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WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND FULFILLMENT

Consciousness- Based Leadership and Management, Volume 1

*Vedic and Other
Philosophical Approaches
to Oneness and Flourishing*

Edited by
Anil K. Maheshwari

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Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment

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Anil K. Maheshwari
Editor

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*Dedicated to
Traversing the Fastest, the Most Direct, and Most Inclusive Paths to
Deep Peace and Effortless Flourishing for
The One Extended Family, the Whole Universe*

FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the phenomenon of consciousness has emerged as central for the future advancement of several fields such as those of physics, artificial intelligence (AI), medicine, neuroscience, and management (e.g. Penrose, 1994; Hartley, 2021). In physics, it is essential to understand the influence of conscious observers on physical systems; in AI, to determine if machines of the future will be conscious; in medicine, to find the role the mind plays in the effectiveness of a therapy or a drug; in neuroscience, to find how awareness arises in the brain; and in management, how to access creativity and leverage it for the good of all.

These problems are now recognized in the scholarly world and represent new challenges for scientists and scholars; they also point to the necessity of making consciousness central in a new approach to leadership suited for our post-industrial information age.

But will future computers become conscious and complicate the problem of management? This possibility is contested and I, for one, don't believe it will come to pass (Kak, 2022). Nevertheless, AI machines will replace humans at most jobs, and leadership and management in such an environment will create unprecedented problems that can only be addressed by a proper understanding of how consciousness works in us.

There are speculations that a marriage of sorts between AI and brains will occur so that, someday, technology will make it possible for humans

to become “posthuman,” transcending the limits of the human condition. There are others who believe that the only way to make sense of scientific facts is to take reality as a simulation, an idea that is used by Hollywood in movies, such as *The Matrix* and *Watch Gamer*.

One must distinguish between computation and awareness of the computation within the brain. There are cognitive tasks where the individual does not have a sense of subjective awareness. Such cognitive tasks can be emulated by the machine with great speed and reliability. It is in tasks where one has to think out of the box, as in creativity, and where awareness plays an important role that will forever remain beyond the capabilities of machines.

In our intuition, consciousness is a category that is dual to physical reality, and we apprehend reality in our mind and not in terms of space, time, and matter, which is why this experience varies based on brain states. It is significant that in our conscious experience we are always outside of the physical world and witness ourselves as apart from our bodies (Kak, 2016). Even in scientific theory, the observer is apart from the system, and there is no explanation of the observer within the theory.

The Vedic view considers consciousness to be primary (e.g., Kak, 2021), and it uses the analogy of the one sun getting reflected in a million different pots of water as little suns is provided to explain the empirical consciousness of the individual. In this view, there is a single consciousness that gets manifested in the minds of sentient beings. The mind is an instrument consisting of the complex of ego, intelligence, and memory. Without the inner lamp of consciousness, this instrument cannot have awareness. The different awareness states depend on the clarity of the surface of the mind.

The Vedic model speaks of 5 inhering systems, *koshas*, that are like Russian dolls, each subtler than its predecessor: *annamaya kosha* (physical body), *pranamaya kosha* (life currents in the body), *manomaya kosha* (mind), *vijnanamaya kosha* (knowledge), and *anandamaya kosha* (happiness and wisdom). In turn, these are informed by the consciousness that transcends the five. The mind includes elements such as ego (the sense of the autobiographical self), memories, intelligence, and awareness; it is the inner processor that performs operations associated with different cognitive capacities in a systematic manner.

A dynamic society must ensure that education facilitates the development of each of these *koshas*. Spirituality is associated with consciousness

and it, therefore, provides a top-down view that is complementary to the bottom-up materialistic view.

The West has had its own ways of being informed by the spiritual perspective until the unprecedented material prosperity of the current age led to a zeitgeist in which people see themselves primarily as bodies. Hyper-specialization that sets people apart in silos, and the need to conform to the rhythms of the machines have alienated humans from their own nature. A radical materialist view has become dominant in education and entertainment, and it focuses mostly on the bottom three *koshas*, with knowledge creation left to the domain experts. In this understanding, happiness is mainly body-centric, to be obtained by ersatz means and ingested substances. No wonder, there is addiction and despair, and in 2020 over 90,000 people died in the United States of drug overdose (CDC, 2021).

Given this cultural and moral climate of the times, leadership and management has also tended to focus on the short-term view of things. As a consequence, the United States is finding it difficult to compete with other global competitors and its own physical and educational infrastructure is in disarray. While its universities remain the best in the world, they are greatly dependent on students and researchers from Asian countries.

There are individuals who are raising the alarm about the need for sustainability, not only of the environment but also societal structures. Clearly, a new kind of leadership informed by deeper consciousness states is required for our times.

THE NATURE OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVITY

The manager of a modern organization needs to balance two complementary views: first, that the organization is mainly products and the people who work for it; and second, it is fundamental knowledge and information. The old view of the organization was that it was primarily *being*, whereas, in the view demanded by the information age, it needs to have a very significant element of *becoming*. This indicates the need for the capability to innovate on a continual basis.

The unfolding of the universe takes place in a multitude of dimensions, whereas language, which is linear, is limited in its ability to describe reality. Because of this limitation, reality can only be experienced and never described fully, and the experience of deeper states of consciousness eludes simple description.

The limits to the machine paradigm are clear when we consider the question of creativity. From what we know it appears that the creative moment is not at the end of a deliberate computation. There are many anecdotal accounts of dreams or visions that preceded specific acts of creativity. Two famous examples of this are Elias Howe's 1845 dream of the design of the modern sewing machine, and August Kekulé's similar discovery of the structure of benzene in 1862.

The life of Srinivasa Ramanujan, who died in 1920 at the age of 32, is evidence in favor of the theory that consciousness extends beyond the individual. His long-forgotten notebook, which was published in 1988, contains several thousand formulas that were well ahead of their time, without explanation of how he arrived at them. When he was alive, he claimed that formulas were revealed to him in his sleep (Berndt & Rankin, 1995).

Even if one were to dismiss accounts of creativity as nothing but coincidence, the ontic understanding of reality becomes problematic when one brings information into the mix, as is done extensively in modern physics. This is because information implies the existence of a mind, which category lies outside of the realm of physics (Penrose et al., 2011).

LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

The consciousness-based approach to leadership and management makes it possible to deal with innovation and creativity in a skillful way. *Yogah karmasu kaushalam*, "Yoga is skill in action," is an old definition of action informed by consciousness.

Another way of looking at this is from the ecological lens. Consciousness-based management is ecological: it seeks strategies that are optimal both in the local and the global and, therefore, are sustainable. It is supportive of the environment, the needs of present and future generations, and the economy; it looks at the limiting of resource depletion, which in turn requires sustainable practices in business, agriculture, and society. At the personal level, it values decisions that help sustain immediate surroundings and the management of emotional and physical well-being.

I am very pleased that Professor Anil Maheshwari has edited this pioneering book on Consciousness-based Leadership and Management, which, I am sure, will guide future thought leaders, academics, and managers. It provides a framework to help people access their higher

consciousness states and thereby perform roles in the organization in a creative and empathic manner.

Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA

Subhash Kak

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Subhash Kak is Regents Professor at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater and Distinguished Academic Scholar at Chapman University, Orange, California. His research areas include AI, quantum computing, and the history of science. He is the author of twenty books that include “The Nature of Physical Reality” and “Mind and Self.” He is a member of the Indian Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council.

PREFACE

What is consciousness-based leadership and management, and why should you care? Leadership is about directing change for the betterment of humanity and the world. Consciousness-based leadership helps operate from an expanded and inclusive state of awareness of the self and the world, such that all of the universe is one and is accessible within ourselves.

Aligning leadership practices with the notion of unbounded consciousness, this edited collection will extend the literature on organizational culture, leadership, and sustainability, contributing to solving the grand challenges facing humanity. This two-volume set examines the need for a consciousness-based view of leadership, which emphasizes universal human flourishing, as opposed to a resource-based view, which focuses on sustaining a competitive advantage. This approach is built around three main principles: (1) Paradigm (Consciousness is primary including complementary existence of opposites), (2) Interpersonal (focusing on empathy and compassion), and (3) Individual (experiencing Oneness and expressing creativity). This book promotes consciousness as an approach to bringing humanity into a state of harmony to generate effective collective action. It includes contributions from leaders in the field of consciousness and workplace spirituality from around the world.

This Volume One is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on Consciousness-based approaches to Inclusive, Purposeful,

Quantum, and Vedic leadership. The second section focuses on leadership principles from Vedic scriptures such as Ramayana and Vedanta. The third section includes leadership principles from other scriptures such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Thirukural. Thanks to all the authors and co-authors of the chapters in this book. Many thanks to the publisher, Marcus Ballenger, for enthusiastically signing on to this project. We appreciate the support of the production support staff at Palgrave, including Supraja Yegnaraman.

This book was developed out of research presentations and discussions at the International Conference on Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, organized by the editor with support from Dennis P. Heaton. We wish to recognize the guidance of our incredible global board of advisors, which included Satinder Dhiman, Cathy DuBois, Chris Laszlo, Sharda Nandram, Judi Neal, and Kathryn Pavlovich. We wish to thank all the graduate students at Maharishi International University and other volunteers who helped make the conference possible. That includes Vikram Gulati, Danny Sandra, Meagen Andersen, and Natalia Fernandez. Many thanks to my wife Neerja for supporting me for many months through the preparation for the conference. Ultimate gratefulness to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for making higher consciousness accessible, creating this university as the home of Consciousness-based Education, and pioneering the research on Consciousness.

The conference was inspired by the desire for finding the principles for the fastest and the most direct path to a peaceful and blissful world. May you feel the bliss and peace, now and forever.

Fairfield, Iowa, USA
November 2022

Anil K. Maheshwari

PRAISE FOR CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, VOLUME I

“As the management world seeks to expand its horizons to encompass the interior development of the manager, the need for expert guidance expands apace. Anil Maheshwari, Ph.D. and Tony Nader, MD provide an important resource for just this purpose. With a Vedic perspective on consciousness as primary lens, they take us on a wide-ranging and richly engaging tour that interweaves philosophy-of-mind, cutting edge findings in neuroscience, innovative approaches to peace building and eco-sustainability, and the timeless wisdom of the wholeness of existence that could not be more timely in today’s world. Among the most compelling facets of the book is its seamless account of how the pristine silence of pure consciousness as invoked in meditation, where awareness knows only its primordial, self-referral nature, directly enhances creative and coherent navigation of day-to-day management turbulence. Mere competency in the workplace takes an evolutionary stride that defines genuine transformative leadership; enlightened managers elevate the consciousness of those around them. The notion, moreover, that collective meditation can enliven collective consciousness in society, resulting in benefits including reduced crime and accident rates, represents yet another new chapter in the emergent story of management leadership. This is a visionary book if ever there was one.”

—Ed Sarath, *Professor of Music, Founder and Co-Director, Program in Creativity and Consciousness, The University of Michigan, USA*

“This book provides a refreshingly new and concise consciousness-based framework for management as a source of world benefit. It is a much-needed resource to continue to build emphasis on Consciousness as the basis for action, in business and elsewhere. This volume presents leadership and management based on the non-dual direct intuitive ways of knowing and quantum theory and many other philosophical perspectives. It will be of great resource for the academic as well as professional audiences. Highly recommended.”

—Chris Laszlo, *Professor of Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, USA*

“Consciousness and its influence on how we lead is a topic that is more important now than ever. This book brings Vedic, Puranic, Chinese perspectives on Consciousness linked beautifully to modern leadership principles in a very readable and thought-provoking style. I highly recommend it!”

—Prasad Kaipa, *Co-founder of Center for Consciousness Studies at Indic Academy, Former Research Fellow in Apple University*

“Combining spiritual insight with intellectual understanding, *Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management, Volume I*, offers readers a set of acute observations on purposeful leadership. This accessible text is eminently readable. It offers a compelling pathway for business leaders interested in both individual flourishing and transformative business practices. I enjoyed reading it very much. This volume will offer readers a wonderful introduction to the values of consciousness-based leadership. Heaven knows, this approach is much needed in this chaotic world of ours.”

—Mary Beauregard, *Adjunct Faculty, College for Creative Studies, USA, and Co-Director, Program in Creativity and Consciousness, The University of Michigan, USA*

“Brilliant structure and synthesis of Consciousness-based Leadership and Management! I enjoyed reading it. Kudos!”

—Hari Kiran Vadlamani, *Founder of INDICA, India*

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PART I

This Part Presents Six Chapters
of Leadership Guided by Consciousness
Based Paradigm as Articulated by Maharishi
Mahesh Yogi



Wholeness of Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management

Anil K. Maheshwari 

INTRODUCTION

Yogasthah Kuru Karmani: Established in Self, perform Action. (Bhagavad Gita 2:48)

The crucial mistake that has dogged mankind for countless centuries is the loss of understanding of the primary importance of the field of pure consciousness. It is this field alone which is the field of all possibilities and the home of all the laws of nature. Unless thought and action are experienced from this field, life remains incomplete and plagued by ups and downs, and by imbalance. Only direct experience can re-establish the importance of pure consciousness as the field that we must contact before we can be successful in whatever interests us. (Maharishi, 1978, p. 39)

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LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

As the quotes above suggest, discovering one's higher self, and connecting with it, is the key to avoiding alienation and creating a wholeness that is at one once blissful and powerful. Even as the world has evolved to become technologically advanced and materially prosperous over the last more than 100 years, grand challenges such as social inequality and climate change pose an existential threat to our species and the world. Rapidly transforming technologies and societies are generating alienation, fear, and anxiety among those left behind in society. Ancient Vedic scriptures suggest viewing the world as one family (*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*: Maha Upanishad VI.71–73), in which every person's actions provide benefit to the entire family. Many organizations and institutions around the world are working silently and tirelessly, in diverse ways and levels, towards raising the consciousness of the world. Development of one's consciousness could catalyze surprisingly different answers and visions for fundamental questions such as what is the basic theory of management (Polman & Winston, 2021) such as: Is management about optimal consumption of resources for maximal benefit, or is it about sustainable evolution, or about personal growth?

Managers of the future, to be effective in a VUCA world (Nandram, 2017), will need to tap into their own unbounded potential and that of their teams and harness their visionary and transformative abilities, their empathetic and synergistic qualities, and their moral perspectives. This book is dedicated to helping managers develop higher consciousness and operate from a sense of transcendental connectedness at the core of their organizing practice (Maheshwari, 2021). Effective leadership relates to developing the rich inner life of the manager/leader and how they can seek impactful social change in and through their organization. Some of the challenges to be discussed on this path are (a) What are some key principles to model CBLM in organizations? (b) What are some practical ways to develop this ability in organizations? (c) What are some case studies of such principles in practice? (d) What kind of a future does one aspire to bring about?

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership is the *sine qua non* of social change. Creativity is the *sine qua non* of leadership. Leadership is often associated with an imaginative beneficial vision for the future. Leadership capability may arise from any level in the organization or society (Bennis, 1959). Among contemporary leadership theories, one can identify two distinct categories based on the source of leadership effectiveness. The conventional set of theories focuses on marshaling external resources effectively to grow an organization or society. The other emergent set of leadership theories focuses on the inner aspects of the leader as the primary source for excellence and transformation of the organization.

The category of inner-directed leadership includes many approaches such as Authentic leadership (George et al., 2007), Conscious leadership (Mackey & Sisodia, 2014; Pavlovich, 2013), Consciousness-based leadership (Harung et al., 1995; Maheshwari, 2021), Holistic leadership (Dhiman, 2017), Inclusive leadership (Brown, 2019; Hollander, 2012; Marques, 2020), Integral leadership (Laloux, 2014; Wilber, 2001), Positive leadership (Cameron, 2012), Purposeful leadership (Nader & Maheshwari, this volume; Quinn & Thakor, 2018), Primal Leadership (Goleman et al., 2013), Principles centered leadership (Covey, 1992), Quantum leadership (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019), Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1971; Van Dierendonck, 2011), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), Transcendental Leadership (Barney et al., 2015), Transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), Vedic Leadership (Maheshwari & Gupta, 2018; this volume), Virtuous Leadership (Gehani & Gehani, this volume; Wang & Hackett, 2020), Yogic leadership (Nandram, 2015), Moral Leadership, Values-based leadership, Evolutionary leadership, and more.

One can identify two major common features in this set of theories. (a) The leadership stance and activity is organized around a morally high aspirational vision, or a mechanism for creating such transformative visions, from values, principles, and purposes, and (b) There is a humble, holistic, and effective servant leader, or a small leadership team, who might model higher moral consciousness, display deep empathy, and often work as a coach, cheerleader, facilitator, and trust-builder, in helping members of the organization achieve their own goals while aligning them with the organization's goals. These two complementary qualities—ambitious goals of total dynamism, and personal humility of deep silent wholeness—may appear to be incompatible capabilities, but

they can come together in consciousness-based leadership. Tsao and Laszlo (2019) call consciousness as the mother of all capital. Development of one's consciousness can potentially help develop complementary skills, or what may be called ambidextrous behaviors.

VEDIC PHILOSOPHY

The Vedas is an ancient holistic system of knowledge from India. Vedas are said to codify total eternal knowledge, the constitution of the universe (Maharishi 1963; Nader, 2021). Three key principles of Vedic philosophy are:

Consciousness is primary. The first principle is that Consciousness is all there is. Consciousness is beyond qualities and names. Consciousness is unbounded and invincible. Everyone and everything is pure consciousness. Vedas culminates in the message of *Aham Brahmasmi* (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10 of Yajur Veda), or "I am Totality," or "I am Divine." Yet, there is tremendous variety in its dynamic manifestation in many forms.

The world is one family. The Vedic principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* means that the world is one big family. Hurting the other is hurting oneself. There is an acceptance of complementarity, and acceptance of opposites. Everyone has an assigned moral duty (*dharma*) according to which one does one's work dispassionately (*karma*).

Development of consciousness. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi discovered that the structure of knowledge of the Vedas has an exact correlation with the structure of human physiology (Nader, 1994). Thus, all the knowledge of the universe can potentially be accessed by everyone through developing a supremely refined perception (Nader, 1994). Self-transcendence through meditation is the way of developing one's consciousness.

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Human beings can experience many different states of consciousness. These are the ordinary states of waking, sleeping, and dreaming. In sleeping, there is no awareness of the self or thoughts. In the dreaming state, there is awareness of one's thoughts, but not of the self. In the waking state, there is awareness of oneself and also of one's thoughts. However, there exists a fourth state of consciousness called Transcendental Consciousness (TC), in which one is aware of oneself, but is

not aware of one's thoughts. *Shantam shivam advaitam chaturtham manyante, sa atma, sa viggayah* (Mandukya Upanishad, verse 7). Or: "Consciousness is absolute unbounded silence. It is the fourth state, and is truly worth knowing as the Self." This fourth state is neuro-physiologically different from the three ordinary states (Wallace, 1970). TC is physiologically described as a state of "restful alertness," as it is correlated with a measurable calming of the physiological processes (low metabolism) combined with full alertness of the mind (high brain coherence) (Wallace, 1970). With further development of consciousness, one can attain a yet higher state of cosmic consciousness (CC), where one can have the awareness of the TC even while being in a waking state and engaged in the surface reality. CC can be a particularly useful state for CBLM, as it can enable broad vision and sharp focus simultaneously. Eventually, with fuller development, one may develop into a state of unity consciousness, where all distinctions between the relative and the absolute pure consciousness are dissolved, and everything inside and outside is experienced as fluctuations within pure consciousness. All these states of consciousness are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 States of consciousness

<i>State of consciousness</i>	<i>Self-awareness</i>	<i>Content of experience</i>
Sleep State	None	None
Dream State	None	Illusory
Waking	Individual Ego (Lower self)	Perceptions, thoughts, feelings
Transcendental Consciousness	Unbounded Pure Consciousness (Higher Self)	None
Cosmic Consciousness	Unbounded Pure Consciousness (Higher Self)	Perceptions, thoughts, feelings
Refined Cosmic Consciousness	Unbounded Pure Consciousness (Higher Self)	Finest Relative Perceptions of infinite correlations in everything
Unity Consciousness or Brahman Consciousness	Unbounded Pure Consciousness (Higher Self)	Fluctuations within pure consciousness "...all things in terms of the Self"

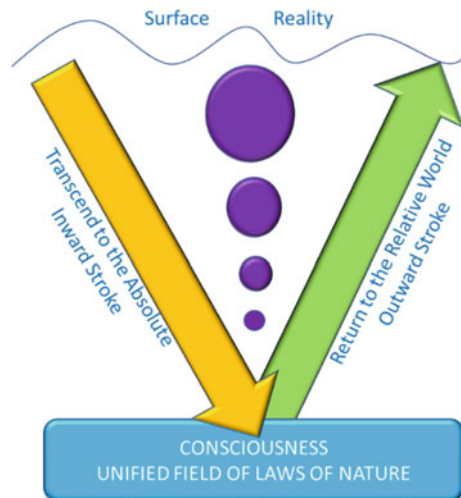
Source Maheshwari (2021)

V-THEORY OF TRANSCENDENCE

Transcendence can be defined as the process of going beyond surface reality and accessing pure consciousness. Transcendence can lead to a direct perception of oneself beyond space, time, form, function, thoughts, and objects. Comparable to and building upon the U-theory of managing from emergence (Scharmer, 2009), the V-theory of transcendence (Maheshwari, 2021) is a relatively simple two-step model that helps connect the surface reality of discrete elements with the absolute oneness of pure consciousness (Fig. 1.1).

