higher status through power. Followers are comfortable with powerful leaders. Followers/subordinates tend to idealize their leaders and look on them as repository of virtues, deserving faith and respect. Leaders are expected to be role models with many facets—high integrity, system builder and humane father figure. The leaders are expected to act as benevolent guides to their subordinates and taking personal interest in their well-being and growth. Followers expect a personalized mode of relationship with their leaders (Garg & Parikh, 1995).

Effective Leader: A Karta in Organizational Setting

A review of indigenous leadership concepts reveals that an effective leader in Indian context should be like the karta in an Indian joint family. The karta is a father figure who is nurturant, caring, dependable, sacrificing and yet demanding, authoritative and strict disciplinarian. He evokes feelings of security, trust and dependability in creating a familial culture. He empowers, guides and protects. He also mediates if there are any family disputes and generally his decisions are accepted and respected. In Indian cultural context, effective leadership style is primarily shaped and influenced by the karta psyche through the transference of father-son relationship to the boss-subordinate relationship in work situation. Kalra (2004) argued that the concept of 'karta' indigenous, and hence relevant to Indian cultural context. It influences the psyche of Indian managers/leaders through the process of 'kartarisation', which is a process characterized by 'the internalization and transference of many of the ritualistic and symbolic behaviours and associated beliefs, values and attitudes of 'karta' of the Indian joint family to various organizational and non-organizational roles outside the family, such as managers, colleagues and subordinates etc.'. He further added, 'the development of 'karta' psyche in Indian managers takes place through

the process of 'kartarisation' and it strongly influences their managerial behaviour'.

Kalra, using the concept of *karta*, proposed consultative style managerial leadership (CSML), which he argued to be effective in Indian context besides Nurturant Task Leadership conceptualized by Sinha (1980).

Singh and Bhandarkar's (1990) conceptualization of transformational leadership was based on the idea of *karta*—head of Indian family. Such leaders empower followers, take risk, are visionary; have clarity in what they do. They, similar to NT leadership style, groom, guide, mentor and protect followers. Followers view their leaders as their father figure. Virmani and Gupta (1991) have found that effective leaders in formal organizations also play the role of *karta*, besides the role of a professional leader. Sinha (1995) argues that the leader has to be like family head. There is no demarcation between home and work domains, between work relations and personal relations with the subordinates.

Nurturant Task Leadership (NTL): The Effective Leadership Style

NTL is found to be most effective in Indian context as it is congruent with Indian cultural values and behavioural dispositions. This style is essentially paternalistic, drawing heavily on the patterns of interactions typifying family dynamics in India. It is in congruent with the findings of Kalra and Gupta's studies (1999) that indicated that effective managers were high on nurturance, moderate on prescription and low on task obsession.

On the whole, an effective leader in Indian context should nurture and mentor subordinates; be mildly prescriptive, and task oriented; patronise subordinates; shows his interest in subordinates' growth and well-being; and involves subordinates in organizational activities.

There are two criticisms of NTL. First, Kalra and Gupta (1999) have questioned the 'task' orientation aspect of Sinha's NTL. Kalra (2004) has argued that NTL may not be effective amongst the professionally qualified, autonomy-seeking executives as they want to be more empowered.

Kalra and Gupta (1999) found that effective managers, as perceived by colleagues in the organization, were those who exhibit patronizing behaviour along with being supportive, normative and problem solving oriented. 'Indian subordinates do not see patronizing as ineffective managerial style provided it is not clubbed with prescriptive, task-obsessive, bohemian, aggressive and avoidant managerial style or behaviour. If the boss is supportive and patronizing along with other functional ego styles, he is seen as effective by the subordinates' (Kalra & Gupta, 1999, p. 295).

Kalra (2004) made a case for consultative style leadership, as an alternative to Nurturant Task Leadership (Sinha, 1980), given the average Indian psyche, which is dependence prone, feels comfortable in hierarchical structures, looks for support/approval from superiors and even being heard by the boss gives him a feeling of acceptance. His argument is that professionally qualified executives may seek more autonomy and empowerment. They may wish for more participation, which counters the fundamental assumptions underlying NT leadership. NT leadership assumes that subordinates need to be initiated, guided and directed to work hard and maintain desired level of productivity. Once subordinates prove their capability and achieve desired goals, the leader may become more participative and less directive in his approach of leading.