In this perspective, one normally lives in a surface-level reality of waking/sleeping/dreaming. Using a suitable contemplative practice, or a *yogic* meditation such as Transcendental Meditation™ (TM), one can transcend to pure consciousness at the bottom of the V. That is called the inward stroke. During transcending, thoughts and the awareness of those thoughts, just dissolve away until they disappear completely. One should stay at that level of consciousness for a certain duration and take in pure coherence or negative entropy. Then one can suitably and effortlessly return to the surface-level reality. That is called the outward stroke. One may experience greater alertness, energy, clarity, enthusiasm, and creativity

Fig. 1.1 V-Theory: A 2-step model of transcendence (*Source* Maheshwari 2021)



upon returning to the surface reality or waking mode (So & Orme-Johnson, 2001). Khari and Sinha (2020) present a model of measuring transcendence in work situations.

V-theory of transcending can potentially be accessed through a large number of contemplative and meditation techniques, every one of which may have their own features and benefits. Many powerful meditation techniques have emerged from the Vedic, Buddhist, and Zen traditions. Travis and Shear (2010) surveyed research on meditation techniques and categorized them into three basic approaches: focused attention, open monitoring, and automatic self-transcending. All of them have the potential of changing one's mode of thinking (Travis & Shear, 2010). Yogic meditations are premised on there being an ultimate nondual reality of pure unbounded consciousness. Transcendental Meditation™ technique is a simple mantra-based Vedic meditation technique. Research on TM (Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018; So & Orme-Johnson, 2001) has shown significant benefits from developing consciousness for the individual, organizations, and society. TM is the only known technique in the category of automatic self-transcending. Other Vedic meditation techniques such as *Yoga Nidra* (Ozdemir & Saritas, 2019) and *Sahaj Yoga* (Chung et al., 2012) have also shown psycho-physiological benefits. Buddhist and Zen traditions posit nothingness or void as the ultimate reality. The Buddhist technique of *Vipassana* (Adhikari, 2012) and Zen technique of *Qigong* (Faber et al., 2012) are among other prominent techniques for meditation of the open monitoring type.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

For the last 50 years, Maharishi International University (MIU) has spearheaded groundbreaking research on CBLM (Schmidt-Wilk et al., 1996). The author organized a one-of-a-kind three-day international conference on CBLM at MIU in 2021. The conference was co-sponsored by the Academy of Management through the Management, Spirituality and Religion (MSR) Interest Group. The conference focused on identifying approaches, practices, and theories for mapping the path to a flourishing humanity. It aimed to bring together leading voices from around the world to discuss broad approaches and proven techniques for promoting a consciousness-based view of leadership and management for a more blissful and peaceful world. Almost 100 speakers representing diverse

disciplines approaches presented their ideas in the 15 sessions of the conference of 90 min each. Almost 1200 registered participants from 400 cities around the world registered to join the sessions to listen and ask questions. The conference aspired to arrive at an alignment and consensus on the best approaches for moving forward together in the right direction. The conference welcomed the full spectrum of research around the growing convergence between ancient scriptures and modern quantum sciences (Laszlo et al., 2021). Researchers from the fields of leadership, management, education, entrepreneurship, physical sciences, social sciences, arts, religion, philosophy, social action, and others were warmly invited to contribute to and participate in the conference. Formal research studies demonstrating proof of the efficacy of a method or technique were presented; and papers exploring new perspectives and theories were presented. Business leaders and entrepreneurs were encouraged to share their experiences and principles in working towards universal human flourishing. The conference was designed to have an emergent quality, with just enough structure for bliss and creativity to flourish. The conference was a great success in achieving its purpose.

PRINCIPLES LEARNED FROM THE CONFERENCE

Three high-level principles for Consciousness-based leadership and management (CBLM) were distilled from deliberations at the conference (Maheshwari, 2021). The three principles are:

1. Paradigm—Consciousness is primary. This principle includes the idea of complementary existence of opposites, and living in total harmony with nature.
2. Social/Interpersonal—Love is all we need. This principle includes the idea of interacting from empathy and compassion towards all life forms.
3. Individual—Unboundarize oneself. This principle includes freeing oneself from space–time containers and developing openness and creativity.

The three principles of CBLM are detailed below.

CBLM Principle 1: Consciousness Is Primary

Consciousness is all there is (Maharishi, 1963). Consciousness is pure existence, and thus is the ontological primitive. This is a new paradigm that challenges the materialist paradigm. The whole universe can be conceived of as being an unbounded ocean of consciousness (Nader, 2021). Consciousness itself is beyond space and time, and yet it is manifested *in* space–time through objects. Major quantum scientists such as Schrodinger, Oppenheimer, Planck, Heisenberg, and Bohm have also suggested the Vedic concept of unbounded unified consciousness as the source of everything (Wilber, 2001). Everything is totally interconnected, and one realizes that separation is an illusion (Sadhguru, 2021). The space–time forms can be considered a holographic projection of a higher dimensional consciousness (Bohm, 2005). Mass and energy, solid and vibration, can be seen as interchangeable manifestations of consciousness. A collective oneness through quantum empathy is the new understanding of reality from the intersection of quantum field theory, neuroscience, and other scientific perspectives (Pavlovich, 2020).

Consciousness has a few features that require it to be studied differently. “The really hard problem of consciousness is the problem of *experience*” (Chalmers, 1995, p. 201). First, consciousness is self-referral, that is, it is conscious of itself (Nader, 2015). Self-referral means that consciousness has a three-fold structure of being the knower, the known, and the process of knowing, all in one. Self-referral also means that consciousness is independent of everything else, as it is all there is. Self-referral can have a different connotation at lower levels, as it may denote insularity and egotism. The most important aspect of consciousness is the knower. Knowing the knower is considered the Socratic basis of knowing everything else. Second, the nature of consciousness is absolute silence. However, it is said to contain within itself the finest impulses of dynamism which develop to become the seeds of effective and dynamic action. Consciousness is thus like the hollowness of the banyan seed, which contains within itself the potential to manifest the huge banyan tree. Here too, the Silent Self is the key to knowing dynamic action. Third, the self-unfolding structure of consciousness is the unfolding structure of Vedas, which can be experienced by human beings in their own selves (Bohm, 2005; Nader, 1994). Consciousness can be grasped at the level of the seed, and it can be grasped in terms of its infinite manifestations. This layered and unfolding structure forms the basis for transcendence as a way of knowing oneself, and of knowing the entire universe.

CBLM Principle 2: Love Is All We Need

Almost all spiritual and religious traditions speak of the love of God and for fellow human beings. Love can be broadly defined as truly seeing the other and a commitment to growing together. Love is said to be the only emotion that broadens awareness and expands intelligent behavior (Matu-rana & Bunnell, 1999). Exemplary leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Mother Teresa have shown us that anything is possible when one acts from universal brotherhood and love (Maheshwari & Gehani, this volume).

Vedic philosophy considers the whole universe as one family. Every person and thing has its place in the grand order of things. Every individual is like a neuron in a body that is doing their own chosen duty to society, according to one's true nature and talents, to promote fairness and justice. Everyone acts externally essentially their own infinite creative potential (Arendt, 1987). When asked how he felt about liberating India, Mahatma Gandhi said, "I was only trying to liberate myself" (Rimanoczy, 2017).

CBLM can thus model a higher moral reality of a team and organization, where there is no other, and that leads everyone to experience greater empathy and interconnectedness with everyone. Operating from an intense commitment to fundamental principles of love, integrity, and inclusion, some organizations have achieved near-impossible things as "firms of endearment" (Sisodia et al., 2003). CBLM can help develop passion and compassion, purpose and vision, and also the courage to act on one's convictions.

CBLM Principle 3: Unboundarize Oneself

Development of one's consciousness to its highest level of unbound- edness, or unity consciousness, is considered the most direct and ulti- mate form of self-development (Maharishi, 1963). CBLM practitioners should transcend current self-perceptions and mindsets to experience pure unbounded consciousness as the Self. Development of conscious- ness can enhance a person's sphere of self-awareness, or one's connectome (Ardesch et al., 2019), enabling the realization of being unbounded consciousness. This realization can create more openness to possibilities,

cognizing them, and eventually manifesting them. With a deep connection and alignment with all the laws of nature, the CBLM approach may enable one to project holistic visions and achieve results spontaneously.

Ken Wilber (2007) depicts the variety of bases for managerial action in a four-quadrant structure, with an internal versus an external focus, and an individual versus collective dimension. It enables one to make the important distinction between the external and visible aspects, where the most conversation is normally directed, from the internal aspects which, while tacit and unseen, play a major role in driving our behaviors. The internal dimension is totally about developing an open unbounded mindset (Rimanoczy, 2020) which is the site of our worldviews, values, and beliefs that are later manifested in the world as behaviors and actions. Living the integral life helps develop one's consciousness and can lead to create actions for the greater good (Combs, 2002).

ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

This book is the first volume in CBLM. It presents a window into CBLM from a variety of Vedic and other philosophical approaches. Part I presents six chapters of leadership guided by Consciousness based paradigm as articulated by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. These include case studies on purposeful leadership, values-based leadership, quantum leadership, Vedic leadership, and Collective consciousness. Part II presents leadership from Vedic scriptural texts, such as *Rk Veda*, *Ramayana*, and *Advaita Vedanta*. Part III presents leadership from other scriptures such as Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Thirukural.

Part I

In Chapter 2, Tony Nader and Anil Maheshwari propose that Consciousness is the ultimate source of purposeful leadership. Purposeful Leadership based on a higher purpose (Quinn & Thakor, 2019), a deep purpose (Gulati & Adam, 2022), a sustainable purpose (Polman & Winston, 2021), and total interconnectedness (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019) is a way to harness the integrative self-awareness of people in organizations. They propose that purposeful leadership emerges from the higher consciousness of leaders and managers (Maheshwari, 2021; Nader, 2021). The foundational Vedic message of *Yogasthab kuru karmani*, (BG: 2:48) or

“Established in Consciousness, perform action,” implies that highly developed consciousness of individuals leads to more evolutionary leadership (Harung et al., 1995). This chapter discusses purpose-driven leadership and purpose-driven organizations (Quinn & Thakor, 2019) towards developing a theory of organizational purpose (Morrison & Rota, 2021), which describes the principal values and drivers of purpose-driven organizations, and how such organizations may be better positioned for solving the problems facing humanity. The chapter concludes by describing how a regular practice of transcending can help develop the consciousness of leaders and managers and help clarify their deeper purpose.

In Chapter 3, Anil Maheshwari describes how Maharishi Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* offers a basket of useful tools for Quantum Leadership. *Yoga Sutras* is an ancient and popular Vedic scripture that provides an integrated multi-modal model for development into higher states of consciousness. *Yoga Sutras* identifies many interconnected paths to Oneness or Totality. The eight limbs of *yoga sutras* range from the *yamas* and *niyamas*, which are the observable behavioral guidance to the subtle, to the deeply internal subtle processes of *dhyana* and *samadhi*. Every one of these eight limbs is capable of bringing an experience of oneness. This chapter presents three case studies of global quantum leadership who leveraged different limbs of *Yoga Sutras* to create oneness and well-being in the world. A peerless global leader, Mahatma Gandhi used *yama* and *niyama* as behavioral guidance to spiritually uplift millions of poor Indian masses into a strong non-violence force. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi used *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* to promote mental and world peace through Transcendental Meditation and advanced techniques. Swami Ramdev utilizes *asanas* and *pranayama* to uplift the health and well-being of billions of people. Each one of these leaders used appropriate principles and practices from *Yoga Sutras* in different ways to develop visions and powerful tools of social action that touched the lives of people around the world. This chapter concludes with guidance on how these principles and tools from *Yoga Sutras* can be deployed more widely to solve grand management challenges.

In Chapter 4, Anil Maheshwari and Ray Gehani focus on the core values that guided Mahatma Gandhi in his life and leadership. Gandhi’s moral values and practices inspired other leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela to further inspire their own populations to oneness and brotherly love. Mahatma Gandhi radiated a purity of vision that was universal and deeply grounded in the Vedic values of *Vasudhaiva*

Kutumbakam, or the world as one family. Through experimenting with and creating ways of adhering to the core values of non-violence (*ahimsa*), Truth (*satya*), and love for all, Gandhi was instrumental in mobilizing the masses of millions of Indians into a self-respecting organized force that dislodged two centuries of colonial British rule. This chapter asks how Gandhi's one-humanity-based approach can inspire the managers of today and tomorrow? This chapter will help expand the awareness of Gandhian consciousness and key principles flowing from his values. The chapter will describe how the three core values of non-violence (*ahimsa*), Truth (*satyagraha*), and upliftment of all (*sarvodaya*) were applied by Gandhi, and how those could be applied now by managers as they seek to develop oneness across boundaries and resolve the grand challenges facing organizations and society.

In Chapter 5, Anil Maheshwari and Rakesh Gupta present a concept of Vedic Leadership that supports the Vedic ideal of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, or “the whole world is one family.” The most important guiding principles of Vedic leadership relate to the nature of the Self and Action—i.e., who we are and what should we do. The authors articulate a simple Vedic leadership formula as follows: Authentic leaders are *self-realized* people who do their *work dispassionately* according to their *moral duty*. Vedic leadership potentially leads to a sustainably growing organization that engages the wholeness of being, and fullness of knowledge, for mistake-free action on everyone's part. In such an organization, everyone performs their specific assigned role to the best of their natural ability and talent, while keeping the greater good of the whole in mind. This chapter illuminates the concept of Vedic Leadership with a powerful qualitative case study of a multinational business organization in the information technology industry. Operating from the Vedic ideal of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, this business experienced unexpectedly rapid and sustainable growth for over a decade. The chapter discusses implications for leadership and transformation in organizations as well as for society for addressing grand social challenges.

In Chapter 6, David Orme-Johnson describes how group practice of Transcendental Meditation can create coherence in collective consciousness that can positively affect society and organizations. Empirical published research has shown that when the square root of 1% or more of a population practices a specific form of automatic self-transcending meditation (the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi techniques), simultaneous holistic positive effects are produced in society.

This chapter explains two fundamental issues about this research. The first issue is empirical evidence. The second is about how we theoretically explain the effect and its possible mechanisms. This chapter reviews three major projects using multiple social indicators of social well-being, e.g., war deaths, traffic fatalities, violent crime, drug-related deaths, and infant mortality (Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018). The experimental protocols specifying the research hypotheses, methodologies, and timing of the interventions were posited in advance and the data were official government statistics. All these studies found that varying the magnitude of the independent variable (meditator group size) created corresponding predicted changes in the dependent variables (social indicators), providing a strong case for causality. Social, political, cultural, or climatic events could not explain the results nor could autocorrelations or prior trends in the data. The holistic simultaneity of the effect on multiple diverse social indicators suggests that the effect is mediated by a common holistic influence, the unified field, the transcendental field of universal consciousness at the basis of every mind and of natural law. The data should encourage citizens and leadership to make use of these evidence-based technologies to improve their collective lives. This technology is thus an evidence-based approach to mitigate the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous nature of the world today.

Part II

This part presents four chapters related to leadership principles derived from Lord Ram, non-duality, and unity consciousness.

In Chapter 7, Ray Gehani and Nishant Gehani discuss the inner journey of Lord Ram to identify leadership lessons. Lord Ram has been revered as a *Purushottam* (or a most perfect person), and as a role model who championed and embodied righteousness for over 100 generations. Rama's reign, or *Rama Rajya*, is considered the epitome of good governance and leadership. Ram's Journey is often primarily explored with respect to his actions in the outer material world across the Indian sub-continent (Sattar, 1994). The authors explore the significance of the inner journey of the legendary leader Ram, who is mostly known for his external conquests against oppressive and materially lustful leader Ravana and his equally oppressive allies and followers. In his Inner Palace (or mind), Rama's consciousness discovered treasures such as the beautiful pristine Nature and intimate almost spiritual friendship of other species such as

friendly vultures (*Jatayu* and *Sampati*), monkey-men (*Hanuman* and *Sugriva*), and big bears (*Jambavan*). Based on the classic Valmiki's (c.700 BCE) *Ramayana*, they postulate a new model of Ram as a *Dharmic* and *Karma-yogi* leader, which is also the template for Vedic Leadership (Maheshwari & Gupta, this volume). Using the lens of consciousness, they further explore whether, in Rama's Journey (Gehani, 2020), the helpful monkey-men, and oppressive ogre rakshasas were distinctly separate entities from the mortal and morally conscious Rama, or were these diverse entities with different levels of consciousness nothing but the manifestations of Rama's own imagination, with partial self-realization. Similarly, they explore the deep relationship between Rama and his wife Sita, and how it could contribute to the mindset about living harmoniously in the current times.

In Chapter 8, Sairavi Subramaniam presents a qualitative textual examination of the leadership traits of Ram from *Srimad Valmiki Ramayan*. Applying the constant comparison method of the grounded theory approach, he codified and categorized the leadership traits found from reading all chapters of the original Sanskrit text. Upon distilling key phrases about Ram and his leadership from consciousness, he found that the key quality of Ram as a leader was that he was Self-realized. This quality was the basis of all other traits. The chapter presents several passages from the *Ramayan*, to concretely present the following leadership traits of Ram: Self-realized, Ethical, Trustworthy, Humble, Developmental, Knowledgeable, Foresighted, Eloquent, Appreciative, Benevolent, Attractive, and Invincible. Self-Realized implies a highly developed state of consciousness. The chapter suggests a practical technique by which individuals can develop the core trait of being Self-realized.

In Chapter 9, Amit Hiray and Kirti Rajhans explore how *Advaita* (or non-duality) might facilitate the practice of consciousness-based leadership. *Advaita* is essentially a spiritual philosophy of experiencing the union of the individual self with the absolute reality, *Brahman*. *Advaita* was introduced in about 1st BCE. It fell into disuse, till Adi Sankara revived this philosophy in the eighth century. In the blissful *Advaita* philosophy there are no differences of caste, creed, religion, gender, or status; and the world is one huge family, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, including humans, animals, or plants. Differences arise when the mind is corrupted by surface-level thoughts which control the waking or dreamy state. They finally ask how a sense of oneness and mutual affiliation can be created among the leaders. Based on their extensive critical review of

the spiritual leadership literature, they propose a new model of spiritual leadership which underlines the significance of *Advaita* consciousness. This model offers pragmatic suggestions on how it could be implemented by a new generation of leaders. They suggest that the *Advaita* experience can help develop interpersonal sensitivity and empathy, and thereby emotional and social intelligence. They examine the role of meditation as a tool in fortifying the experience of *Advaita*, and thus developing effective spiritual leadership.

In Chapter 10, Mohan Gurubatham explores the development of higher states of consciousness in managers (Maheshwari, 2021) from a native population's perspective. He examines the theoretical and empirical underpinnings for cognitive development in management development. He cites examples of unconscious violation of the cultural integrity of traditional peoples and their practices, which creates an urgency for a greater consciousness among leaders and managers. Traditional people's lives need to be understood in terms of what is important for them in terms of their values before others seek to resolve conflict in a win-win paradigm. The default assumptions around managerial intervention must be unfreezed so that they can be examined and updated. The technique of TM is proposed as being effective in the development of consciousness to enable greater empathy and compassion for all. He concludes that the development of consciousness can unfold the full cognitive potential of managers.

Part III

This part presents four chapters covering non-Vedic philosophical approaches including Dao, Confucianism, Nicheren Buddhism, and Thirukural.

In Chapter 11, Janet Dao and Dennis Heaton present a grounded theory-based qualitative analysis to identify the key concepts of a theory of management implicit in the 81 chapters of *Dao De Jing*. Laozi's classic *Dao De Jing* expounds that one can access the hidden power of Dao, or Natural Law, through a state of consciousness which is non-active. The Dao is nothingness, yet it is the mother of all things. According to Laozi, as one lets Dao manage instead of making deliberate actions to be strong or to govern, one acts in alignment with the spontaneity of the Natural Way. The Way or Dao is a transcendental phenomenon, yet it is the source of exceptional effectiveness. A perspective for appreciating

Laozi's Dao way of management is the work of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Maharishi explained that action from wakeful inner silence utilizes the organizing power of Natural Law to achieve the target for holistic success and least resistance. They conclude by observing similarities between Dao management and consciousness-based leadership and management.

In Chapter 12, Yunxiang Zhu and Liquan Cai describe lessons from their experience of teaching a course on the development of consciousness to management students in a different culture. This course, called Science and Technology of Consciousness (STC) has a practical component which is the Transcendental Meditation technique. The authors address the challenge of disseminating the knowledge of consciousness to students of different cultural backgrounds, which becomes even more challenging when onsite teaching was not possible due to the pandemic. This chapter identifies a key element to successfully teach the consciousness development course to Chinese students through online delivery. The authors approached the teachings of the STC course from the perspective of traditional Chinese wisdom as evidenced by Confucian teachings in Daxue (The Great Learning) which emphasizes the cultivation of inner awareness of Self. When students were encouraged to connect to their own roots and traditions, they immediately felt at home. This helped them to be more open-minded to what the STC course was offering and thereby, secured the success of the course. This successful approach may also be applicable to teaching consciousness development courses in other cultures.

In Chapter 13, Richa Kathuria, Richa Awasthy, and Tanuja Sharma give hope for development of spiritual intelligence (SI) based on the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. "Never have we ever heard of a believer in the Lotus Sutra who turned into an ordinary person. Whoever hears the law will attain the Buddhahood." SI is inextricably connected with virtues such as caring, hope, kindness, love, and optimism, and thus it has a positive impact on human lives. This chapter empirically explores and extracts the dimensions of SI in Nichiren Buddhism (NB). SI promotes conscious leadership, which helps to bring out the best in people and organizations. NB states that one can access the unlimited inherent potentialities in our lives and achieve Transcendental Consciousness (TC) by chanting *Nam-myō-ho-renge-kyō*. The authors present the results of a qualitative inductive content analysis of the English translation of the NB scripture. They abstracted 7 high-level themes and principles of SI from it. These themes are the Purpose of life, the notion of Higher Self, the Environment,

Faith, Worship, Transcendence, and Interpersonal relations. They propose a model of SI with three layers: individual, social, and consciousness, and discuss its implications for developing consciousness-based leadership.

In Chapter 14, Subhashini Durai presents a view of consciousness-based leadership from Thirukural which is one of the most prominent literary works in Tamil, a venerated South Indian language, known for its excellent and timeless elucidation of ways and values of life. This text from 300 BCE is considered one of the greatest works on ethics and morality and is known for its universality and secular nature. The chapter analyzes ten sacred verses from Thirukural that emphasize the importance of attainment of higher consciousness. This scripture states that the darkness of ignorance will vanish and true happiness will result for those who have realized the taintless Truth, being free of delusion. Applying the same quality to leadership, if a leader has a more developed quality of consciousness, then they will be very transparent and will have knowledge of the truth. The truth directs the leaders to making the right decisions without any dilemma. The real happiness and success of a great leader depends upon understanding the truth, and on differentiating the favorable and unfavorable situations that exist in an organization. Only when the consciousness of the leader is well-developed, they will be able to assess the situation and can take the most suitable decisions.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This chapter present a small but diverse window of perspectives on CBLM. A key aspect of CBLM would be to identify one's moral duty or *dharma*, and then act dispassionately towards its accomplishment. Here is a table comparing CBLM with conventional leadership and management (Table 1.2).

A clear understanding of pure consciousness, and the path of transcendence to access it, are among the greatest tools for living a fulfilling human life. Life should be lived sustainably in accordance with the natural laws of the universe (Maharishi, 1963). The sun is our gateway to the larger universe and is also the source of life on earth. Without the sun there would be no earth, nor its regular rotation, or the circadian rhythms of life forms. The life-supporting energy of the sun makes it possible to exist, and to achieve well-being for all. The workplace and all spaces of the future should potentially provide greater alignment with the laws of nature, and enable more direct access to nature. Living and working in

Table 1.2 Consciousness-based leadership and management versus conventional management

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Consciousness-based leadership and management</i>	<i>Conventional leadership and management</i>
Fundamental Metaphor	Consciousness in Action	Command and control
Guiding principles	Everyone is Pure Consciousness Act from authentic Self Do moral duty through dispassionate right actions	Set goals, communicate goals, monitor goals, and rewards for achievement
Management purpose	World as one family in harmony Holistic development and growth	Resource optimization Gain success, money and power
Leadership source	Self-awareness as the basic source of leadership potential	Better skills, experiences, resources, and relationships
Self-Development process	Regular practice of transcendence	Functional training and coaching
Individual vs Collective Management	Leadership comes from higher consciousness individuals	Leadership comes from decisive thinking and data-driven approach
Leadership style	Inspire people to help develop themselves	Focus on accomplishing goals

consciousness-based structures aligned with the energies of the sun and the earth has been shown to improve employee well-being (Maheshwari et al., 2022).

Effective action begins with an intentional imagination of a desirable state of the world. What would one be willing to live for, and die for? What kind of a world does one want to manifest? What should humanity and the planet look like? Do we all want a peaceful and blissful world, naturally guided by consciousness? What kind of activities should be encouraged? Can everyone potentially develop the awareness of the whole universe within themselves? This can be a world in which spontaneous right action will occur just in time, as in synchronicity (Combs & Holland, 1990), or support of nature (Ho & Heaton, this volume). CBLM practitioners may be able to discover effortless paths to fulfilling their highest dreams and aspirations. Global grand challenges can be an opportunity to shine by displaying great creativity for the common good (Laszlo

et al., 2020). One can imagine every social gathering and activity beginning with a few minutes of collective transcendence to create a grounded reality for peaceful conversations and a flourishing world. Regular practice of transcendence could develop consciousness also produce freedom from fear at a personal and organizational level. Awareness of a shared, silent, and unbounded transcendental reality could help managers be inclusive and appreciative of all forms of life. This way of being can lead to a perpetually malleable flowing world, where all can act intentionally and potentially realize their full creative potential. With the support of technologies of automation and communication, one may need to do practically nothing and achieve almost anything. Potentially, everyone can be free to work on realizing their full creative potential (Diamandis & Kotler, 2012).

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Consciousness as the Source of Purposeful Leadership

Tony Nader and Anil K. Maheshwari 

INTRODUCTION

Strong, focused, and inclusive leadership is of the essence in articulating and solving the overwhelming problems of climate change, social inequality, bio-extinction, and more. Many researchers have highlighted the need to design new integrative approaches to gather the collective energies of humanity to face those challenges (Datar et al., 2010).

This chapter presents a relationship between consciousness and leadership from many perspectives, including quantum physics, spirituality, and organizational theory. It is based on the emerging paradigm that consciousness is primary and is the source of all manifestations (Nader, 1994, 2014, 2021). Leadership is about articulating a worthy

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goal or purpose, then guiding the path forward. These processes invariably reference the higher consciousness of the leadership (Maheshwari, 2021). This chapter will address the questions of What is consciousness? What is purposeful leadership? What are its features? And how does one recognize deeper purpose? This chapter explores the theories of purposeful leadership and purpose-driven organizations and their source in higher consciousness. Finally, it presents a proven technique for the development of consciousness that enables people to unfold their full potential and achieve their higher purpose.

THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

What is consciousness? That is arguably the most important of the questions facing humanity. Many scientific theories have been proposed to explain it. They range from pan-psyche and spiritual theories where consciousness is prior to and independent of human existence (Combs, 2009; Laszlo, 2007; Nader, 2021), to materialist theories where consciousness is considered to be an emergent property of the complexity of the nervous system (Dennett, 1993; Hameroff & Penrose, 2014). Mid-range theories have more specifically hypothesized that consciousness exists in the microtubules in neurons of the brain (Hameroff & Penrose, 2014), or as integrated information (Tononi et al., 2016) that extends beyond humanity and into all life forms.

This chapter supports the idealist paradigm that consciousness is primary and independent of any material existence. Its primary attribute is that it is conscious of itself (Nader, 2021). The physical universe, with all its material and nonmaterial parts, exists as expressions of unbounded pure consciousness, which is itself immaterial. Consciousness is beyond the brain, beyond individuality, and is independent of any personal “owner.” Fortunately, however, the full value of unbounded consciousness is accessible to everyone through their own neurophysiology, their own mind, and body (Nader, 1994).

PHILOSOPHICAL CONUNDRUMS RELATED TO CONSCIOUSNESS

At a 1994 conference, the Australian philosopher David Chalmers made a distinction that has become widely known as the “easy” problem and the “hard” problem of consciousness research. The easy problem involves discovering the neural basis or correlates for mental functions, such as memory and forgetting, while the hard problem is to understand and

explain why and how these functions result in a purely subjective experience. The hard problem of consciousness (Chalmers, 1995) is thus about how something material and tangible can produce something so subjective as an experience. There is no scientific consensus as to its solution (Nader, 2014).

A paradigm shift is needed. The classical materialistic paradigm posits that everything consists of bodies in space–time acting according to the Newtonian laws of action and reaction. More recent theories of quantum physics propose subtler fields and explanations that stretch beyond Newton’s laws. In this new physics, the reality is wave functions, though it may also appear as discreet and subatomic particles and objects probabilistically in a space–time domain. Physics is pushing even further, with theories that see those wave functions as fluctuations of an underlying field (Battersby, 2008), or even a unified field of consciousness (Hagelin, 1987). As Einstein said, mass is energy at a low enough frequency that we can see it. From the consciousness-as-primary perspective, the philosophical conundrum is no longer the hard problem of consciousness as much as it is the hard problem of physicality, i.e., how something so immaterial as consciousness may lead to something so tangible as a material object. From this perspective, there is a continuum of consciousness, from the pure consciousness of the universe to the infinitesimal consciousness of a dust particle. Mystics among professionals have highlighted their relationships with their objects of work. The iconic architect Louis Kahn designed remarkable buildings and campuses using red bricks. He reported that he often asked the red brick in his hand what it wanted done to it! He intuited the voice of the brick and created remarkable new architectural designs to give expression to that voice.

VEDIC APPROACH TO CONSCIOUSNESS

The Vedas is an ancient holistic system of knowledge that is based in the primacy of nondual consciousness (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2001; Nader, 2021). The Vedas are said to codify total eternal knowledge, the constitution of the universe. Three key principles of Vedic philosophy are:

Consciousness is Primary

According to the Vedas, consciousness is all there is (Nader, 2015). Consciousness is beyond qualities and names. The Vedas culminate in the

message of *Aham Brahmasmi* (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10 of Yajur Veda), or “I am Totality.” In other words, everyone and everything is a manifestation of pure Consciousness. Yet, there is tremendous variety in its dynamic manifestation.

The World is One Family

The Vedic principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (Maha Upanishad VI.71–73) means the world is one big family. There is no other. Hurting the other is hurting oneself. There is an acceptance of the complementarity of opposites. Everyone has an assigned moral duty (*dharma*) according to which one does one’s work dispassionately (*karma*).

Development of One’s Consciousness

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi discovered that all the knowledge of the Vedas has an exact correlation with aspects of human physiology. Thus all the knowledge of the universe can potentially be accessed from transcendence, which results in a more refined perception (Nader, 1994, 2021). Self-transcendence through meditation is seen as a way of developing one’s consciousness.

Research has identified a fourth state of consciousness (Travis, 2014; Wallace, 1970), beyond the ordinary states of waking, sleeping, and dreaming. This is a state in which the pure value of consciousness itself is experienced; where the body attains deep rest but the mind remains awake and alert. This fourth state, called Transcendental Consciousness, as described in Vedic texts, can be experienced through direct experience, and is verifiable through its physiological correlates (Nader, 2021). There are further higher states of consciousness beyond the fourth state, where pure consciousness is accessible even during ordinary waking, dreaming, and sleeping states.

QUANTUM APPROACH TO CONSCIOUSNESS

The quantum perspective to Consciousness is about the total interconnectedness of everything in the universe. Consciousness is the transcendent field of pure existence that manifests as objects, planets, stars, animals, humans, and all that exists in our universe (Nader, 2021). The same phenomenon can be perceived and measured in different ways

simultaneously; it can appear as a wave and particle based on whether it is being observed or not. Using a famous example of Schrödinger's cat, the cat in a box may appear to be simultaneously dead and alive. But one won't know which it is until one opens the box and makes a conscious observation. The same object can be a gross observable object at one level; and on another level it can be molecules; and on another level, subatomic particles such as leptons, quarks, neutrinos; and at yet another level, pure waves of consciousness. What appears separate may indeed be manifestations of the same huge wave function. Using the ocean metaphor, every object may be a wave in one unbounded ocean of consciousness. All layers of energy and matter are carved out of the unified field of consciousness. Further, the many-worlds interpretation of quantum theory says that a particle or object may manifest in many different places, at the same time, and in different parallel universes.

As one goes from individual components to complex entities, a sense of "self" evolves. A single particle has no or infinitesimal self-awareness, but large, complex, and orderly groups of particles, creating for example a human being, lead to a deep and profound sense of self. This sense of self is the result of the collective consciousness of the particles and their orderly structure constituting a human being. "It is a special society of particles leading to a society of cells" (Nader, 2021; p. 306). The society of cells creates organs, and the society of organs creates a human being. Societies of humans also have their collective consciousness of which the individual humans are not necessarily fully aware, although they might have an underlying sense of that collective self.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND PURPOSE

There have been numerous calls for uniting science and spirituality to meaningfully solve systemic threats to human existence (Laszlo et al., 2021). Consciousness is the field of infinite correlations, and the field of total knowledge (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2001). A fully developed consciousness can consider all possibilities and articulate the right purpose for society and organizations. Thus, the deeper purpose in life could be flourishing by living a life of integrity, creativity, abundance, and security (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2001).

In their book *Deep Purpose*, Gulati and Adam (2022) define purpose as a "stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at the same time meaningful to the self and consequential for the world beyond

the self” (p. 10). The purpose may overlap and subsume many organizational constructs, such as vision, mission, intent, values, service, and stewardship (George et al., 2021). Gulati and Adam (2022) contrast deep purpose with convenient purpose. A deep purpose serves as an existential organizing principle representing wholeness. A purpose is considered deeper when it transcends conventional assumptions about a narrow and immediate self-interest as the guiding force. In contrast, a convenient purpose is purely functional, commercial, and tactical. Organized around a deeper purpose, there could be layers of successively more tactical and functional short-term convenient purposes.

PURPOSE AND LEADERSHIP

Some of the most successful historical cases of leadership come from a deep sense of self-awareness, and the mastery and ownership of an overarching purpose. For example, Abraham Lincoln, arguably the most consequential President of the United States, was known for his unquestionable commitment to protecting the Union. A mission-based approach was another way to accomplish massively transformative purposes at societal levels, such as the landing on the moon in the 1960s (Mazzucato, 2021).

Leadership in business is often attributed to those who manifest unbounded human potential through lofty aspirational goals and paths (Christensen, 2013; O’Reilly & Tushman, 2021). Businesses have been increasingly conceived with the purpose of world benefit (LaLoux, 2014; Laszlo & Brown, 2020; Mackey & Sisodia, 2014; Polson & Newman, 2021). Too many of our global troubles, Mackey and Sisodia (2014) say, come from an “unconscious” capitalism that is too focused on gains and creating incentives based on fears. Instead, the workforce can be made to feel empowered to have a sense of ownership of the company as “my company” (Maheshwari & Gupta, 2022, this volume). When teams are inspired by a love of their mission, they will likely be more innovative, more inspired, and more productive (Barsade & O’Neill, 2014).

Leadership theories may be categorized as being essentially of two types. The traditional theories focus on effectively marshaling external resources strategically to grow an organization or society. The other set of leadership theories focuses on the inner domain of the leader as the primary source. Leadership theories originating from the inner domain

include servant leadership (Van Dierendonck, 2011); inclusive leadership (Brown, 2019; Hollander, 2012; Marques, 2020); integral leadership (Laloux, 2014); authentic leadership (George et al., 2007); and primal leadership (Goleman et al., 2013); to name just a few.

More recently, there has been a growing interest in the theory of purpose-driven leadership. Leading from a higher purpose (Quinn & Thakore, 2019); a deep purpose (Gulati & Adam, 2022); a sustainable purpose (Polson & Winston, 2021); and a massively transformative purpose (Diamandis & Kotler, 2015), are some recent characterizations of purposeful leadership needed to address the great challenges facing humanity. In the organizational context, the overall purpose becomes a unifying statement of the commercial and social problems that a business intends to profitably solve for its stakeholders. It also implicitly assigns at a general level the goals and duties for all the stakeholders.

THEORIES OF ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE

The original purpose of organizations was to accomplish large projects that an individual could not do alone. However, the purpose of organizations changed to making money, especially for shareholders, as a bulwark against socialism. In a post-socialist world, this purpose appears to be anachronistic. A lack of awareness of the higher or inspiring purpose can deprive members of an organization of their connection with the source that makes organizational life joyful. Focused only on the lower-level purposes, the organization loses access to the infinite energy from the source or the soul. The emerging organization should be a “platform for channeling human energy to create value for customers and other stakeholders” (Bolles, 2021, p. 224).

Hollensbe et al. (2014) keenly observe that businesses not only produce goods and services, they also produce people. They describe “organizations with purpose” as those that go beyond asking questions about whether a business is operating profitably or whether an action is legal; they engage in a soul-searching focus on questions at a core level, such as: What is a business’s sense of purpose? How and why did a particular business begin? Who founded the enterprise, and what did they want to achieve? How does a sense of purpose relate to all the stakeholders in the organization and to the context in which it operates? How does a business understand itself relative to society, and what is it doing to create a shared sense of purpose? They suggest five human-centric

purposes for organizations (Hollensbe et al., 2014). These are Dignity, Solidarity, Plurality, Subsidiarity, and Reciprocity. *Dignity* means viewing each person as a someone, not a something. *Solidarity* means recognizing that other people matter. *Plurality* means valuing diversity and building bridges. *Subsidiarity* means exercising freedom with responsibility. And *reciprocity* means building trust and trusted relationships.

Morrison and Rota (2021) articulate a formal theory of organizational purpose based on two philosophical dimensions: intentionality and speech acts. Intention helps conceptualize the “corporate mind,” which they suggest is a set of long-lived beliefs about the world-as-it-is and intentions about the world-as-it-will-be that drives organizational activity. They state that the purpose of any organization is to sustain its corporate mind. They identify five core attributes that enable organizations to fulfil their core purpose: these are authorization, property rights, the ability to contract, the capacity to deliberate, and conversability. Conversability allows organizations to perform speech acts: that is, to make statements about their purpose and the corporate mind. This also includes complex and valuable forms of social cooperation. These models emphasize that organizations with purpose have a clear intentionality of goals, and that these should include a sense of care and value for all people.

PURPOSE-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

Quinn and Thakor (2019) state that the primary purpose of leadership is to transcend conventional constraints and create a purpose-driven organization (PDO). They define a PDO as one in which “the organization gains an authentic, prosocial, higher purpose that transcends the usual business goals and affects decisions big and small” (p. 5). They define higher purpose as a “prosocial goal that transcends the usual pursuit of business goals but intersects with those goals” (p. 53). This form of leadership can be radically giving of all it has and is, knowing that the universe will return its actions manifold.

A PDO’s higher purpose should be authentic and shared. That would help create a purpose-driven culture that serves to both stabilize and inspire the people. The purpose intersects with strategy and is the overriding arbiter of every decision. When the higher purpose takes hold, a paradoxical shift happens, in which the collective interest becomes the self-interest. As a result of that, the workforce becomes more engaged and contributive. Every person is encouraged to manifest their potential

to become an active contributor to the overall flourishing of the world. When employees embrace the organization's higher purpose, they transcend conventions and contracts, access new capacity, and align in favor of the behavior that the owners of the business want. Thus, the PDO is able to "transcend the tension represented by the principal-agent problem in economics, or the self-interested behavior of the worker" (p. 194).

Quinn and Thakor (2019) further state that the leaders with a higher purpose have a more developed consciousness, and they exercise more control on how to construct meaning from experience. In the process of transcending the conventional mindset, purposeful leaders are able to see possibilities of organizational excellence, networks of people linked to a higher purpose, demonstrations of resilience, engagement in learning, and collaboration as they create patterns of higher performance. Purposeful leaders are ready to sacrifice for something bigger than their own self-interest. Importantly, this "transcendence of self-interest gives rise to moral power" (p. 56). It can lead to the development of capabilities such as taking initiative, assisting others, persisting in meaningful tasks, being open to negative feedback, motivating others, stimulating new ideas, and inspiring creative action. When managers become purpose-driven, they begin to transcend conventional thinking, and begin to transform into leaders. As a case study, Quinn and Thakor (2019) cite a manager from Bank of America: "When the employees realize that the purpose is real, the purpose sinks in to the collective consciousness. The culture changes, and the organization begins to perform at a higher level. Processes become simpler and easier to execute and sustain. People start looking for permanent solutions rather than stop-gap measures that create more inefficiencies through process variations" (p. 131).

DEEP PURPOSE ORGANIZATIONS

GULATI and Adam (2022) call deep purpose organizations (DPO) those that regard purpose in a more expansive and more elevated way. These organizations orient themselves existentially around their deep purpose, articulating a conscious intent to conduct their business in a more elevated way. At the deepest level of purpose, such organizations practice business as win-win-only. They commit to embracing a multi-stakeholder approach (Freeman, 2001; Polman & Winston, 2021), by energetically pursuing business opportunities that deliver value for society and shareholders. Leaders at DPOs pragmatically acknowledge and address the

challenges inherent in pursuing a purpose and dedicate themselves self-consciously to the ongoing and imperfect navigation of tradeoffs between stakeholders. Their focus primary is on the striving itself, knowing well that they may never fully manifest their aspirations. Instead, they choose to make meaningful progress in the direction of their existential intent, using new opportunities as they emerge for more fully realizing the deep purpose (Gulati & Adam, 2022). Brown (2019) suggests for organizations to instead of thinking in terms of good and bad, “it may be more helpful to think in terms of conscious and unconscious, aware and unaware” (p. 31). A more developed consciousness may lead to “full spectrum thinking,” in which there is greater awareness and appreciation of the totality of the situation (Johansen, 2020).