Being Effective in Leadership Role: What Leaders Need to Do in India?

Organizational leaders need to do create a family-like work environment; demonstrate leadership that nurtures subordinates; ensure performance without being task obsessive; and engage with subordinates beyond work boundaries to create a truly familial organization in spirit.

In a family-like work environment, the leader is like the head of the family (*karta*). If the leader-subordinate relationship is marked by relationship of *sneh* (affection) and *shradha* (deference), subordinates would go to any extent for her or his paternal superior to get the work done. Indian employees generally feel anxious and insecure if their superiors

maintain contractual/professional relationship. Such relationship may demotivate and alienate employees.

By implication, organizational leaders may effectively elicit productive behaviour from Indian employees, by judiciously lubricating task relationship with emotional reciprocity and compassion. The work culture needs to be based on 'emotional reciprocity' and 'trust', like a typical Indian family. If organizational leaders can recreate family-like environment, employees may exhibit a sense of belongingness and emotional connect with the organization. If employees can develop a sense of belongingness, they would be productive.

Secondly, organizational leaders should nurture subordinates through appreciation, guidance, recognition and develop them through empowerment. First, organizational leaders need to address the deep urge for appreciation and recognition of Indian employees. They desire that people who matter should recognize the tasks they have been doing. Indian employees tend to be more productive and effective under a leader, who empowers them and includes them in the organizational decision making.

Organizational leaders should also ensure that subordinates' self-efficacy is enhanced through job performance by ensuring that bureaucratic and other organizational constraints do not become roadblocks for task performance and they develop necessary capabilities, required to execute the job effectively, through appropriate learning and developmental interventions.

Effective leaders in India, as perceived by their subordinates, tend to be patronising along with being supportive, normative and problem solving oriented. They also tend to be innovative, confronting/assertive and respectful. Hence, patronizing as leadership style is not considered ineffective in Indian context if it is blended with problem solving approach. The leaders must focus on achievement of performance. Nurturance should be made conditional, contingent upon task performance. Task obsessive approach may not be effective in Indian context.

The work culture must be meritocratic with unambiguous articulation of performance norms and expectations and merit-centric organizational systems and processes. Along with stringent performance criteria, organizational leaders should express confidence in the ability of subordinates.

The leaders may use punitive measures such as disciplinary actions to ensure performance and curb undesirable work behaviour, as mentioned above.

Finally, organizational leaders should participate in non-work practices (NWP) (Awasthy & Gupta, 2011), that include three kinds of activities including individual celebrations such as birthday celebration, family function of employees, religious celebrations with employee family members; activities facilitated through organization such as picnics to understand and connect with employees at personal level and activities where the superior is personally involved with juniors, such as superiors' participation with junior in recreational activities, or visiting subordinates during family celebrations such as marriage etc.

When possible, organizational leaders should voluntarily participate in such NWP and personal involvement of the leaders may enhance employees' commitment. It is consistent with the principles of participative management, and the idea that employees prefer work environments where they can contribute to work they find meaningful.

Participating in religious festivities and family celebration of employees may also encourage employees to accept organizational leaders as one of the family members. The employees may feel personally obliged to the leader(s). Involvement of leaders in NWP is significant in Indian context as it fosters the spirit of 'truly familial organisation' (Gupta, 1999).

Corporate India has changed significantly over the last two decades with many entrepreneurial ventures; professionally managed entities in IT, ITeS, tech-enabled entities. Indians in current generations seem to be different from Indians of yester-years in terms of their aspirations, mindsets and behavioural dispositions. Given that there is a need to explore the cultural anchors and examine the efficacy of above mentioned recommendations for effective leadership.

Addressing Leadership Deficit in Indian Organizations

Despite the access to significant insights (knowledge) and understanding on leadership and leadership development in the world of scholarships and availability of resources for grooming leaders, organizations in India still experience the brunt of leadership deficit (Hou, 2010; Panda, 2017; Shyamsunder et al., 2011).