Cameron (2012) calls positive leadership as that enabling “meaningfulness in work by highlighting the value associated with the organization’s outcomes” (p.100), which extends and transcends the personal benefit of individual employees. In the process, leaders also become conscious of the full spectrum of different orientations that individuals possess regarding their work and toward the organization itself. Mackey and Sisodia (2014) highlight higher states of consciousness experienced by leaders who practice “Conscious Capitalism.” These higher states reveal to the leaders the interdependencies that exist across all stakeholders, allowing them to discover and harvest synergies from situations that otherwise seem replete with tradeoffs.

RECOGNIZING HIGHER PURPOSE

George et al. (2021) describe the role of internal and external drivers of the firm to help articulate a purpose that creates the institutional context for value-creation for all the stakeholders. The inner drivers of the purpose are the “inspirational convictions and commitments of organizational leaders, most typically a firm’s founders” (p. 8). The external drivers include ecological responsiveness, stakeholder influence, and other vital contextual cues. Pavlovich (2013) explored how organizational leaders articulated their higher purpose. She found that “concern for others” is a foremost attribute of leadership in this regard. She grasped that higher consciousness leaders are “conscious” because of this deeper awareness of their place in a broader interconnected universe. These leaders discovered their conscious purpose through an inner directive, and their self-development occurred through a deepening of awareness of qualities

that transcended individual ego. Mirvis (2008) analyzed the experience of various “consciousness-raising” experiences in several corporate development programs, and noted that service experiences can attune individuals and their organization to issues and interests in society, and help clarify their purpose. He documented the impact of such experiences on the executive’s self-awareness, understanding of others, dealings with diversity, and engagement with the larger world. In principles-centered leadership, Covey (1992) states that the creation of purpose happens with the clarity of intention on the inside. Integrity and morality also develop from the inside and influence purpose creation. Thus, the continuous development of one’s inner capabilities is the essence of a purpose-centered leader. The primary importance of inner development is illustrated by the example that “if you give a person a fish, you feed them for a day. If you teach them how to fish, then you feed them for a lifetime.”

DISCOVERING PURPOSE FROM HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

From a consciousness perspective, purposefulness appears when the “awareness of the self is accompanied by awareness of the direction in which the self is moving, whether this is fully consciously appreciated or not” (Nader, 2021, p. 315). Further, rising to higher states of consciousness comes with higher, more inclusive, and more comprehensive awareness, thus expanding the sense of self to include gradually more of what used to be seen as different and separate. With higher consciousness, there also comes a greater awareness of the self and that there are different paths toward more fulfillment, which focus the intention in a purposeful direction. Of the many possible paths, the ones with the least friction and requiring the least effort are sought. This follows the principle of least action, which according to science underlies all phenomena in physical manifestation (Nader, 2021).

Purposeful management training requires that the manager’s awareness be raised to the level of unbounded consciousness (Maheshwari, 2021). When the individual consciousness is aligned with pure consciousness, then action can be effortlessly and flawlessly performed from this level. The great organizing power of nature itself, which is at the basis of the movement of stars and the beat of a butterfly wing, can then be applied to the leader’s organization, and the effortless effectiveness of the whole will then move through the parts (Nader, 2021).

Developing one's consciousness is crucial for discovering and developing an authentic higher purpose. Leaders can develop the all-important self-awareness by tapping the limitless reservoir of consciousness and bringing it into their lives in a practical way. Experience of the higher state of transcendental consciousness has been linked with attributes and values indispensable to the successful practice of business (Harung & Travis, 2016; Harung et al., 1995). Moreover, the experience of it has the power to change the way we live and interact with others.

DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Due to its already highly orderly structure, human physiology has the ability to experience pure consciousness and thereby be directly exposed to the grand field of pure consciousness (Nader, 1994). This means that the human structure (the complexity and orderliness of the human anatomy, physiology, mind, and intellect) is advanced to such a high degree that it can fathom the highest level of consciousness. By transcending limiting experiences, the mind and thus awareness directly experience pure consciousness. Human awareness can transcend the limitations of specific thoughts and experience wholeness. The human mind can directly experience pure consciousness by diving within to experience the ultimate Self, pure consciousness.

TRANSCENDENCE

The most profound and effective way to naturally align the nervous system, mind, and awareness is the direct experience of pure consciousness. The mind settles to the most fulfilling object of experience, which is the fourth state of Transcendental Consciousness, while simultaneously broadening awareness, removing stress, and balancing both mind and body. This cannot happen through intellectual analysis or projecting attention toward any outer perception. It happens only through transcending all activities of the mind, all thought, and all outer experience. The Transcendental Meditation® (TM®) technique offers an easy path to enable this experience. By facilitating the direct experience of pure consciousness, TM practice provides a shortcut to expanding awareness spontaneously in the direction of higher consciousness. TM accomplishes this in a natural, effortless way while it simultaneously and spontaneously providing the body with deep rest to remove stress (Nader, 2021).

The TM technique has been shown to be effective and fulfilling in aligning the structures and functions of the physiology with perfect orderliness, as it removes stress and distortions of perceptions (Nader, 2021). This experience reshapes the nervous system and the entire physiology. TM practice contributes to employee health, happiness, creativity, problem-solving ability, and brain functioning, as numerous studies have shown (Alexander et al., 1993; Harung et al., 2009; Travis & Arenander, 2006; Travis et al., 2009). Regular practice of the TM technique also results in significant improvements in cardiovascular health, with reduced hypertension and improved cardiovascular functioning (Schneider et al., 2012). It is also shown to lead to a significant reduction in anxiety (Orme-Johnson & Barnes, 2014). “The mechanism of the effects of TM practice appears to be through acute and longitudinal reductions in sympathetic tone and reactivity to stress” (Barnes & Orme-Johnson, 2012, p. 237).

Filmmaker Lynch (2006) describes the experience of transcendence as diving into a field of unbounded creativity. He calls this “real creativity,” which with practice can more easily find solutions to problems. The benefits of higher consciousness also have a multiplier effect, when large numbers of people transcend together. When individual consciousness evolves in phase with others, it creates coherence in collective consciousness, leading to peace and flourishing in nations and societies (Dillbeck & Cavanaugh, 2016; Hatchard & Cavanaugh, 2017; Orme-Johnson, this volume).

CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the paradigm that in higher states of consciousness, the mind, body, and actions become aligned with the unified source of all knowledge (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2001). Consciousness, with its perfect all-knowing orderliness, becomes the spontaneously guiding light and leads to spontaneous right action, providing maximum benefits to the individual and to society. From higher states of consciousness, organizational leaders may be able to articulate higher and deeper purpose for themselves and their organizations, to make the world a better place. Leaders may also draw upon creative ways and projects to move forward in the direction of evolution. Development of consciousness, such as through the practice of the TM technique, provides individual benefits, and when collective consciousness reaches a high level

of orderliness, social and organizational life also become evolutionary and fulfilling.

There have been clarion calls from business leaders to combine purpose with profit, including by the world's largest financial investor Larry Fink, in the foreword to *Deep Purpose* (Gulati & Adam, 2022). The activist corporate leader Paul Polman asks courageous leaders to actively disrupt their entire ecosystems for the path to true sustainability, and the profits will follow (Polman & Winston, 2021). The great resignation of 2021 shows that people, especially the youth, are looking for more meaningful work environments. The crises of pandemics and wars can be the opportunity for courageous leaders to seek within themselves holistic answers to the question of higher purpose that can unify organizations and society. By basing an organization on trust, love, and faith, organizations have the power to lift people out of poverty, to create prosperity, and to improve the world. It is within the power of the global leaders of business to recognize the highest purpose and implement technologies to create wholeness, progress, and prosperity, not only for themselves and their businesses but for the benefit of the whole world (Sisodia et al., 2003; Pavlovich, 2020).

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Quantum Leadership Through Yoga Sutras

Anil K. Maheshwari ¹

INTRODUCTION

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.—Margaret Mead¹

Some of the greatest leadership has come about in remarkably unpredictable ways by unlikely leaders who however stepped into a moment of history from a higher state of consciousness and led with unequivocal care, creativity, and commitment. Maharishi (1963) emphasizes the importance of operating from the state of pure consciousness, or pure Being:

¹ Mead, M. (2005). Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. *GoodReads, Quotes*. Retrieved December 12, 2017, from www.goodreads.com/author/quotes, 61107.

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If the mind is without Being, the process of thinking is as though lifeless, and, when the mind is not familiar with Being, the process of thinking and the thought force are very weak. If these are weak, so will be the resultant activity, and as a result of weak activity, the accomplishments are not satisfying and the fulfillment of life is not gained. So it is the art of Being while thinking that is the basis of all accomplishments and fulfillment in life. (p. 89)

Lao Tzu said that highest leadership is leadership is a state of consciousness, where one leads without words (Chatterjee & Senge, 2012). Quantum leadership (QL) is a model of enabling transformation toward care and compassion, using contemplation practices to access consciousness (Tsao & Lazslo, 2019). They discovered that “transforming our consciousness is the most effective tool we have for unlocking local and global change” (p. 113). Quantum empathy is “an entangled, interconnected and indeterminate shared existence that may support the ethical shift in human consciousness” (Pavlovich, 2020, p. 1). This paper presents three quantum leaders—Mahatma Gandhi, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and Swami Ramdev—that operated from the principles of oneness of existence, and created well-being for people around the world. We will discuss how their innovative tools of massive social action based on *Yoga Sutras*, or the principles of Divine Union, effectively helped resolve some of the grand challenges of their eras. These case studies will help identify principles for QL that may be able to guide future leaders.

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership is the *sine qua non* of social change. There are many leadership theories that are based on the inner domain of the leader as the primary source of the vision and insights from a higher and deeper levels of awareness. These include Authentic leadership (George et al., 2007), Conscious leadership (Mackey & Sisodia, 2014; Pavlovich, 2013), Consciousness-based leadership (Harung et al., 1995; Maheshwari, 2021), Holistic leadership (Dhiman, 2017), Inclusive leadership (Brown, 2019; Hollander, 2012; Marques, 2020), Integral leadership (Laloux, 2014; Wilber, 2001), Positive leadership (Cameron, 2012), Purposeful leadership (Nader & Maheshwari, this volume; Quinn & Thakor, 2019), Primal Leadership (Goleman et al., 2013), Principles

centered leadership (Covey, 1992), Quantum leadership (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019), Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Van Dierendonck, 2011), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), Transcendental Leadership (Barney et al., 2015), Transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), Systems Leadership (Senge et al., 2015), Vedic Leadership (Maheshwari & Gupta, 2018), Virtuous Leadership (Gehani & Gehani, this volume; Wang & Hackett, 2020), Yogic leadership (Nandram, 2015), Moral Leadership, values-based leadership, evolutionary leadership, and more.

There are two major common features in these theories. (a) The leadership stance and activity is organized around a morally high aspirational vision, or a mechanism for creating such transformative visions, from values, principles, and purposes, and (b) There is a humble, holistic, and effective servant leader, or a small leadership team, who might model higher moral consciousness, display quantum empathy, and often work as a coach, cheerleader, facilitator, and trust-builder, in helping members of the organization achieve their own goals while aligning them with the organization's goals. These two complementary qualities—ambitious goals of total dynamism and personal humility of deep interconnectedness—may appear to be incompatible capabilities, but they tend to come together in effective leadership.

Quantum Leadership theory (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019) is conceived around the confluence of science and spirituality, by integrating quantum theory, consciousness theory, natural and social sciences, and humanities, toward a 'science of connectedness.' They describe QL as a "learning journey to elevate a person's consciousness as the most powerful level for unlocking his or her leadership potential to drive creativity and innovation" (p. 9). Pavlovich (2020, p. 12) describes the consciousness of connectedness as "a harmonic frequency of the universe where everything is fluid, indeterminate, entangled and interconnected." At the quantum level, there is no separation between self and other, with the relational self being both I and We through entanglement. Merleau-Ponty (1962) described the phenomenology of perception as "a transcendental process for which the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins—as 'an inalienable presence'; and all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world." Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) highlight the need for development of consciousness for beneficial collective action: "What is needed is the ability to hold and evolve our collective attention at the same rate at which the reality

around us keeps changing” (pp. 72–73). Laloux (2014) describes self-organizing systems that evolve over time, in line with higher stages of human consciousness, leading to an integral organization where people are not controlled but feel fulfilled.

CONSCIOUSNESS

The nature of consciousness is one of the most important of the questions facing humanity. Many scientific theories have been proposed to define and explain it. On one end are a set of idealist theories such as pan-psychic and spiritual theories where consciousness is prior to and independent of the human existence (Combs, 2009; Laszlo, 2007; Maharishi, 1963; Nader, 2015). On the other end are materialist theories where consciousness is considered to be an emergent property of the complexity of the substrate of the human nervous system (Dennett, 1993). Some other mid-range neurophysiological theories hypothesize that consciousness exists in the microtubules in neurons of the brain (Hameroff & Penrose, 1996), or as integrated information (Tononi et al., 2016) that however extends beyond humanity and into all life forms.

QUANTUM APPROACH TO CONSCIOUSNESS

The materialistic paradigm posits that everything consists of bodies in space–time operating according to classical physical laws of action and reaction. However, the notion of a fixed observed world is turned upside down most notably by Godel’s incompleteness theorem, Einstein’s relativity theory, and Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle (Bernstein, 2022). Using a famous example of Schrödinger’s, the cat in a box may appear to be simultaneously dead and alive, but one won’t know which it is until one opens the box and makes a conscious observation. The important role of conscious observers is expressed by Bohr’s famous dictum: “In the great drama of existence we ourselves are both actors and spectators” (Bohr, 1958, p. 81). The freedom of conscious agents to subjectively observe what they wish within the causal structure defined by the known physical laws is emphasized by Bohr: “To my mind there is no other alternative than to admit in this field of experience, we are dealing with individual phenomena” (Bohr, 1958, p. 51). The quantum physical perspective is thus in essence about the total interconnectedness of everything in the universe (Pavlovich, 2020). What appear as distinct

possibilities and objects may be manifestations of one underlying unified field of consciousness (Nader, 2021).

More recent theories of consciousness, such as Integrated Information Theory (Tononi et al., 2016), state that information assembled during experiences is integrated into a physical substrate of the brain, leading to consciousness. ‘Orchestration—Objective Reduction’ (Orch-OR) theory of consciousness states: “Consciousness occurs if an appropriately organized system is able to develop and maintain quantum coherent superposition until a specific objective criterion of quantum gravity threshold for space–time separation is reached; the coherent system then self-reduces (non-computably)” (Hameroff & Penrose, 1996, p. 11). Global Workplace theory (Baars, 1997) and Attention schemata theory (Graziano, 2019) conceive a theater of consciousness, where a spotlight of selective attention shines a bright spot that reveals the contents of consciousness as actors move on and off the stage. Predictive Coding theories suggest that the brain has a mechanism of creating relevant subjective experiences from abstracting concepts from non-conscious perceptions (Seth et al., 2012). However, none of these materialist theories of consciousness addresses the ‘hard problem,’ which is how does self-awareness arise from a material brain (Chalmers, 1995).

David Chalmers (1995) made a distinction that has become widely known as the ‘easy’ problem and the ‘hard’ problem of consciousness research. The easy problem involves discovering the neural basis or correlates for mental functions, such as memory and recognition. The hard problem of consciousness (Chalmers, 1995) is about how something material and tangible can produce something so subjective as an experience. There is no scientific consensus as to its solution. The hard problem supports the emergence of consciousness-as-primary paradigm (Nader, 2021). In this approach, there is a continuum of consciousness, from the pure consciousness experienced by the human mind to the infinitesimal consciousness of a dust particle.

Baruš and Mossbridge (2017) describe para-psychological events of eight kinds, such as clairvoyance, mediumship, and remote viewing, which can only be explained by engaging from an interconnected reality or consciousness. Goswami (1995) similarly argues that consciousness is the fundamental basis for creation of matter and mind. Thus, only a field paradigm can potentially solve the ‘hard problem’ of consciousness (Hagelin, 1987; Travis et al., 2005).

VEDIC APPROACH TO CONSCIOUSNESS

The Vedas are an ancient holistic system of knowledge that considered Consciousness to be a transcendent field of pure existence (Maharishi, 1963). The physical universe, with all its material and nonmaterial parts, exists as expressions of pure consciousness, which itself is immaterial. The Vedas are said to codify total eternal knowledge, the constitution of the universe. Three key principles of Vedic philosophy are:

Consciousness is Primary

According to the Vedas, consciousness is all there is (Nader, 2015). Consciousness is beyond qualities and names. Consciousness is the field of infinite correlations, and the field of total knowledge (Maharishi, 1963). The Vedas culminate in the message of *Aham Brahmasmi*, or “I am Totality” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10 of Yajur Veda). In other words, everyone and everything is a manifestation of pure consciousness. Yet, there is tremendous variety in its dynamic manifestation. Pure Consciousness is beyond the brain, beyond individuality, and independent of any personal ‘owner.’ Its primary attribute is that it is conscious of itself. It is the observer, the observed, and the process of observation.

The World is One Family

The Vedic principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (Maha Upanishad VI. 71–73) means the world is one big family. There is no other. Hurting the other is hurting oneself. There is an acceptance of complementarity of opposites. Everyone has an assigned moral duty (*dharma*) according to which one does one’s work dispassionately (*karma*) for the well-being of the whole family.

Development of One’s Consciousness

The structure of the knowledge of the Vedas has an exact correlation with the structure of human physiology (Nader, 1994). Thus, all the knowledge of the universe can potentially be accessed in one’s own physiology from a highly refined perception, which can be developed through self-transcendence.

QUANTUM LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

There are many parallels between the Quantum Field Theory (QFT) and the Field theory of Consciousness (FTC) (Oates, 2019; Routt, 2005) which can form as common principles for Quantum Leadership.

1. *Deep (or Total) Connectedness*. Both QFT and FTC acknowledge instant non-local connectedness at infinite distances. QFT presents it as entanglement of quantum particles, what Einstein called ‘spooky action at a distance.’ FTC approaches everything as the unbounded ocean of pure awareness at the surface of which waves arise and collapse.
2. *Unbounded Power*. Both theories operate from the principle of least action (Feynman, 2005; Maharishi, 1978). QFT defines a solution as reaching the lowest energy states for the whole system. Thus, quantum computing algorithms provide solutions to complex problems with a whole system of constraints in orders of magnitude less time to solve than traditional computers (Routt, 2005). FTC implies that nature supports subtle impulses from the deepest level of integrated existence that can align diverse forces at the surface level, like moving the world with an Archimedean lever (Maharishi, 1978).
3. *Probabilistic manifestation of reality*. Both theories include the impact of the observer on the phenomenon being observed. Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle in QFT describes the inherent probabilistic nature of space–time measurements such as location and speed. FTC states that the outcome of observing the self depends upon the state of consciousness, as knowledge is different in different states of consciousness (Nader, 1994).
4. *Extreme Environment*. QFT operates at extremely low near-zero temperature where individual atoms can display coherence. FTC creates coherence at higher states of consciousness, which require the use of practices of transcendence.

Tsao and Laszlo (2019) present complementary and more granular principles of QL (pp. 153–154):

1. The known world is composed of vibrational fields of energy and information.

2. Physical reality is integral and interconnected. Objects and people are linked in systems.
3. Physical processes are organic, are interwoven, and exhibit a high degree of coherence.
4. To be human is to care for others and all life on earth.
5. The purpose of business is to create well-being, prosperity, and flourishing.
6. Well-being and happiness are more important than material success alone.
7. People and organizations are living systems.
8. Humanity is an integral part of the web of life.

A comparison of Transformative and Quantum Leadership theories is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Comparison of moral leadership theories

<i>Model/Attribute</i>	<i>Transformative leadership</i>	<i>Servant leadership</i>	<i>Quantum leadership</i>
What	Great imaginative change-making	Serving others in helping others achieve their goals	Universal goals driven by higher consciousness
Why	Re-imagine a better future for society	Empowerment of people with trust and engagement	Dissolve deep, global problems with purpose and meaning
Who	Creative	Humble	Deeply evolved and self-realized
Where	Across social, economic domains	In organizations	Across social, economic domains
When	Shines in times of crisis, change, and opportunity	Shines in times of fiefdoms and intense materialism	Shines in times of chaos and moral breakdown
How	Championing a better reality and leading the followers	Facilitating meaningful work, getting out of the way, not taking credit	Development of consciousness for a life in alignment with nature
Theorists	Burns (1978), Bass (1998)	Greenleaf (1977)	Tsao and Lazslo (2019), Maheshwari (2021)

HIGHER STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

There are several states of consciousness, from ordinary to higher states (Alexander & Langer, 1990). The three ordinary states of consciousness are: waking, sleeping, and dreaming. (There are also impaired states of consciousness, such as the vegetative state and coma, and altered states of consciousness, such as hallucinating and hypnosis.). In the sleeping state, there are no thoughts, and there is no awareness at all. In the dreaming state, there is awareness of thought, but there is no awareness of the self. In the waking state, there are thoughts and there is awareness of the self. Scientific research has identified a fourth state of consciousness (Travis, 2014; Wallace, 1970), beyond the ordinary states of waking, sleeping, and dreaming. This is a state in which the pure consciousness itself is experienced; This fourth state, called Transcendental Consciousness, can be experienced through direct experience, and is verifiable through its physiological correlates where the body attains deep rest but the mind remains awake and alert (Wallace, 1970). “*Shantam Shivam Advaitam chaturtham manayante; sa atma; sa vigyeya*” (Mandukya Upanishad: verse 7). Or that “the non-dual Absolute is pure peace and is called the fourth (state of consciousness); it is the Self and is worth knowing.” Maharishi (1978, p. 383) states that “the transcendent is the absolute, non-changing, non-variable, eternal, infinite, unboundedness of life—which is the inner core of everyone’s life.”

There are further higher states of consciousness beyond the fourth state, where pure consciousness is accessible even during ordinary waking, dreaming, and sleeping states. In the state of Cosmic Consciousness, there is awareness of the transcendent even in waking state of consciousness (Alexander & Langer, 1990). With continued practice of transcendence, one naturally develops a finer ability of direct perception of the ultimate reality, which continues to grow until one reaches the ultimate, non-dual, state of consciousness, called Unity Consciousness (Sands, 2013). In this state, everything is seen as fluctuations within the unified field of the Self, or as Pavlovich (2020) describes, ‘waves of information’ traveling non-locally. There is then no distinction between the Self and the other, even when operating in the relative world. This self-referral field of consciousness is accessible to every human being (Maharishi, 1963; Wilber, 2014). The seven states of consciousness are summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Seven states of consciousness

<i>State of consciousness</i>	<i>Self-awareness</i>	<i>Content of experience</i>
Sleep state	None	None
Dream state	None	Illusory
Waking state	Individual ego (lower self)	Perceptions, thoughts, feelings
Transcendental consciousness	Pure consciousness: (higher self)	None
Cosmic consciousness	Pure consciousness: (higher self)	Perceptions, thoughts, feelings
Refined cosmic consciousness	Pure consciousness: (higher self)	Finest relative perception, brought about by most refined development of the heart
Unity consciousness	Pure consciousness: (higher self)	Fluctuations within pure consciousness; “seeing all things in terms of the self”

TRANSCENDENCE

Due to its already highly orderly structure, human physiology has an intrinsic ability to experience pure consciousness and thereby be directly exposed to the grand field of pure consciousness (Nader, 1994). This means that the human structure (the complexity and orderliness of the human anatomy, physiology, mind, and intellect) is advanced to such a high degree that it can fathom the highest level of consciousness. By transcending limiting experiences, the mind can directly experience pure consciousness. Human awareness can transcend the limitations of specific thoughts and experience wholeness. The human mind can directly experience pure consciousness by diving within to experience the ultimate Self, pure consciousness.

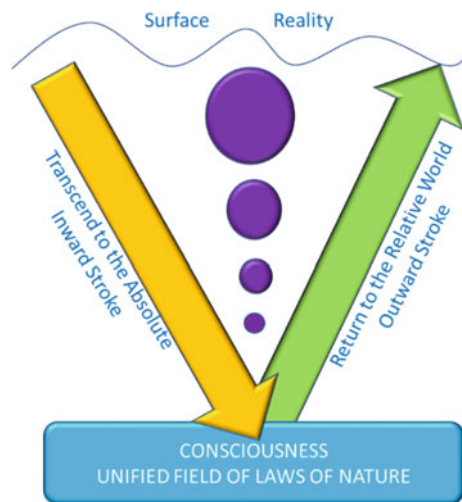
V-THEORY OF TRANSCENDENCE

Transcendence can be defined as a way of going beyond surface reality and accessing pure consciousness. Transcendence happens when Consciousness is left free to experience itself (Maharishi, 1963). By direct unmediated experience one can *realize* the true self as beyond time and form, and

beyond thoughts and objects. Transcendence “bends the world of observation back on ourselves in order to truly know ourselves” (Scharmer, 2009, p. 209). Transcendence can lead to a direct perception of oneself as beyond space, time, form, function, thoughts, and objects. Transcending thought is seen as infinitely more powerful than thought. Comparable to and building upon the U-theory of managing from emergence (Scharmer, 2009), the V-theory of transcendence (Maheshwari, 2021) is a relatively simple two-step model that helps connect the surface reality of discrete elements with the absolute oneness of pure consciousness (Fig. 3.1).

In this perspective, one normally lives in a surface-level reality of waking consciousness. Using a suitable contemplative practice, technique, or meditation, one can transcend to pure consciousness at the bottom of the V. That is called the inward stroke. During transcending, thoughts and the awareness of those thoughts, just dissolve away until they disappear completely. After one stays at that level of consciousness for a certain duration and takes in pure order and coherence, one suitably returns to the surface-level reality. That is called the outward stroke. One may experience greater alertness, energy, clarity, enthusiasm, and creativity upon returning to the surface reality or waking mode (So & Orme-Johnson, 2001).

Fig. 3.1 V-theory: A 2-step model of transcendence



V-theory of transcendence can potentially be accessed through a large number of contemplative and meditation techniques (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019), each one of which may have their own features and benefits. Many powerful meditation techniques have emerged from the Vedic, Buddhist, and Zen traditions. Travis and Shear (2010) surveyed research on these meditation techniques and categorized them into three basic approaches: focused attention, open monitoring, and self-transcending. All of them have the potential of changing one's mode of thinking (Travis & Shear, 2010).

Transcendental Meditation

Transcendental Meditation™ (TM) technique is a simple mantra-based Vedic meditation technique. The TM technique offers an easy, profound, and effective way to naturally align the nervous system, mind, and awareness is the direct experience of pure consciousness. path to enable this experience (Travis & Shear, 2010). By facilitating the direct experience of pure consciousness, TM practice provides a shortcut to expanding awareness spontaneously in the direction of higher consciousness. TM accomplishes this in a natural, effortless way while it simultaneously and spontaneously provides the body with deep rest to remove stress. Research on the use of TM (Orme-Johnson, this volume; Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018; So & Orme-Johnson, 2001) has shown significant benefits for the individual, organizations, and society.

The TM technique has also been shown to be effective and fulfilling in aligning the structures and functions of the physiology with perfect orderliness, as it removes stress and distortions of perceptions, for a greater feeling of wellness. TM is also shown to lead to significant reduction in anxiety (Orme-Johnson & Barnes, 2014). “The mechanism of the effects of TM practice appears to be through acute and longitudinal reductions in sympathetic tone and reactivity to stress” (Barnes & Orme-Johnson, 2012, p. 237). TM practice has been shown to contribute to employee health, happiness, creativity, problem-solving ability, and brain functioning (Harung et al., 2009; Travis & Arenander, 2006; Travis et al., 2009). Regular practice of the TM technique also results in significant improvements in cardiovascular health, with reduced hypertension and improved cardiovascular functioning (Schneider et al., 2012).

Filmmaker Lynch (2006) describes the experience of transcendence as diving into a field of unbounded creativity. He calls this “real creativity,”

which with practice can more easily find solutions to problems. The benefits of higher consciousness also have a multiplier effect, when large numbers of people transcend together. When individual consciousness evolves in phase with others, it creates coherence in collective consciousness, leading to peace and flourishing in nations and societies (Dillbeck & Cavanaugh, 2017; Hatchard & Cavanaugh, 2017; Orme-Johnson & Fergusson 2018; Orme-Johnson, this volume). Development of consciousness through locating in consciousness-based physical structures can lead to greater creativity and well-being for the workforce (Maheshwari & Werd, 2019; Maheshwari et al., 2022).

Other Modes of Transcendence

Other Vedic meditation techniques such as *Yoga Nidra* (Ozdemir & Saritas, 2019) and *Sahaj Yoga* (Chung et al., 2012) have also shown psycho-physiological benefits. The Buddhist technique of *Vipassana* (Adhikari, 2012) and Zen technique of *Qigong* (Faber et al., 2012) are among other prominent techniques for transcendence. Khari and Sinha (2020) developed a Transcendence-at-workplace scale and found it to have three distinct dimensions: Work as service, Self-connectedness, and Sense of We-ness. Thus transcendence at work can be tracked and potentially increased through experimentation. Transcendence through a consciousness-development-oriented workplace can enhance the self-connectedness and well-being of the self at work (Maheshwari et al., 2022). Transcendence can also help with reflecting upon one's dialogues, inner and outer, to examine which of one's expectations and mental models may have been useful in the past, but may be counterproductive for the future (Combs, 2009).

YOGA SUTRAS FOR TRANSCENDENCE

Yoga means union. *Sutras* means principles. The Vedas provide many ways to achieve *Yoga*, such as through focusing on gaining knowledge, performing action, or practicing devotion. Maharishi Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* (YS) is an ancient and popular scripture that provides an integrated range of techniques for transcendence and supernormal powers (Maheshwari & Werd, 2019; Radin, 2013; Shearer, 2020; Tigunait, 2014). YS defined yoga thus: *Yogas Chitta Vritti Nirodha* (YS, 1:2). That is, *Yoga* is defined as the cessation of the proclivities of the mind.

Maharishi (1963) describes Consciousness as being like the sun whose reflection may be sharp or dull depending upon the quality of the water in a container. When the water in the container is still, then the sun is seen in its full glory. That is union. The process of losing the separateness and gaining the status of the omnipresent is the practice of *yoga* (Maharishi, 1969). The Bhagavad Gita (2:48) says: *Yogasthah Kuru Karmani*. “Established in Being, perform action.” Maharishi states that *yoga* achieves maturity when this transcendental consciousness, or divine Being, has gained ground in the mind to such an extent that, in whatever state the mind finds itself, whether waking or sleeping, it remains established in the state of Being (Sands, 2013).

Yoga Sutras is a pithy document of 196 *sutras* or verses, organized in 4 chapters. *Samadhi Pada* is the first chapter, comprised of 51 *sutras* about enlightenment or transcendence. *Sadhana Pada* is the second chapter, comprised of 56 *sutras* about the steps to reach a yogic state—a process known as the eight limbs of *Yoga* (*Ashtanga yoga*). *Vibhuti Pada* is the third chapter, comprised of 55 *sutras* about the benefits of the *yogic* state, called *yogic* powers or ‘supernatural powers.’ *Kaivalya Pada* is the fourth chapter, comprised of 34 *sutras* about the final liberation from rebirth and suffering, through the achievement of Unity Consciousness, the highest state of consciousness.

Yoga Sutras prescribe an eight-limbed process for *Yoga* in a single phrase: *Yama-niyama-asana-pranayama-pratyahara-dharana-dhyana-samadhayo-ashtava-angani* (YS: 2:29).

1. *Yamas* are the code of external conduct. It is the administrator that helps keep all eight limbs together. There are five *yamas*: *Satya* (truth), *Ahimsa* (nonviolence), *Asteya* (non-attachment), *Brahmacharya* (strong will), and *Aparigraha* (non-possession). These five *yamas* structure the unity of natural laws to govern.
2. *Niyamas* are the code of internal conduct through which the administrator leads. There are five *niyamas*: *Shauch* (cleanliness or purity), *Santosha* (contentment or satisfaction), *Tapas* (purification), *Swadhyaya* (self learning), and *Ishwarpranidhan* (bringing god into one’s awareness).
3. *Asanas* are physical postures that form the basis for stability at the level of the body.
4. *Pranayama* is activity or dynamism at the level of the breath.

5. *Pratyahara* is the process of withdrawing the senses and digesting experiences.
6. *Dharana* means to hold or maintain a certain thought or state of Being.
7. *Dhyana* is the silent field in which all holding and sustaining of the mind takes place. This is best translated as meditation.
8. *Samadhi* is total stillness of mind, where all is Being. This is the state of *sat-chit-ananda*, or bliss consciousness.

Yama and *niyama* are sets of behavioral principles for establishing harmony in the field of experience. The next two limbs, *asanas* and *pranayama*, bring harmony in the different limbs of the body, and between the different principles of the breath. These first four limbs are called *Bahirang yoga*, or external yoga. *Dharana* brings coordination between the senses and the mind, so the sense impressions do not bind the mind. *Dhyana* brings coordination between the mind and *Samadhi*, which is 7th state of *Yoga*, or the transcendental state of Being. The last three limbs are called *Antarang yoga* or internal yoga. *Pratyahara* can be included in both the categories, as it brings coordination between the inner senses and the outer body.

It is important to emphasize that the eight limbs of *Yoga* are interconnected and grow simultaneously (Krishnan, 2001; Tigonait, 2014); these are not eight steps that need to be followed sequentially like a ladder. They are like eight legs of a table, and pulling any one leg can pull the entire table. Maharishi says you can't have *samadhi* without having some accomplishment in *yama* and *niyama* and you can't totally accomplish *yama* and *niyama* without some support from *samadhi*. In fact, the last limb of YS, *samadhi*, is identical to the first *yama*, or Truth. That is, Truth is a state of *samadhi* from where only truth emerges in thought, speech, and action. Thus, the limbs of YS are like the many legs of a chair; pulling the chair by any of its legs moves the whole chair. However, pulling different legs of the chair may be more convenient in moving the chair in different ways. Similarly, different limbs of YS help different fields of human life. Every limb enlivens a different field of life. An integrated view of *Ashtanga Yoga* is shown in Fig. 3.2.

Extant research on YS has shown that regular practice of specific *pranayama* activities brings relief from stress and chronic diseases such as hypertension and obesity (Taneja, 2014). Yogalakshmi and Latha (2015) reported that regular practice of select yoga *asanas* and *pranayama*

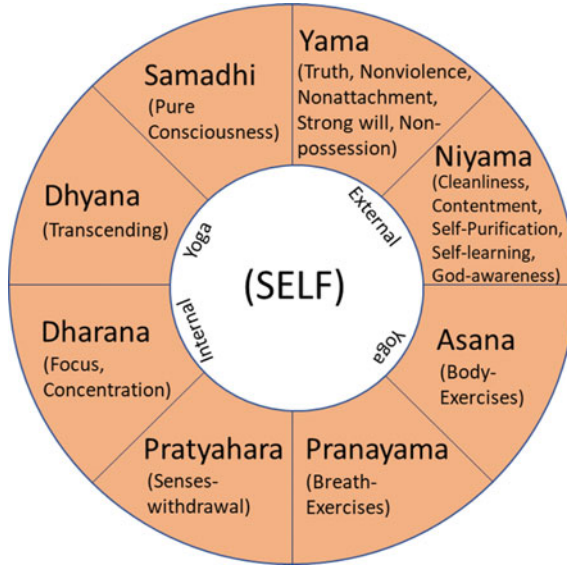


Fig. 3.2 *Ashtanga* (eight limbs) of Yoga

led to statistically significant improvement of creativity in entrepreneurs. Pavlovich and Corner (2014) describe the journey of an entrepreneur who was a regular practitioner of YS in creating a small *yoga* clothing business, using YS to be part of creating a more ethical form of business.

QUANTUM LEADERSHIP CASE STUDIES

We present three exceptional contemporary quantum leadership case studies that deployed techniques from *Yoga Sutras*. These cases were chosen based on several criteria. First, they should have had an unusually high impact without holding a public or political office, having positively impacted the lives of hundreds of millions of people. They should be original leaders and not have any follower or inheritance relationship among themselves. Second, they should have been active within the last 100 years, so there will be adequate literature available on them. Within that period, they should have operated in different eras and not be overlapped in their time frames. Third, *yoga sutras* should be a key contributor

to their *modus operandi*, even though they may have used other techniques too. The three chosen QL cases along with their YS-based tools are Mahatma Gandhi from the first half of the twentieth century (using *nonviolence* or *Satya* from *Yama-Niyama*), Maharishi Mahesh Yogi from the second half of the twentieth century (creating Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi from *Dharana-Dhyana-Samadhi*), and Swami Ramdev from the twenty-first century (creating easy and effective health routines from *Asana-Pranayama*). We will describe key highlights of their lives and work, and the usage of YS in their entanglement with their millions of followers.

Mahatma Gandhi

Albert Einstein said at Mahatma Gandhi's funeral: "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."²

In spite of his unimpressive features, his loin-cloth, and bare body, there was a royalty and kingliness in Gandhi which compelled a willing obeisance from others (Nair, 1994). When asked how he felt upon liberating India, Gandhi humbly said he was simply trying to liberate himself, with India becoming the vehicle (Rimanoczy, 2013). His autobiography was titled '*The Story of my Experiments with Truth*' (Gandhi, 1935).

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in 1869 to an upper-middle-class spiritual family in the western region of India. He went to London to train as a barrister (attorney). Then he went to Johannesburg and became the first non-white lawyer in South Africa. He spotted an opportunity in fighting the cause of the native people against British colonial oppression (Gandhi, 1935). About his work in South Africa, "the one phenomenon which distinctly stands out in the name of Mahatma Gandhi is the weapon of *satyagraha*" or stubborn insistence on truth (Kallideen, 2013, p. 22). He won significant legal rights for the colored people during his 20 years' stay in South Africa. He returned to India in 1915 and jumped into the freedom movement against the British Empire. He assiduously followed the moral principles and the practice of *satyagraha* to spiritually uplift the

² Statement on the occasion of Gandhi's 70th birthday (1939) Einstein archive 32-601, published in *Out of My Later Years* (1950).

Indian population and led them to freedom from colonial oppression in 1947.

Gandhi's Dandi Salt March in 1930 was a striking example of QL in action. He took on the injustice of colonial rule by focusing on a small but pervasive problem: the unjust British law that forbade Indians from making and selling their own salt. The British tried to ignore him. Gandhi carried his own meager food rations, so he would not have to depend upon the poor villagers on the way. He practiced truth and nonviolence during the Salt March (Guha, 2018). Eventually, sixty thousand Indians followed him to the oceanside where they defiantly made their own salt. The images of dignified men and women being brutally clubbed by British soldiers circulated around the globe and brought sharp condemnation on British colonialism. The British empire was hobbled and could not able to recover from that blow and soon left India.³

Gandhi was the quintessential *quantum leader* who would make decisions from a state of perfect purity of consciousness, and with a radically inclusive view of humanity (Gehani & Maheshwari, 2020; Maheshwari & Gehani, this volume). He was highly creative and organized many boycotts against unjust laws. Gandhi published articles in his newspaper that propagated his views and generated enough money for his daily expenses. He reinvigorated the simple spinning wheel as an economic symbol of self-reliance. He tested the commitment and consciousness of the audience through frequent moments of contemplation and even when he was talking to the people or when spinning cotton. He would transcend in the middle of public meetings, and sense the energy and commitment of the people gathered there.

His main technique, *satyagraha*, was an active technique of pursuit of *satya* (truth) with *ahimsa* (nonviolence). Lauricella (2013) documents how all the *yamas* and *niyamas* could also be found in Gandhi's practices. He practiced *asteya*, or non-possession. As a child he stole some money from his father's shirt, and was caught, and then vowed never to steal. *Brahmacharya*, or a strong-willed life of celibacy, was the mainstay of the second half of his life, after his four sons were born. Finally, he followed the principle of *aparigraha*, or non-possession.

All the *niyamas* also applied to Gandhi's life. He would clean toilets whether in jails or at public events, wherever he saw stinking toilets.

³ Gandhi the movie, 1983, based upon true events.

Gandhi would practice cleanliness in thought too; no job was too low, even when cleaning was reserved for the lower castes. As for *santosha*, or contentment, Gandhi famously said there is enough in the world for everyone's need but not enough for everyone's greed. He would fast to sacrifice pleasure of food, for self-purification. He also called for prayer and fasting for self-purification as an alternative to striking against the government. He believed in the dignity of hard work. He would work very hard—such that he needed three secretaries. Gandhi was always practicing self-study, or *swadhyaya*, by reading books. Gandhi would always seek out the most brilliant minds to learn from them. Gandhi was always experimenting and willing to learn from other religions and cultures. He famously said, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' As for *ishwarapranidhana*, Gandhi held prayer meetings in the morning and the evening every day.

In summary, Mahatma Gandhi utilized all the *yamas* and *niyamas* from *Yoga Sutras* to invent *satyagraha*, a path to fight injustice from higher morality and without resorting to violence. His great insight was that nonviolence has a greater moral power than violence. Leading by example, he was able to raise the consciousness of Indian people, and create more courage and empathy for the fellow human beings, to make them ready to be their own masters. His main tool of peaceful pursuit of truth through nonviolent non-cooperation was used later by other leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela to win freedom for their peoples.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Maharishi (1963) was widely regarded as the foremost Vedic scientist in the field of consciousness. Known for his spontaneous giggle, he was famous as the white-robed guru of Beatles and other celebrities. His Transcendental Meditation technique brought relief and joy to millions of people around the world (Rosenthal, 2009). He was born in about 1918, and upon completing his education in physics, he became a formal disciple of the Shankaracharya, the highest spiritual seat of Vedic tradition in India, in the foothills of the Himalayas. After his guru passed away, he left the Himalayas in about 1955, and gave lectures on what he had learned in the Himalayas. That led him to start a Spiritual Regeneration Movement to awaken the people to the value of their true nature as pure consciousness.