Organizations are generally obsessed with tangible outcomes and efficiency at the expense of employee development. The design of organization is guided by rationality and desire to control, which is conducive for imbibing managerial mindset amongst organizational members. In such organizations, one finds efficiency and control-driven managerial culture. Organizations with managerial culture tend to groom employees through socialization. Such an approach ignores development through self-mastery, which is key to leadership development.

Hence, many of the leadership development programs tend to be informational and knowledge-based. In reality, there is a huge disconnect between ‘knowing’, ‘being’ and ‘doing’. Knowing does not automatically lead to requisite changes in the being and doing of an individual (Reddy & Srinivasan, 2015, p. 46). Enhanced cognitive understanding at the individual level does not automatically translate into internalization and change in behaviour in the real-world context.

Kalra (1997) has proposed the concept of human potential management (HPM) to argue that treating human beings as a resource to be used, utilized or manipulated like any other resource is demeaning. With the increasing number of highly skilled knowledge workers, resentment of the word “resource” is likely to increase, since knowledge workers are likely to prefer the organization to enable them to fulfil their true potential and, in so doing, help the organization to achieve its objectives. The learning leaders in organizations need to take note of this and strategize the learning and development strategies for their organizations.

Panda (2019) in his study on why leadership development has not been as effective in Indian context has argued that individuals with potential can only become effective leaders, if they are psychologically

ready and have developed an emotional connect with the organizations. Secondly, individuals' psychological readiness is influenced by the way they are socialized in their families. Hence, in-family socialization contributes to one's psychological preparedness. Though, developmental experiences and meaningful relationships, besides class-room interventions provide opportunities to individuals to learn how to lead, yet individuals with psychological readiness have greater probability learning from developmental opportunities with the support of their mentors.

Primary socialization in typical Indian family tends to imbibe values, behaviours and attitudes which, are argued to be not helpful in developing leadership mindset. It imbibes a deep need for dependency, personalized and familial relationship with emotional reciprocity (Dayal, 1999, p. 79), many a times at the expense of independence and self-identity (Garg & Parikh, 1995).

Developing Effective Leaders for the Indian Context

First, development of people is not a mechanical exercise. Rather, it is an organic process which needs to be seamlessly integrated and aligned with other people processes. The organization has to initiate management and supervisory practices that could generate amongst employees a desire for self-development (Dayal, 2000).

Secondly, organizational leaders should stop viewing human beings as a resource to be used, utilized or manipulated like any other resource, which is demeaning (Kalra, 1997). Everyone has hidden potential that needs to be identified, nurtured and leveraged. The learning and development process has a significant role to play. Dayal's (1999) study has identified three critical processes in leader development, which included developing three qualities amongst potential leaders (i) the urge to achieve, to succeed, (ii) the process of maturing and (iii) the process of becoming oneself.

Dayal (1999, 2007) has pointed out that achievement orientation can be inculcated amongst the executives through systematic external interventions such as by (a) institutionalizing a culture of achievement and learning; (b) instilling a sense of belongingness amongst the employees;

and (c) fostering a feeling of being accepted by the peer groups and work communities. Challenging experiences provide requisite opportunities to develop an urge to achieve.

Moreover, the organization practices which contribute to the process of maturing are: (a) challenging assignments and performance review by superiors; (b) openness to ask questions without adverse effect on a person's career; and (c) giving feedback to authorities on a variety of issues which give the individual a feeling of belonging and acceptance in the organization. The process of becoming "oneself" is aided by gaining new ideas, experiences and insights and using them in the work situation.

Lessons of Experience (LOE) study conducted jointly by Tata Management Training Centre (TMTTC) and the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL) revealed interesting findings on how leaders in India learn to lead. Organizational leaders mentioned of 24 distinct developmental experiences (excluding coursework and training), which facilitated development and honing of 29 unique leadership competencies (lessons) (Panda, 2017). The 24 developmental experiences (excluding coursework and training) are clustered in four distinct categories that include (a) Challenging assignment (work context); (b) Mistakes, Crises and Hardship; (c) Other people including role models, mentors and coaches; and finally (d) Other developmental experiences including personal experiences, early life/job experiences.