Maharishi's key insight was that contemplation and meditation practices based on *Yoga Sutras* can enliven the deep, peaceful quality within oneself, which can also lead to spontaneous freedom from stress, and feeling lightness and joy. Maharishi focused on in the inner yoga, or *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* aspects of YS, in creating Transcendental Meditation as a mantra-based meditation technique (Rosenthal, 2009). Maharishi used additional instructions from YS to create more advanced techniques, called the TM-Sidhis, to accelerate the evolution to self-realization. Maharishi would go on to develop *Maharishi Ayurveda*, Maharishi Vastu (Maheshwari et al., 2022), and other technologies of consciousness. Like Gandhi, Maharishi also worked tirelessly, and he also needed three secretaries to support him through the 24-hour cycle. In 2003, Maharishi declared the dawn of an Age of Enlightenment, where the entire world would become peaceful and joyful using the technologies of TM and TM-Siddhis. Maharishi's mission was unbounded by geography and unconstrained by resources.

In keeping with the scientific temper of the era, he insisted on doing scientific research on the use of these technologies, which has led to a corpus of over 700 published studies on his technologies of consciousness. Regular practice of TM has been shown to help with reduction in stress and anxiety, increase in brain integration, improvement in cardiac health, and reduction in negativity in society (Chandler et al., 2005; Nidich et al., 2018; Schneider et al., 1995; Wallace, 1970). Norlyk Herriott et al. (2009) reported that long-term practice of the TM and TM-Sidhi program significantly impacted their nature of work.

Maharishi's work went far beyond helping individuals, to create coherence and peace for the whole world. *Tat Sannidhau Vaira Tyagah* (YS, 2:35) means: "In the vicinity of Yoga (or unity) negative tendencies are eliminated." This led to Maharishi's most profound and impactful discovery, of the 'Super Radiance effect.' When a group of people meditate together, not only do they develop coherence individually, but their collective coherence also rises exponentially (Orme-Johnson, this volume; Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018). Maharishi organized World Peace Assemblies to lower the 'mental temperature' in the political hotspots in the world and bring calmness. No other technology is known to have produced such a strong non-local action at a distance, which is however consistent with Consciousness and Quantum and Field theories. Scientific research has conclusively proven this Super Radiance effect (Orme-Johnson, this volume; Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018). Figure 3.3

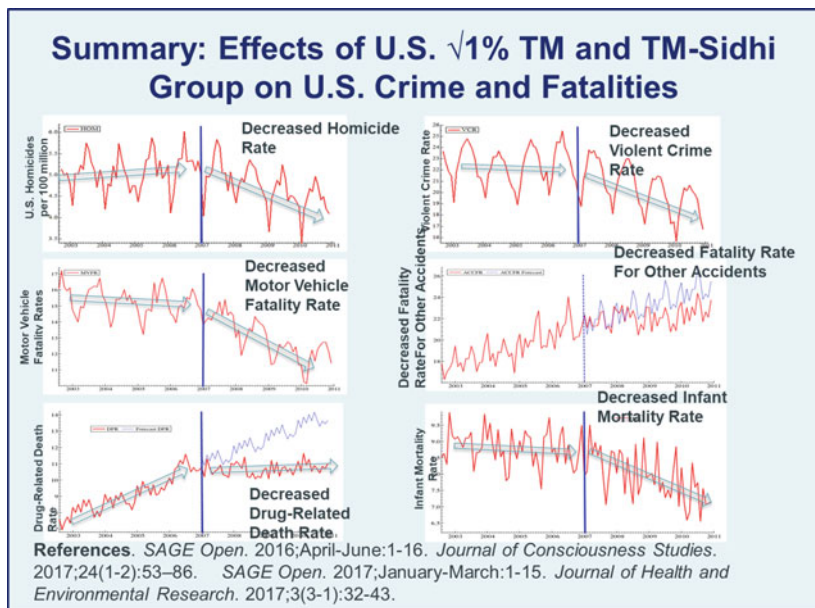


Fig. 3.3 Super radiance effect: Coherent collective consciousness improves quality of life

shows the results from a recent multi-year prospective super-radiance experiment in the USA (Dillbeck & Cavanaugh, 2017). This study shows that crime, drugs, and mortality rates dropped when the meditating group size approached two thousand, the square-root of 1% of the US population. To summarize, Maharishi was a quantum leader who recovered the lost ancient Vedic knowledge of transcendence and brought it to bear on society's need for freedom from turbulence and anxiety, and to deliver joy and fulfillment in a practical and effortless way.

Swami Ramdev

Swami Ramdev is among the most recognized contemporary leaders in contemporary India. This saffron-clad *yoga* guru expanded his sphere of activities to include Ayurveda, organic farming, yogic education, research, and more. Born in 1965 in a poor family, he successfully healed himself

from paralysis through practice of *yoga asanas* and *pranayama* (Deka, 2017). That established his faith in *Yoga Sutras*. He studied in Vedic spiritual schools and then spent many years in the Himalayas, meditating, studying herbs, and practicing *yoga*. He felt that the purpose of a self-realized seer was not to sit idle, but to accomplish bigger tasks for the greater good. Swami Ramdev found his power in *Yoga Sutras*. He started teaching a simple thirty-minute morning *yoga asanas* routine for free, to help his friends and neighbors regain health. His *yoga routines* included *pranayama* (breathing exercises) coupled with physical *asanas*. The effectiveness of his methods in treating several chronic illnesses slowly won him converts to the cause of health through *yoga*. He held *yoga* camps for millions of people all over India. He also delivered his *yoga* education through a television channel. He claims to have personally instructed over 30 million followers in physical *yoga* camps and brought health and joy to over 1 billion followers through his television shows (Deka, 2017).

Swami Ramdev brings tireless passion to everything he does. His work extends beyond *asanas* and *pranayama* to the pursuit of a healthy world through *Ayurveda* and providing safe and healthy consumer products at a low price (Khalikova, 2017). He created a company called Patanjali Ayurveda to provide herbal supplements for health and vitality. With innovative low-cost marketing and low prices, within less than a decade of founding his company had revenue of billions of dollars. Patanjali Ayurveda has become the #1 trusted brand in the consumer goods category and one of the most trusted brands in India overall. He invests in farmers to support organic farming of herbs and other produce. As an ascetic, he does not personally own any part of the company he drives, and whose modest profits are ploughed back for its continued growth.

Ramdev is a quantum leader of this era who has already brought greater wholeness, oneness, and health to hundreds of millions in India and globally. He did so by increasing the awareness of physical practices of *asana* and *pranayama* and offering healthy foods and *Ayurvedic* medicines. He also uplifts national spirit and independence by encouraging people to support Indian businesses. He continues to create new projects with ever-larger goals to achieve his mission of a healthy and self-sufficient world.

Table 3.3 *Yoga Sutras* limbs and quantum leadership relationships

<i>Limbs of Yoga Sutras</i>	<i>Quantum leadership</i>	<i>Tools created for social change</i>
1. Yama 2. Niyama	Mahatma Gandhi	<i>Satyagraha</i> and <i>nonviolence</i> (civil disobedience)
3. Asana 4. Pranayama	Swami Ramdev	<i>Asana</i> and <i>Pranayama</i> routines for specific health benefits
5. Pratyahara	All three (Gandhi, Maharishi, Ramdev)	Educational practices for focus and retention
6. Dharana 7. Dhyana 8. Samadhi	Maharishi Mahesh Yogi	Transcendental <i>Meditation</i> and TM-Siddhi techniques

DISCUSSION

Quantum leaders are singular figures who operate at a global scale with simple principles and practices. This chapter presented three quantum leaders. It also highlighted that *Yoga Sutras* is an integrated system with eight limbs like the legs of a chair, that can inspire a number of tools and practices for transcendence by focusing on different limbs. Gandhi invented powerful new tools such as *satyagraha* (nonviolent non-cooperation) based on the behavioral principles of *Yamas* and *Niyamas*, (1st and 2nd limbs of *YS*). Maharishi invented TM and TM-Siddhis from *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* (6th, 7th, and 8th limbs). Ramdev created physical and mental health routines through *Asanas* and *Pranayama* (3rd and 4th limbs). All three Quantum Leaders additionally employed the 5th limb of *Pratyahara*. A summary of QL and their tools for social action is shown in Table 3.3.

One can extract four principles of QL from the case studies:

1. Deep Connectedness: The Quantum Leader in each of the three cases is a *self-realized person*, who has achieved a higher state of consciousness. They are self-sufficient and have a strong will to succeed in achieving their goals.

2. Unbounded Aspirations: The Quantum Leader sets *universal goals* for development of all human beings, in tune with their highly developed consciousness. They set *infinity-sized goals*, unbounded by any physical or resource constraints.
3. Probabilistic Paths: The Quantum Leader is prolific in *creative experimenting* with ideas. They perceive the needs of the people in their own consciousness and cognize the tools to meet those appropriately.
4. Extreme Engagement: Quantum Leaders are *fearless*, and undeterred by temporary setbacks or any sense of personal loss. They minimize the profit motive, if any, only to the extent of reinvesting in the growth of the mission.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Looking ahead, one can explore how QL can be realized using the four principles, in dealing with the grand challenges facing the world (George et al., 2016). If social inequality can be framed as colonization of vast numbers of poor people by a few, then Gandhi's generative and empowering method of *satyagraha* can be utilized. Practices of Super Radiance or global transcendence through group meditation could be used to create coherence and dissolve negative sentiments. If climate change and global warming could be framed as a dereliction of duty by the older generation to protect the planet for the younger generation, then again the methods of *satyagraha* could be utilized. Swedish teenage activist Greta Thurnberg is a contemporary example of *satyagraha*, who has mobilized youth around the world using a basic truth-seeking question through nonviolence: *why don't world leaders act with urgency in response to established scientific consensus on the existential threat from climate change?* By utilizing the communication techniques of social media, Greta has been able to provide glimpses of solutions to these problems. If biodiversity extinction could be framed as the colonization of the environment by human beings to the disadvantage of all other life forms, including plants and animals, then who will do the *satyagraha*? New tools from YS and other perennial knowledge could be invented to develop naturally inclusive solutions from the principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. If nuclear proliferation can be framed as a fear-based action of developing strong weapons for self-defense, then Maharishi's technologies of Super Radiance could be deployed to lower the 'mental temperature'

of the populations so that the national leadership can walk back from the brink. Similarly, if majoritarian, nationalist, and tribalist movements are framed as fear-based responses, then those fears too could be dissolved through meditation-based Super Radiance initiatives. If the abortions of the girl child, and the prevalent incidents of rape and incest can be framed as sexism and exploitation, then the technologies of *satyagraha* and peaceful non-cooperation could work. Regular practice of TM and other *yoga* techniques under the rubric of V-theory can potentially tame the devastating coronavirus pandemic through epigenetics, by allowing the switching of genes on and off, to suit the adaptive needs of the human body.

This chapter demonstrated the breadth of powerful tools from *Yoga Sutras* to create deeply connected or quantum leadership. There are limitations which can be addressed in future research. First, only three case studies of quantum leadership were considered. More quantum leaders could be evaluated to extend the principles developed in this paper. Textual analysis of leaders' utterances could be done to identify themes underlying QL. Other contemplative techniques could be considered and evaluated as techniques for QL. The relative impact of contemplative tools on QL could also be compared using quantifiable social and financial benefits.

CONCLUSION

Quantum leadership emanates from a perception of extreme connectedness and non-local action. V-theory of transcendence provides many techniques for developing that connectedness, by immersing into the field of consciousness. The principles and practices of *Yoga Sutras* provide various mechanisms to reach pure unbounded consciousness in the context of the V-theory. The three case studies showed how Yoga Sutras-based tools can create positive large-scale social change. As the number of *quantum leaders* grows, they could collectively engage in dynamic movements and organizations that may effectively help tackle grand management challenges. Ideally, all life on earth could be guided by the timeless principles of unbounded Consciousness for a healthy and peaceful world.

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CHAPTER 4

Gandhi's Consciousness-Based Leadership: Principles of Truth, Non-Violence, and Love for All

Anil K. Maheshwari  and *R. Ray Gehani*

INTRODUCTION

“Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.” The Nobel-prize-winning scientist Albert Einstein declared on Gandhi's martyrdom (1948).

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If there existed one man who symbolizes the oneness of humanity, it was Mahatma Gandhi, a global leader from India (Fischer, 1951). Gandhi was a charismatic but introverted leader who was creative in operating from the highest universal values to creating powerful tools of mass movement such as *satyagraha* and non-violent non-cooperation (Bligh & Robinson, 2010; Borman, 1986; Chenoweth, 2021). His life inspired other leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela to great success. Millions of people around the world continue to gain spiritual sustenance from his life's work. Gandhi represents an exemplary illustration of values-based leadership, transformative vision, and leading by example through living ethically (Dhiman, 2015; Gehani & Maheshwari, 2020; Nair, 1994). Gandhi's thoughts and ideas about specific political strategies in specific contexts flowed from an integrated system of key values (Bilgrami, 2003). This chapter unfolds Gandhian leadership from values and key actions, derived from his own autobiography and other sources (Gandhi, 1935/1983). The first part of this chapter focuses on three main values of truth, non-violence, and love for all, that Gandhi received from his parents (Gehani, 2019), *Yoga Sutras* (Maheshwari, 2022) and *Bhagavad Gita* (Gandhi, 2010). The second part of the chapter focuses on his creative action choices emanating from the values. The third part of the chapter suggests Gandhian principles for guiding today's leaders and managers.

On the last page of his autobiography (Gandhi, 1935/1983), he sums up his message thus:

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics...those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.... identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of Ahimsa must remain an empty dream; God can never be realized by one who is not pure at heart. (p. 454)

THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The world today is riven by religious, economic, and many other differences. The current pandemic further exacerbated the divisions and uncertainty beyond that which has been experienced before. The pandemic also helped bring much needed focus on the marginalized sections and regions in society. In living through the current pandemic, human beings strive to perform their duties so that they can emerge mentally and emotionally unscathed from the epidemic. Healing the world will require raising the level of consciousness of leadership (Maheshwari, 2021). There is increasing evidence that human beings and business organizations are choosing to become more purposeful and purpose-driven (Nader & Maheshwari, 2022; Quinn & Thakor, 2019). Gandhi symbolized being steadfast in a higher purpose, along with an empathizing and compassion quality, a visionary and creative quality, and a moral and love quality. Gandhi led by understanding the diversity of the people of India in all dimensions—spiritual, cultural, and economic. He then sought to live like the most marginalized of people and discover what might they need. By developing himself alongside the people he led, he modeled the change he wished to see in this world.

Gandhi's values and deep compassion helped him visualize the qualities of an independent Indian nation. Guha (2018) says that Gandhi set four challenges, or goals: free India from British occupation, end untouchability, improve relations between cultures and religions, and to make India into a self-reliant nation—economically and socially. Gandhi mobilized and organized around achieving these four goals of freedom, inclusion, harmony, and empowerment.

GANDHI'S VALUES

Gandhi gained his values and wisdom early in his childhood from his parents, whom he loved and respected very much. These values were supported by the *Yamas* and *Niyamas* from the scripture of *Yoga Sutras*. Finally, he received a heartfelt guidance from the scripture of *Bhagavad Gita*, that he called his spiritual mother. His acquisition of key values is covered next.

VALUES FROM HIS PARENTS

How did Mohandas Gandhi develop his deep-rooted values during his formative childhood years in Rajkot? The second author grew up during his early childhood less than 3 miles from Gandhi's residence. We ask what values transformed a teenage Mohandas into a Mahatma (Great Spirit), a shining beacon for the whole world, who devoted six decades of his life for the freedom and liberation of hundreds of millions of impoverished people in South Africa, India, and other countries? What led Gandhi to live a life of simplicity, frugality, and equality and be a vibrant role model for more than a billion people in distant parts of the world for more than a century?

In Rajkot, from an early age Gandhi developed a deep passionate affiliation for three foundational key values: (1) non-violence, (2) truth, and (3) and equality with love for all. He relied on these foundational values heavily throughout the rest of his life. These three values are also Gandhi's most significant contributions to modern spirituality and spiritual consciousness.

Non-violence or Ahimsa

Mohandas Gandhi was inspired by non-violence from an early age in Rajkot from his devout mother Putli Bai. She was a follower of the Jain faith which is deeply rooted in avoiding any intentional and unintentional non-violence to all humans and other sentient species. The Jains try hard to minimize any harm they may cause to not only the fellow humans but also to any species with less senses than humans. Many Jains walk bare feet so that they do not crush bugs inadvertently while walking with leather shoes or slippers. Jains cover their mouths so that airborne insects do not enter their mouths and die. They even avoid eating root vegetables such as potatoes, beet, and radish as eating these results in killing these plants. Thus, from his early childhood in Rajkot Mahatma Gandhi loved all life forms, and also became a strict vegetarian like his devout mother.

Truth (or Satya)

Mohandas Gandhi was moved by his close encounter with Truth via his father Karamchand Gandhi, who was the prime minister of the princely state of Rajkot (Gandhi, 1983). Once Mohandas was tempted to enjoin

his brother in stealing a part of gold from the arm amulet of his brother. After a few days of the theft incident Mohandas felt very guilty and wrote a letter of truthful apology to his father. Mohandas expected and was prepared to receive verbal and physical punishment from his strict and law-abiding and law-enforcing father. Instead, his father quietly cried with tears trickling down his cheeks realizing what Mohandas had done and not yet learned. This had a moving transformational impact on young Mohandas. On another occasion, Mohandas Gandhi's school class was being inspected by their regional English educational inspector. To check the quality of their teachers' instructions, Gandhi and his other classmates were given an English spelling test. Gandhi's English teacher noted that Gandhi was spelling a word wrong, and the teacher prodded Gandhi with his foot to copy from his neighbor so that the entire class would achieve a perfect performance score. Gandhi, instead, stuck to his truth, refused to copy and be a party to a lie, which earned him much harsh criticism from his teacher later.

Equality or Love for All

Mohandas Gandhi was moved by the love and affection he received from his nanny and other servants of lower caste in his big lavish household in Rajkot. Gandhi was very shy and timid when he was a young child. He was short, skinny, and light weight. As a result, he was acutely afraid to be bullied by his fellow bigger classmates, and he feared going into a dark room. To alleviate his fears, Mohandas's nanny taught Gandhi to chant Ram Mantra for strength whenever he encountered any fearful situation. Gandhi followed this practice throughout his life even when he confronted the most oppressive tyrants of the world's mightiest British Colonial Empire where the sun never set. The young Gandhi often questioned his elders on why India had traditionally discriminated against lower caste Hindu Indians and others. From a young age he took a vow to end such caste, class, and religion-based discriminations and love all others equally.

VALUES FROM YOGA SUTRAS

Gandhi was a lofty self-referral leader *par excellence*. Gandhi was primarily trying to liberate himself from the limitations of a physical existence through the *yogic* technique of Divine Union.

Yoga is defined as the cessation of the activities of the mind (YS: 1:2). How does one achieve this state of inner peace or perfect union? The path is through the eight limbs of *Yoga Sutras*. The eight limbs are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, and *Samadhi*. These limbs range from the most observable and tangible level of social behaviors (*Yama*) to being the subtlest limb of establishment in the nondual consciousness (*Samadhi*). These limbs are not sequential steps, as one can start with any limb or all limbs together, as all the limbs support one another. Success in one limb leads to success in the others (Maheshwari, 2022).

His direction was toward purity of thought and deed. The framework of purity is about realizing one's divine nature. This path for Gandhi flowed from *Yoga Sutras* (YS), the science of union with the higher Self (Maheshwari, 2022). *Ritambhara tatra Pragyā* (Yoga Sutras, 1:48)—or where there is pure consciousness, there is true knowledge. *Yoga Sutras* (2:30) say that *ahimsa* (non-violence) and *satya* (truth) are highest ideals or *dharma*. Action infused with pure knowledge is supported by nature and is invincible.

Yama

The first limb of *Yama* is the administrator role. It has five sub-limbs. These are *Ahimsa*, *Satya*, *Asteya*, *Brahmcharya*, and *Aparigreha*, in that order. *Ahimsa* means non-violence. When one is established in wholeness, there is no other. Hurting the other is hurting the self. Thus, one should eschew all violence in thought and deed. *Satya* or truth comes next. Truth is about realizing one's own nature as being pure consciousness itself. We are not this body or the mind. Pure consciousness is invincible and immortal. *Asteya* is non-covetousness or non-stealing. When one identifies with the wholeness, then attachment to possessions naturally falls off. *Brahmcharya* is literally about living like *Brahman*, or totality. The more popular meaning of it is celibacy, of no temptation for bodily pleasures. *Aparigreha* is non-possession. The desire for possessions falls off when one realizes that even the body is not one's own as it is made of the elements and will be dropped off upon the passing of the soul. Incidentally, the five sub-limbs of *yamas* are very similar to the five precepts of Buddhism.

Niyama

The second limb of *Yoga Sutras* is *Niyama*, or rules for personal living. It also has five sub-limbs: *Shaucha*, *santosha*, *tapas*, *svadhyaya*, and *ishwar paridhaana*. *Shaucha* means cleanliness. It applies to mind, body, actions, and vicinity. *Santosha* is contentment. This means a restful mind and a healthy body. *Tapas* is sacrifice. Nothing comes for free. One has to pay the price or penitence, through righteous action. *Swadhaya* means self-examination, or continuous self-learning. Knowing oneself can take a whole life time. *Ishwar paridhana* means contemplation of God or pure consciousness in thought and deed. It also leads to humility. Many of the *niyamas* are also found in the Buddhist canon. Almost all the *yama* and *niyama* can be actively found in Gandhian life and behavior.