Challenging assignments and role modelling were found to be the most powerful learning experiences as they together constituted around fifty per cent of the total instances of developmental experiences and facilitated the learning of more than 65% of the leadership lessons. Firstly, challenging assignments are found to be more effective than job rotations for leader development. Secondly, as reporting managers and other significant superiors are acknowledged as role models, they should mentor and coach their junior colleagues. Thirdly, Indian leaders were found to learn leadership from their personal experiences. Hence, the interaction between the mentor/coach and the protégé may provide a psychologically safe platform to build on personal experiences to make the protégé aware of self and gain confidence. Wilson (2010) presented the findings of Lessons of Experience study in the title *Developing Tomorrow's Leaders Today*. She has categorized all leadership lessons into

eleven clusters and mapped those lessons to seven key experiences that matter in Indian context namely: boss and superiors, turnaround, new initiative, horizontal move, cultural crossing, increased job scope and first professional job. Business executives in India are expected to understand and appreciate the saliency of leadership lessons that matter in Indian context and more importantly they can identify the experiences from which these lessons can be acquired or developed. The right blend of developmental opportunities in Indian context, going by the findings of Lessons of Experience India (LOEI) study (Panda, 2017), would be challenging assignments such as fix it/turnaround situations; enriching and enlarging the jobs; Greenfield projects; cross-functional moves and rural stints; besides targeted role modelling and mentoring, which offers learning opportunities to executives. They should also be exposed to educational and training programs as 'deliberate practices' (Day, 2010) with specific learning outcomes.

Executives are encouraged to experiment and explore new ideas on the job. As an approach, learners work and reflect synchronously on real-time problems occurring in their own work setting (Raelin & Coghlan, 2006). In the process the executives reflect their own assumptions, mental maps and thinking pattern and change, if needed to be more effective. Action learning is guided by Schön's (1983) "reflection-in-action" principle as the executive as learner reframes unanticipated problem situations in order to see experience differently.

Individuals learn and grow when the ecosystem offers the following four learning conditions: first, individuals generally learn from experience, if they find the experience 'meaningful' and the relationships 'developmental'. Such experience and relationship trigger appraisal and recognition of self-worth and make individual confident. Organizations need to create a psychologically safe environment, which is conducive of experimentation and exploration of new ideas followed by critical reflection of one's actions. Individuals are encouraged to try out new ideas/insights gained from various training and learning inputs and reflect on those experiences to gain newer insights. It depends on an individual's absorptive capacity (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990), which primarily depends on the knowledge source and prior knowledge (Todorova & Durisin, 2007).

Dayal (2007) proposes that organizations must create an ecosystem where (a) employees feel as part of work community and are accepted without evaluation by peers and superiors; and (b) the norms of work community should be similar to what employees are socialized to in family and society at large and are comfortable with. Besides, individuals should also be psychologically ready to take advantage of the learning opportunities. Thirdly, they need to reflect on their experiences to discover new insights. Many a time, executives need to be guided on how to reflect with a purpose. Hence, organizational leaders as reporting managers, coaches and mentors have critical roles to play in guiding executives to reflect on experiences and draw meaningful insights.

Leadership development process begins with the identification of developmental needs of executives. TV Rao has emphasized the importance of 360 degree and multi-rater assessment tools for identifying developmental needs for executives. *The Power of 360° Feedback: The India Way for Leadership Effectiveness*, authored by Rao and Rao (2014), presents in-depth details about the process of developing managers into leaders and outlines methodologies for designing and using a 360 Degree Programme for managers at all levels. Once the developmental needs are identified, executives go through preparation, exposure, action and reflection phases, which has been captured by an integrated leadership development framework titled “PEAR” framework developed by Panda (2019). First, the executive in target (with leadership potential) needs to be psychologically ready and must demonstrate requisite maturity to leverage developmental opportunities for personal growth. Once, the executive is psychologically ready she/he is exposed to relevant developmental experiences that provide opportunities to experiment and explore. Executives are encouraged to reflect and learn on-the job under the guidance and support of mentors and coaches.