Lauricella (2013) presents a detailed account of the practice of *yamas* and *niyamas* in Gandhi's life. Vedas say *Satyameva Jayate*, or truth will win. Gandhi totally believed in the power of truth. He uttered the truth about his own wishes and concerns. He followed up with non-violence. He realized that non-violence has a greater (moral) power than violence. He practiced it in many situations, including in the Salt March to Dandi against the British empire. He also practiced that in his march in Noakhali to bring the warring Indian communities to stop killing each other. Not much has been written about his non-stealing. Except he has said that he stole some money from his father's shirt, and was caught, and he vowed never to steal again. *Brahmcharya*, or celibacy, was a mainstay of the second half of his life, after his four sons were born. He experimented with celibacy by testing his own inner mental strength and resolve. He advised it to everyone including his sons. As for *asteya* or non-possession, he would not wear more than the basic needed clothes. He believed in the dignity of hard work to earn money for oneself. He was never for accumulating and greed. Everyone can have enough for their need, but not their greed, he said. Gandhi was fearless and frugal.

He also practiced the *niyamas* or rules of personal practice. The first *niyama* is cleanliness. He saw no shame in cleaning toilets in south African jails, in his Phoenix ashram, and even at public gatherings and conventions, wherever he saw stinking toilets. He would do with his own hands just about any of his needed tasks. No job was too low, even when cleaning was considered a lowly job reserved for the lower castes. The second *niyama* is *Santosha* or contentment. He would not take advantage of any fortunate situation and suppress his opponent. He would

be satisfied with the path that he was taking. He believed that help will arrive from nature at the right moment. The third *niyama* would be *tapas* or refining oneself through holy fire. He would fast often to sacrifice pleasure of food. Fast unto death became another of his potent weapons against injustice. He worked incessantly—late into the night, and had three secretaries to support his innumerable activities. The fourth *niyama* is *swadhaya* or continuous learning. Gandhi learned a lot by reading books in South Africa. Gandhi would always seek out the most brilliant minds—in India or elsewhere—to learn from them. He would read *Bhagavad Gita* every day. The fifth *niyama* is *Ishwar paridhana*—or praying to the One. He held regular prayer meetings in the morning and the evening every day. His staff was instructed to interrupt him whenever the prayer time arrived. His meetings included prayers from all religions and sects. His favorite song of “*Vaishnav jan to tene kahiye je peer parayi jaane re*” is the song of compassion for others, and of feeling their pain. He would speak of *sarvadharmā sambhava*, or harmony among all religions. Another of his potent tools for spiritual rejuvenation of the people was declaring a day of praying and fasting, essentially meant *tapas* and *ishwaraparidhana*. A secondary benefit was that no one would go out for work, and it will be a general strike in effect.

VALUES FROM BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

Gandhi leaned upon the *Bhagavad Gita*, calling it as his “spiritual dictionary,” and “the mother who never let him down” (Dhiman, 2015, 2019; Gandhi, 2010). The *Gita* was a most precious constant companion for Gandhi in his practice as a consciousness-based leader. Gandhi studied it all his life, and he lived and died in accordance with the teachings of the *Gita* (Dhiman, 2015, 2019; Gandhi, 2010). *Bhagavad Gita* helped Gandhi in developing the qualities of equanimity in all situations and equality toward all communities. Every time he confronted his corporeal frailties, he turned his attention inward to find potent and holistic answers within himself.

Dharma and Karma

Bhagavad Gita says *Yogathāh kuru karmāni* (2:48). Or Established in Self, perform action. In other words, realize your *dharma* and do *karma*. *Bhagavad Gita* further says *karmāny evadhikarāṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadacāna* (2:47). Or “to action alone does one has the right, and not to its, fruits.”

Thus one should be resolute in doing the right thing, but not be attached to or be longing for the fruits of one's action. Dispassionate action thus performed does not bind one to the effects of the action. Gandhi thus aimed to follow his duty (*dharmā*) through dispassionate selfless action (*karmā*). He was committed to his values and ideals and was resolute in creative action to help accomplish those. When one is established in higher consciousness, one experiences a lot of support of nature (Ho & Heaton, 2022 in this volume), and thus can conceive big ideals and accomplish one's selfless desires in an effortless manner.

Gandhi's Actions

Gandhi's creative actions were potent in dislodging the mighty British empire. He never deviated from his key values of truth, non-violence and love for all, and achieved the near-impossible. Non-violence is exemplified by operating from a loving and life-supporting state of consciousness. Truth is exemplified by his continuous search for deeper truth through radical experimentation. Love for all is exemplified by his approach of the upliftment of all communities across caste, creed, gender, and religion. These three aspects are covered next.

AHIMSA AND LOVE FOR ALL

Non-violence, or being life-supporting, is perhaps the greatest universal principle of all. Gandhi applied this principle of non-violence at many levels. For him there were not dichotomies between the several aspects of life such as culture, spirituality, religion, and economics.

Personal Relationships

Gandhi was usually tender and accommodating in his family relationships. He however reported his own mistakes in his autobiography, such as his occasional misbehavior with his wife and elder son, and vowed never to repeat them.

Social Relations

Gandhi applied the principle of *Sarvadharmā sambhava* (equality of all religions and traditions) as he believed that all religions shared the same

message of universal brotherhood and the oneness of whole humanity. Gandhi exposed some of the social hypocrisy and falsehoods emanating from distorted social customs, by inviting friends across religions and races to live together in all his ashrams throughout his life. He published newspapers, *Young India* and *Harijan*, to inform and inspire people that the whole world is one family. He successfully renamed the lower castes and untouchables in India as *Harijan*, or God's people, to restore their natural dignity. This enabled him to build credibility with people across the religious and the spiritual spectrum. His grass-roots connection with the masses grew through solving their problems. People from all communities could connect well with him.

Spiritual Development

Gandhi worked tirelessly and fasted often to purify his own consciousness through tremendous self-discipline. He read scriptures of all religions at a young age in South Africa, and developed a deep appreciation and understanding of all the religions and did not differentiate between castes or religions. He read Hindu scriptures such as the *Bhagavad Gita*, and found them resonating in hearts of people of rural India. His inner connection with his higher Self continued to deepen with his all-religion devotional prayer meetings (Bhajans). Gandhi began his day with an hour-long all-religion-and-traditions *sarvadharmā* prayer meeting in his ashrams. Even on his day of assassination, he was walking to such a prayer meeting. Every year on his birth anniversary all-religion prayer meetings are held around the country. These meetings are traditionally attended by the top leadership of the country. The first author had the opportunity to attend a few such meetings at his final resting place in Raj Ghat in New Delhi, the capital city of India.

TRUTH—DISCOVERY THROUGH EXPERIMENTATION

Gandhi's autobiography is appropriately titled *The Story of my Experiments with Truth* (Gandhi, 1983). Gandhi highlighted in his autobiography many values-based experiments he conducted and integrated over multiple decades. These included his experiments with truth, non-violence, non-cooperation, celibacy, empowerment of untouchables and women, morality, dietetics, healthcare, education, organizing, leadership, parenting, self-reliance, publishing, and more (Gandhi, 1935/1983).

Gandhi has been candid in revealing much personal detail with brutal honesty. He was very interested in sharing in his writings his experiments in the spiritual (and moral) field that were known only to him, and from which he derived the power to work in the political field.

He claimed that his experiments were just like those of a scientist. These used planning, precision, and an open mind regarding their conclusions: either acceptance or rejection at every stage of experiments lasting multiple decades. He also quickly realized, and reported, that his quest for Truth followed a narrow path that was as sharp as a razor's edge. The instruments needed to seek truthfulness seemed simple, but these were difficult to practice. He was radically honest in building the capability of soul-power through living with a single and higher standard of values in public as well as private life (Nair, 1994). He also cautioned that a seeker of Truth must be humbler than the dust that the world crushes, and should never be arrogant about seeking Truth. Gandhi vividly illustrated that experimenting with Truth is neither simple nor straightforward. Here below we list some of the well-known experiments with Truth.

Satyagraha (or Pressing for Truth)

Gandhi's main technique of political mass movement was *Satya-agraha*, or literally pressing for truth. It was an active technique of not cooperating with untruth. Gandhi said that a satyagrahi does not know what defeat is. Satyagraha is essentially a process of purification and penance. As the first barrister of color in South Africa, Gandhi made successful and principled protests against the white officers there, in favor of justice for the immigrant Indian community and even the Black community. The *satyagraha* event of Dandi Salt March in 1930 was a very decisive and potent factor in fundamentally shaking the British empire in India to the core. The British government wanted to control the Indian population through control of production of the basic commodity of common salt. Gandhi asked the basic question of why a common food item such as salt should be monopolized by the British government. He launched a weeks-long foot march to the coastal town of Dandi to manufacture salt in defiance of the unethical law. A large number of local volunteers joined on the journey. The British government's brutal violent response to the non-violent protesters lost the government all moral authority. At that point, people became more respectful of Gandhi than they were fearful of the British.

Gandhi's experiments with truth grew in the political sphere. And made national freedom as a distinct possibility in the eyes of the Indian people and the whole world. He plainly stated his opinion that the British will see the wisdom of leaving the country, as three hundred could not be ruled by just half a million British people without the consent and acquiescence of the ruled. The strength of pure truth of Gandhi soon became more powerful than the fear of British repression—and people began to willingly follow his lead. In his experiments he tested many principles, including the power of non-cooperation, truth, self-restraint, and more. He wanted his three hundred country men to take ownership of their own selves and make themselves ready for self-rule. These experiments in the political field related to successful peaceful protests became well-known throughout the civilized world.

SARVODAYA—WELFARE FOR ALL

Beyond non-violence, lies the principle of flourishing for all. Bhagavad Gita (5:25) further says: *Sarva-bhuta-hite rataḥ* (be immersed in the welfare of all beings). In his book *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi (1921, 1951) coined the concept of *Sarvodaya*, which translates as “universal upliftment,” based on a few key principles:

- That the good of the one is contained in the good of all,
- That everyone's work has equal value,
- That everyone has the right of earning their livelihood from work,
- That a life of labor is the life worth living.

Leaders such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Mother Teresa have shown us that anything is possible when one acts from universal brotherhood and love. Love has been broadly defined as truly seeing the other and a commitment to growing together. Love is said to be the only emotion that broadens the vision and expands intelligent behavior (Maturana & Bunnell, 1999).

One of Gandhi's first actions upon return to India in 1915, on the advice of senior leaders in India, was to undertake a journey through the whole of India, to familiarize himself with the needs of the people (Guha, 2018). For a whole year, he visited the small villages and learned of their conditions. He met people with diverse cultures, origins, thinking,

and language. He said that he wanted to wipe the tears off the poorest person in India. He also began to dress like the poor people, wearing only one piece of clothing, and living frugally. He asked some basic questions about the status of untouchables and widows. Gandhi's bold initiatives, such as the inclusion of untouchables and widows in the mainstream of society, were based on the *Sarvodaya* principles for the overall upliftment of society, in every way, spiritual and material.

Self-reliance

One early experiment in self-reliance was very influential in his life as setting him up in a different direction. When Gandhi wanted to travel to Britain to study law, his mother asked him to take a vow that he will not consume meat or liquor (Gandhi, 1983). To keep this promise and survive in harsh climatic conditions of Britain, he did work out ways to obtain vegetarian food. When he ran out of money from living the high life of a law student, he experimented with walking instead of taking a buggy ride. He thus saved money, made friends on the way, gained health, and also became an informal doctor to his friends who missed the exercise and fell sick. He thus realized the many benefits of frugality.

Charka or Spinning Wheel

Another powerful experiment in self-reliance was the propagation of *charkha* or the spinning wheel. He found that people could spin their own yarn and make their own clothes. The indigenous systems for spinning yarn had been destroyed by the colonial powers to promote machine made cloth in Britain. In 1920 Gandhi discovered a discarded spinning wheel in an attic. He offered a princely sum as a prize for future developers of improved spinning wheel—to manufacture a good machine doing ten times (10x) the work of the common *charkha*. He applied the principle of great competition or hackathon with a massively transformative purpose to bring about great inventions (Diamandis & Kotler, 2015). As a result, the spinning wheel was improved so significantly that it became available at low cost to everyone to make their own cloth. Very soon, it became a potent symbol of national self-reliance.

Ashrams (or Communes)

As another experiment in *Sarvodaya*, Gandhi adopted the *ashram* (commune) approach to community living. He established ashrams in India (such as in Sabarmati and Wardha) and South Africa (such as in Phoenix) with resident volunteers' labor. He invited a diverse community of volunteers to together build the Phoenix ashram in South Africa from an uninhabitable land. Gandhi said that a life of labor, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living. Gandhi experimented with publishing his own newspapers from the ashrams. These were significant in getting his values-based message and commentary to common people, and also earned revenue for the running of the ashram. His first paper was called "Indian Opinion" at the Phoenix ashram in South Africa. He managed to publish it regularly despite many challenges from the government. The community life of the ashrams afforded great opportunities in experimenting with locally available foods and herbs for health and vitality. He experimented with indigenous self-care treatments including on himself on the rare occasions that he fell sick. This may also be a particularly valuable insight for managers, as it shows how constraints can open up great opportunities.

GANDHIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Gandhi practiced almost all the principles consciousness-based leadership (Maheshwari, 2021, 2022). First, Gandhi believed in perennial values of nondual consciousness. He staunchly believed in *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, or the oneness of the humanity and the universe. He was a values-based leader and activist, who had excellent sensitivity toward society. He included everyone, regardless of religion, caste, creed, class, gender, and age (Gehani & Maheshwari, 2020). He transcended narrow mindedness and parochiality, which made him a global inspiration (Gehani & Maheshwari, 2020; Maheshwari, 2021). Second, Gandhi constantly made efforts to improve himself. He made the effort to read the spiritual and religious books of all the traditions so he could understand all traditions and imbibe the common principles from all of them in his life. He constantly experimented in a holistic way in all spheres of life, be they social, political, economic, health, education, family, or others. He constantly purified himself, and then tried to be consistent with the whole truth as it may presented itself to him at a given moment. Gandhi

was a values-based leader and activist, who had excellent sensitivity toward society.

The key principles for a Gandhian consciousness-based leadership would be:

1. Make an absolute commitment to the highest universal values of truth and non-violence and love for all. Be inclusive in seeking a better world.
2. Be self-referral. Be the change you wish to see in the world. Embody the vision. Experiment with finding new paths to achieving it. Be inclusive. Live ferociously and act urgently. Be engaged efficiently in working toward the vision.

Gandhian principles are relevant today for managers at several levels.

Moral Development

Gandhi was a great moralist. He was a patriot but not a nationalist. He loved his country without hating the others. Gandhi did not define citizenship based on religion. He valued all religions and belief systems. He wanted everyone to be proud of their cultural heritage, but he was not a regionalist based on language or culture. He supported all societies to use their own languages for official work, while using English as a link language. As Bhagavad Gita (5:25) says: *Sarva-bhuta-hite rataḥ* (be immersed in the welfare of all beings). Gandhi conceived the framework of *Sarvodaya*. Gandhi created for the whole world a framework focused on self-sufficiency and self-reliance by collective trusteeship and selfless service, which leads to development. He held that individual happiness lies in the happiness of society. Gandhi approached everyone and everything equally and with unconditional love. He highlighted the symbolic and purifying value of self-sacrifice, self-suffering, and a willing acceptance of pain with *samatvam* or equanimity. This approach is particularly relevant for bringing peace to current times of rising tribalism, in the wake of grand global challenges. How can managers create a more inclusive world and organizations where they are tolerant and indeed supportive of diversity of the people's beliefs and practices?

Personal Evolution

Gandhi was a constant learner. Gandhi was a voracious reader. He learned widely from philosophers around the world, and applied those ideas and insights in his life. He was always willing to learn the truth from other religions and countries. He leaned on and learned from *Bhagavad Gita* during his life struggles. Gandhi emphasized holistic education based on moral principles and self-knowledge and *swadharma*. He also emphasized practical hands-on skills for employability. He said that a holistic education should include practical skills.

He reprimanded the principal of the school where his grandchildren were studying, for creating a culture of showing off fashionable clothes and trinkets. Schools should imbibe the right values in the children he said. This principled development of thinking is solely needed when everyone has been corrupted by the lure of material assets. How can management educators realize their duty to create more self-aware and employable students and workers?

Experimentation

Gandhi was a constant experimenter. One needs to test and validate a knowledge claim before believing it. In the process of learning about the self, the person who experiments is the subject as well as the object. Gandhi reminds us of the importance of embodied knowing: “*try to be the change you want to see in society.*” That means that change must begin within ourselves for it to be manifested outside. Gandhi also reminds us of his humility and pragmatism. His constant experimentation is an inspiration for managers to do the same in the age of rapid change. Leaders should incessantly focus on improving themselves and the people around them to realize their true potential (Maheshwari, 2021).

Gandhi created tools to fight injustice without resorting to violence (Maheshwari, 2021). These tools were *satyagraha*; and *non-violent civil disobedience*. These are tools based on truth and non-violence, the first two *yamas* in *Yoga Sutra*. He made practical the ancient knowledge of the power of the *yamas*. He learned and made use of ancient Indian knowledge for those trying times. He was creative in applying timeless knowledge to those times and situations. Even as these are timeless tools, one should be creative in inventing new tools as they seem appropriate to the situation. Gandhi emphasized cleanliness, simple living and right

thinking, and eating the right food in right quantities. The *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* or the Clean Up India campaign rightly chose Gandhi's iconic glasses as the mascot (Iyer, 2019). How can organizations create alternative indigenous knowledge systems for low-cost health management, for liberation from the scourge of pandemics and other social ills?

Sustainable Living

Gandhi was a precocious environmentalist. Even before India got freedom, Gandhi propagated that corporate responsibility extended to public welfare instead of being restricted to their owners, employees and customers, or state and legal requisites. Economists predominantly believe that companies exist exclusively to generate maximum profits for shareholders using legal and ethical means. Gandhi disagreed and supported human-scale institutions in the villages for holistic development, where timeless values should govern life, not market value. He endorsed human-scale governance model in villages and local communities. Gandhi shifted emphasis from *swaraj* (self-rule) to *Sarvodaya* to enable purchasing power for everyone through local production and consumption (Kumar, 1996). Gandhi said that in a well-ordered society, the securing of one's livelihood should be the easiest thing in the world. He said that everyone should have enough for their needs but not enough for their greed. He implored for the replacement of greed by love. His view of economics was that unbridled growth and reckless consumption will bring disaster. Scientists have been urging their community to use civil disobedience to secure a livable and sustainable future (Capstick et al., 2022). How can organizations today achieve sustainability, good governance, and high ethical standards in managerial decision making?

CONCLUSION

This chapter brings together three core Gandhian values to create a rich, coherent, and practical framework for the management academic and practitioner communities for applying the Gandhian leadership for building a better world together. Gandhi believed in living in harmony with nature and a simple life. The crux of it was to generate more, from less, for more people. His experimental approach can be a key contribution for guiding managers in a rapidly changing world. Future leaders and managers could experiment, and develop a holistic embodied intelligence that may support coherence, co-existence, and collaboration in the

context of a VUCA world (Nandram, 2015). Gandhi would transcend often and feel the consciousness of the crowds around him, as to whether they were deeply into it or were simply going through the motions. This is another great practice for managers and leaders to be emotionally intelligent and check on the consciousness of their teams (Maheshwari, 2021).

Many from the newer generations may however see him differently. Around the globe, many millennials may not have heard of him and if they have, may see him as an idealist saint of the past, with some quirky habits, beliefs, and practices related to individual salvation and self-realization.

This chapter also focused on developing the Gandhian vision of *Sarvodaya*, for managers to operate from a sense of connectedness and oneness at the core of the organizing practice, for a flourishing world. The principles and practices needed for such social as well as organizational change could emerge from a convergence of science and spirituality (Laszlo et al., 2021). Becoming one with the local context and operating from a local understanding of aspirations and behavior is an essential aspect of successfully connecting with large numbers of people and aligning them toward a higher purpose beyond their narrow self-interests. The academic debate in the last decade has renewed emphasis on addressing the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) segments of the most vulnerable groups (Pralhad, 2006). The answer to such social problems cannot be found in the paradigm of an industrial society; what we need are social innovations that are equal in power before technical innovations. The new working concept for social innovation is focused on the centrality of the social dimension with an ambition for social transformation. While a person and organization serves society with a higher purpose, then the action's impact is more prominent than individual self-interest (Nader & Maheshwari, this volume; Quinn & Thakor, 2019). Following the universal brotherhood approach, managerial actions should be guided by the interest of the entire planet, and indeed the whole universe. Gandhi inspires management researchers and practitioners to develop such a holistic view of society through a constant development of higher consciousness.