Challenges of Developing Leaders in India

Gupta and Panda (2003, p. 377) observed that development of effective leaders in India is a daunting challenge. They identified three core challenges that need to be addressed in developing effective leadership in

Indian cultural context. Narrow base of social identity due to the peculiarities of primary socialization, suppression of religious urge through British model of education system, peculiar emotional dynamics of the Indians and lack of leadership mindset due to dependence syndrome come in the way of grooming effective leaders in Indian cultural and organizational context. Indian mindset makes Indians better subordinate than a leader because of their proneness for dependency. Since the leader would be acceptable to the followers only if he understands and responds to their culturally specific psychological needs. Since Indian followers expect parental caring from their leaders, the leaders will have to learn to be both 'fatherly' and 'motherly'. Hence, leadership development requires that potential leaders learn through experiential learning methods to be purposeful and emotionally sensitive simultaneously (Gupta & Panda, 2003, pp. 377–378).

Due to their dependency proneness, Indians tend to give more salience to their subordinate role than to their role as a leader of people. Consequently, there tends to be a paucity of the necessary leadership behaviour at middle levels. This necessitates specially designed training and development interventions in which they are able to play the dual roles of superior and subordinate without creating cultural disharmony (Gupta & Panda, 2003, p. 378).

Future Research Agenda

Though leadership as a theme is researched extensively over time, there are a few aspects of leadership that should be taken up to have a comprehensive and holistic understanding of effective leadership in Indian context. First, not many studies have been undertaken to examine this aspect of family business in India. We need to identify, understand and appreciate the uniqueness and peculiarities of family businesses in India. Moreover, business families from different communities conduct their businesses in their own ways. The Marwaris' way of doing business could be different from the way Parsis or Gujaratis do business. Gupta and Panda (2009) have urged scholars to understand the uniqueness of the way different business communities or conglomerates do their

businesses. There could possibly be multiple business systems in India, based on region, community or family lineage to understand the way family-owned and managed organizations are led.

Secondly, though there is a general acknowledgement amongst scholars about the effectiveness of NTL in Indian context, we need to examine if NTL is still the effective leadership style, given the changing and evolving demographics. Is this leadership style effective in organizations where employees are mostly professionally qualified with a need for autonomy and less dependence prone? Leadership scholars need to empirically examine the efficacy of alternate leadership styles such as CSML and patronizing styles proposed by Kalra (2004) and Kalra and Gupta (1999), respectively. There is a need to examine the effectiveness of these leadership styles in new forms of organizations in IT, ITeS enabled entrepreneurial startups.

Thirdly, Khandelwal as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Bank of Baroda transformed the bank leveraging his “tough love” (Panda, 2020). Khandelwal believes that compassion, fairness and showing dignity to subordinates are key leadership attributes in Indian context (Panda, 2020). Leadership studies in India have not examined the efficacy of these three leadership attributes in Indian context, which should be examined from the perspective of positive organizational scholarship.

Fourthly, leadership development is rarely distinguished from leader development, though they are different. Leader development is about equipping an individual with desirable leadership behaviours, whereas leadership is about the process of achieving goal(s) by mobilizing resources including one’s followers. Not much research has been conducted on how leaders exercise leadership. Without adequate understanding of the process of exercising leadership, leadership development programmes may not be effective. Academic scholars in collaboration with learning leaders from organizations needs to understand why leaders fail to exercise leadership, in spite of having requisite capabilities.

Fifthly, a sincere effort is called for to examine the efficacy of *sannyasin* and *karmayogin* leadership approach, which are found to be effective in religious and spiritual organizations, in formal business organizations. Sixthly, given the changes in corporate India, where many new forms

of organizations co-existing with traditional entities, it is worthwhile to refine and redefine leadership scales suitable for Indian context or different forms of Indian organizations (IT-enabled startups, traditional family-owned and managed entities or Indian multinational corporations with global presence).

Finally, one should also understand why and when leaders fail to exercise leadership or get derailed? This could possibly third important theme of leadership research. Insights gained from such studies may help organizations arrest derailment of competent leaders through appropriate developmental interventions. Further, such insights would help organizations to tweaking leadership development interventions to proactively helping leaders to grow without getting derailed or plateaued.

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