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Vedic Leadership Principles and Practice: Case Study from the IT Industry

Anil K. Maheshwari  and *Rakesh Gupta*

INTRODUCTION

Yogasthah Kuru Karmani: Established in Self, perform Action. (Bhagavad Gita 2:48)

Bhagavad Gita (BG) is the pre-eminent sacred scripture of 800 verses that is considered to be the essential practical guide for leaders through

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the ages (Gandhi, 2010; Maharishi, 1969). In brief in BG, Lord Krishna reminds Arjuna of his invincible nondual Self; and that he should humbly accept his role in the war (*dharma*) and act (*karma*) dispassionately without worrying about the consequences. This chapter develops these key concepts in a later section. *Yoga Sutras* (Principles for Divine Union) is a shorter scripture of 156 verses that provides the technique for transcendence to access the nondual Oneness. We present the V-theory of transcendence (Maheshwari, 2021) based on *Yoga Sutras*. After presenting these concepts, this chapter will relate an organizational case study of how a Vedic business leader led a multinational technology organization to organically achieve extraordinary growth and success, overcoming an unfriendly socio-political environment.

CONSCIOUSNESS

The primary axiom of Vedas is nondual Consciousness (Maharishi, 1963; Nader, 2015). There are a few key verses called *mahavakyas* (or Great Statements) throughout the Vedic literature that emphasize this fact. They all describe the Self as nondual self-aware Consciousness. This absolute Self is pure silence and pure potential. However, this infinite silence contains within itself infinite diversity and dynamism. Just like the white sunlight contains within itself the various colors of light which manifest themselves when the light is passed through a prism, so also the Absolute Silent Self holds within itself infinite diversity of possibilities for dynamic action.

This pure consciousness is the knower, the known, and the process of knowing (Nader, 2015). Physicists have discovered that consciousness is also the unified field of all the laws of nature (Hagelin, 1987). By transcending surface reality, one can experience all the laws of nature within one's own Being. Pure consciousness "is a blissful state that encompasses elements of serenity, peace and acceptance, but also exhilaration and a sense of possibilities, both for now and for the future," says Dr. Rosenthal (2009, p. 8). Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and Aldous Huxley were some prominent transcendentalist philosophers who are reported to have learned about transcendence from the Vedas. Quantum physicists such as Albert Einstein, Erwin Schrödinger, and Max Planck were also transcendentalists (Wilber, 2001). Many physicists (Goswami, 1993; Hagelin, 1987; Penrose & Hameroff, 2011), physiologists (Nader, 2015), and psychologists (Baruss & Mossbridge, 2016)

now emphasize that consciousness is a fundamental reality that precedes material reality and cannot be explained away as an emergent property of materials. Drawing from quantum physics and biological theories of the brain, quantum physicists Hameroff and Penrose (1996) present a science of connectedness to show that consciousness may exist prior to and outside the human brain. Recent affective neuroscience studies have also affirmed these assertions and unearthed the neurobiological underpinnings of transcendence in terms of strong sense of connectedness with others (Yaden et al., 2017). Pavlovich (2019) describes quantum empathy, at the intersection of quantum theory and spirituality, as the consciousness of connectedness:

Quantum empathy is a harmonic frequency of the universe where everything is fluid, indeterminate, entangled and interconnected. At this quantum level, there is no separation between self and other, with the relational-self being both I and We through entanglement. This is a result of non-locality at the sub-atomic field, where waves of information travel through the universe beyond the world of matter. The reshaping of society can potentially occur through realizing the sacredness of this space through contemplative practice. (p. 12)

Such metaphysical impulses may lead a person to inquire about their place in the natural order and how they may contribute to it. Scharmer and Kaufer (2013) highlight the need for development of consciousness for beneficial collective action: “What is needed is the ability to hold and evolve our collective attention at the same rate at which the reality around us keeps changing” (pp. 72–73).

DHARMA AND KARMA: PRINCIPLES FROM BHAGAVAD GITA

Bhagavad Gita (BG) has been instrumental in helping many leaders achieve great success and happiness over the centuries (Gandhi, 2010; Maharishi, 1969). BG reminds us that the Self is the indestructible soul or pure Consciousness. When Arjuna is confused in war, Lord Krishna reminds him of his true nature. He then asks Arjuna to accept his moral duty and fight the righteous war, without any concern for the outcome. The principle of *dharmā*, which literally means to uphold (rightness in society), has been variously translated as moral duty, religion, and destiny. Realizing one’s true *dharmā* and fulfilling it to the best of one’s abilities is

at the heart of Vedic leadership. *Dharma* is a general principle which has a universal value, such as empathy toward others, and it also has contextual values. *Dharma*-based conduct is said to result in long lasting happiness and fulfillment.

Lord Krishna also reminds Arjuna of the right approach to action. *Karma* means action in the present, and it also means the cumulative storehouse of past actions. Theory of *Karma* agrees with the law of action and reaction: that no one is immune from the effects of their actions. BG (2:47) says *karma-nye adbhikaraya ma phalesu kadachana*, or ‘To action alone does one have the right, and never to the fruit.’ One should not be attached to the fruit of one’s actions. *Karma* thus becomes dispassionate action, without fear of consequences. Actions aligned with one’s *dharmā*, help improve one’s *karmic* storehouse and liberates the self from the bondage of past *karmas*. Without awareness of one’s *dharmā*, choosing the right *karma* can be difficult. The essential lesson from BG is that one should transcend surface reality to realize one’s *dharmā*, and then do the right *karma* in a specific situation.

TRANSCENDENCE: PRINCIPLES FROM YOGA SUTRAS

Yoga Sutras (YS) defines the nature and process of Transcendence. YS (1:2) defines *Yoga* (Divine Union) as the ‘cessation of the activities of the (surface) mind.’ When the chattering mind becomes still, the transcendent Self, shorn of all thoughts, shines through. YS also provides the methods for transcendence. The eight limbs of YS range from behavioral principles such as truth and non-violence, to the physical practices of asanas (physical postures) and pranayama (breathing exercises), to the subtle mental practices of *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (oneness with consciousness). Together these limbs help transcend and connect with pure consciousness.

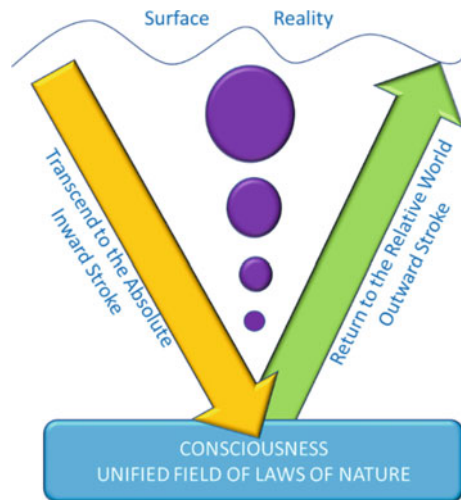
Inspired by YS, this chapter presents V-theory which shows how the universe can be alternately experienced at two different levels: in its dynamic diversity at the top of the V, and its silent unity at the bottom of the V (Fig. 5.1). The upper level is the domain of dynamic action. The bottom level is the level of the Consciousness, the source of pure potential. The path to creatively participating in the continuous transformation of the world at the top of the V is through experiencing the silent unity at the bottom of the V. The first step is to use a suitable technique to transcend surface reality and dive deep to the bottom of the V. It is called

the inward stroke. Resting for a certain period at the bottom of the V brings rest and joy to the mind. The second step of the V is to return to the dynamic surface reality at the top of the V. This is called the outward stroke.

Multiple practices of transcendence may be considered in the context of a simple 2-step V-model of an inward and outward stroke (Maheshwari, 2021). Transcendence can be achieved effectively through automatic self-transcending techniques such as Transcendental Meditation (TM) (Travis & Shear, 2010). Other approaches from the Eastern and Western traditions such as mindfulness, and visual and performing arts such as singing and dancing, can potentially help transcend, with different levels of efficacy (Shear, 2006; Tsao & Lazslo, 2019; Wilber, 2016; Yaden et al., 2017).

When a group of people transcend together, not only do they develop coherence individually, their collective coherence rises to the level of square of the size of the group (Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018). Maharishi's Super Radiance effect states that group transcendence by a few people (square root of one percent of the society) practicing TM and TM-Sidhi techniques together can inject a dose of coherence into the collective consciousness to counter all negativity for the whole society.

Fig. 5.1 V-theory: A 2-step model of transcendence



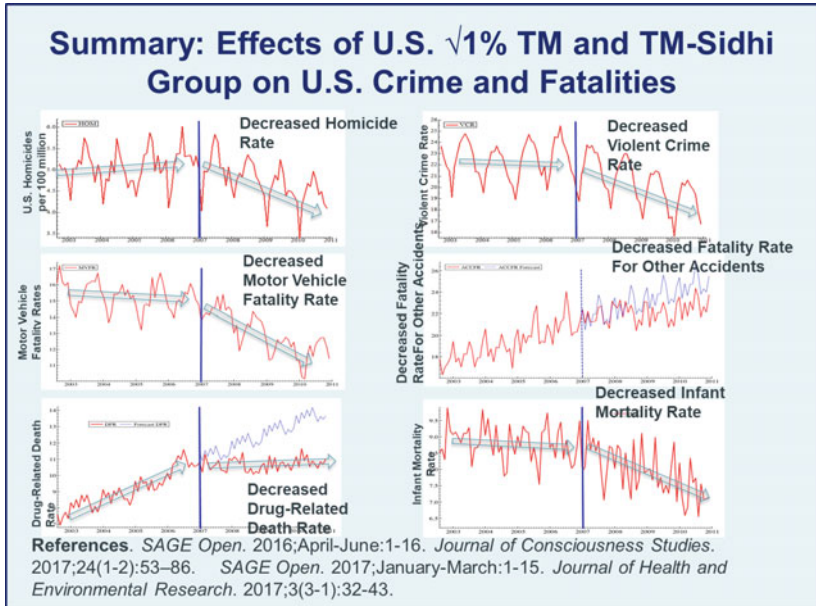


Fig. 5.2 Super radiance effect: Collective consciousness improves quality of life

Figure 5.2 shows the results from a recent multi-year prospective Super Radiance experiment in the USA (Dillbeck & Cavanaugh, 2017). This study shows that crime, drugs, and mortality rates dropped when the meditating group size approached two thousand, the square root of 1% of US population.

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Theories of leadership continue to evolve in response to new developments (Northhouse, 2021). Many leadership theories of the late twentieth century relate to the higher consciousness of the leader. Servant leadership theory (Van Dierendonck, 2011) states that the leader acts humbly with a sense of trusteeship and with a lesser sense of ego. The servant leader works with a natural desire to serve and help the resources in his care and help everyone in the community and the planet (Greenleaf, 1973). Workplace spirituality theory is about meeting the spiritual

needs of the followers through ‘transcending the work process and connecting with them in a way to provide feelings of compassion and joy’ (Fry, 2003, p. 703). Spiritual leadership thus begins with a transcendent vision where the leadership experiences a calling and provides the followers a supportive organizational environment. Inclusive leadership is similarly about care and compassion as it is about doing things with people, based on respect, recognition, responsiveness, and responsibility (Marques, 2020). Transformational Leadership (TL) theory works when leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of morality and motivation (Bass & Bass Bernard, 1985; Burns, 2007). TL theory is predicated on shifts in the leader’s inner perspective, which leads to transformative visions for the future.

Harung et al. (1995) present a ‘unified theory of leadership’ which is conceived as the leader(s) operating from higher states of consciousness. By accessing transcendental consciousness as the powerful unified field of all the laws of nature, organizational leadership can be more creative and effective (Cashman, 2017; Harung et al., 2009). Leadership for sustainable businesses demands a broader and holistic view of the world. Conscious Capitalism (Mackey & Sisodia, 2013) takes a humanistic view of business where conscious businesses are motivated by a higher and inclusive sense of purpose to generate wealth for all their stakeholders. Conscious leaders act from a higher state of consciousness and are committed to the company’s purpose, to the people the business touches, and to the planet. Barney et al. (2015) sketch out three defining features in this shift beyond conventional theories on leadership: focus our awareness on questioning our own thought patterns and belief systems, to expand our horizons of this world; acknowledge that there is something bigger than ourselves, and thus be able to see things in a new way; we realize our purpose as helping others in facilitating a global shift of consciousness toward universal happiness and flourishing. More recently, leadership theories based on neuroscience and quantum physics have emerged. Tsao and Lazslo (2019) present quantum leadership as a model of enabling the transformation toward care and compassion, using contemplation as the key practice to access consciousness, the mother of all capital. They empirically tested this hypothesis with 16 organizations that transforming our consciousness is the most effective tool we have for unlocking local and global change, and similarly found that a self-aware quantum leader is high on the consciousness of connectedness, and is deeply concerned about the wellbeing of the world. Tsao

and Lazslo (2019) also present a first-person report by the first author on how the business magnate came to realize the operating principle of ‘world as one family.’ Maheshwari (2021) describes Higher Consciousness Management as operating from a higher level of self-awareness, and raising the consciousness of all around themselves. Vedic Leadership theory is compatible with these theories, in that the leader should operate from a higher level of consciousness.

VEDIC LEADERSHIP: SPIRIT IN ACTION

Vedic Leadership can be described as Spirit (or Consciousness) in Action. It is predicated upon the leadership transcending to the broadest awareness of interconnected reality, which guides right duty and action. It includes the notions of a self-realized leader who discovers moral duty (*dharma*), and acts without worrying about the fruits (*karma*). In terms of process, Vedic Leadership can be characterized by a repeat sequence of deeper inner self-realizations and self-transformations, which lead to more inclusive and fulfilling actions, which lead to even deeper insights, and the cycle continues. A model of Vedic Leadership (Fig. 5.3) represents the cyclical process of greater development of moral clarity (*dharma*) and impactful action (*karma*). The top half represents behavioral concepts and relate to the top of the V-theory. The bottom half represents individual level, the bottom of the V-theory.

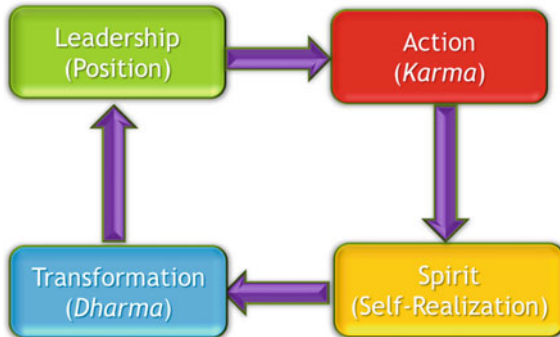


Fig. 5.3 Vedic leadership model

Vedic leaders realize and appreciate infinite potential in everyone. They transcend to the level of consciousness, experience their *dharmā* at every stage, and act fearlessly from that inner guidance. Leaders should begin with following the highest and holistic value of a situation and set the right moral principles (*dharmā*) so that everyone can do their rightful *karmā*. Vedic leaders continue to transcend regularly to deepen their self-realization and grow their leadership potential, i.e. the level of self-realization is the true source of their leadership potential. Vedic leaders should feel humble enough to realize that consciousness acts through them for serving a larger cause beyond themselves. Vedic leadership would inspire and encourage all others to also transcend to develop a coherent collective consciousness of authenticity and peace for the benefit of everyone and the organization. Thus, a Vedic leader leads to a natural starburst of new holistic and enlightened leaders who can carry on the work into the future. Vedic leadership would be perceptive and empathic and respectful of diverse views and needs. *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, “the whole world is just one family” is a Vedic principle that goes far beyond the leader–follower relationships within the organization. Vedic Leadership can be compared with conventional leadership at many levels (Table 5.1).

Mahatma Gandhi would be a primary modern role model for VL. Gandhi led with truth and non-violence, the main behavioral principles from *Yoga Sutras*. He continued to evolve and grow, as many iterations of SALT cycles, to become an ever better leader. This established Gandhi as a Mahatma (great soul), the supreme leader of the Indian freedom struggle. Time magazine called him the most influential leader of the twentieth century. When asked for advice on living well, Gandhi summarily answered in a self-referral manner. He suggested that we should become the change that we want to see in the world, i.e. we should change ourselves for the better before seeking to implement that change in the world. That means all change begins within ourselves, by raising our own consciousness and morality. This helps develop a single level of conduct in personal as well as public life (Nair, 1994). We learn to love others like we love our family. Humility also comes in as one appreciates the diversity of intelligence in the world.

Table 5.1 Vedic versus conventional leadership

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Vedic leadership</i>	<i>Conventional leadership</i>
Fundamental metaphor	Spirit in Action	Coordinated movement toward greater success
Guiding principles	Act from authentic Self. Do your moral duty through right dispassionate actions	Set vision, communicate goals, attract and empower followers, generate trust and action for achievement
Leadership purpose	World as one family in harmony; holistic development and growth	Gain Success, growth, money, and power in relative terms
Leadership source	Self-awareness through transcendence as the broad source of leadership potential	Better Skills, experiences, resources, and relationships
Leadership process	Effortlessly gradually transform self spirally through regular transcendence	Multi-stage models range from transactional to transformative to situational and other
Individual vs collective leadership	Leadership is exceptional self-realized individuals, acting from higher consciousness	Leadership comes from decisive individuals
Leadership style	Inspiring and leading people to help better themselves	Leadership is about accomplishing goals
Servant leadership	Vedic leaders are humble servants in the pursuit of their own dharma	Servant Leader as humble person who works to make everyone successful
Role model	Gandhi	Typical CEO

VEDIC LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

Methodology

This case study is a case of successive expansion of a CEO's circle of care, to include all stakeholders, going well beyond what happens in almost any other company. The second author of this paper (a CEO, recently retired) practiced Vedic leadership principles to the best of his ability, throughout his career. The case study was developed in about 2 distinct phases. In the first phase, the authors discussed the totality of the story among themselves. Many integrative themes from the Vedic literature emerged and were considered as potential integrative themes. The theme of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* was considered to be the most direct and inspiring theme. The growth in this company evolved as an iterative expansion of circle of

care to ultimately include the whole world as one family. In the second phase, the CEO's story was validated by contacting many members in the ecosystem of the organization including former colleagues of the CEO at all levels in the organization. These included the entire range from subordinates to bosses and to external partners, who would be in a good position to provide perspective on the CEO's actions and the organization's performance. About 20 people were contacted, of which about 15 people chose to respond to a standardized semi-structured survey instrument with their answers, impressions, and stories. These respondents vary across leadership levels, organizational affiliation, gender, and geography. The respondents provided formal written permission to use all or parts of their comments for this research. None of the respondents and their recollections substantially negated the CEO's narrative. There were no responses that were in opposition to our chosen theme of narrative of world as one family. From the comments of these 15 respondents, a saturation level was reached in terms of a strong support to the narrative in the case. The case here is organized as an iterative expansion of the scope of the organization, coupled with inclusion of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, in the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. The story is told primarily in CEO's voice to preserve its flow. In each iteration of expansion, snippets from about 15 colleagues and collaborators of the CEO are included to support the claims.

From the Beginning: The CEO's Perspective

The CEO grew up in a family that had deeply imbibed the Vedic principles, even as he went on to study engineering and business administration from top institutions. The primary organizing principle used in his life story is *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*: that the world is an all-inclusive family. This principle naturally derives from the Vedic principles that he learned as a child at the feet of his father.

In this leadership assignment, the CEO started as the first employee of the company. He eventually grew a multinational business from zero to 3000 employees in a decade, most notably in a relatively non-business-friendly state of Kerala in India. More importantly, this achievement was about 60 times the original size planned for this company. This company was a wholly owned subsidiary of a Europe-based global insurance company and provided global back-office information technology-based

services to the parent company. This CEO hired employees with the right attitude and inculcated in the company the belief that the business growth was a natural outcome of doing the right *karma* according to one's *dharma*. *Dharma* and *Karma* are powerful themes of doing the right duty in an unattached way (Maharishi, 1963). For example, the CEO would often say that what you give is what you get. Many employees naturally gravitated to this company because of its nurturing practices, and surprisingly rapid growth.

Families of Employees Enter the Circle of Care

Very early on during the start of the business, the CEO saw the wisdom of engaging not only the employees but also their families. The company invited family members of high performers to the office every quarter. The family would include parents or local guardian or friends. The family was given a grand tour of the facilities. They were picked up from home in a company car, given a tour of the office, with nice interaction with the employee's friends and colleagues, served a nice meal, photographed with senior management, and then dropped off back home. This small investment of time and expense led to a very strong extended support system for the organization. The employees' families began to discourage the employee from even considering leaving the company, by emphasizing the company's unique care. The families even offered to mediate any issues between their family members with the company's senior managers who they believed they knew well. Families also felt safe about the employees, especially women employees, when they were working late night shifts for the customer service call-center duties. Families talked proudly about the employee working in the company to their friends, relatives and office colleagues. This resulted in a regular stream of qualified job applicants, who were capable and keen to join, thus reducing the cost of recruitment. Friends and family members would sometimes themselves be keen to join the organization.

Upon realizing the enormous benefits of embracing this extended layer of local families, the program was extended to employee families that lived out of town. A sustained high performance for one year was the criterion for a fully sponsored trip for the employee's out-of-town family's visit to the company. The same principle was soon extended to ex-employees also. The company thus invested a small amount of effort and money into developing a virtual network of alumni of the organization. Ex-employees

would loathe to talk negative about their ex-employer. It even resulted in many ex-employees returning to the company. This all helped reduce the company's recruitment costs down to almost zero.

Manager's Nurturing Role

Every first-line manager was given a parental role of maintaining a close personal touch with their direct reports. The line manager's performance had formal parameters on proactive measures to reduce attrition and number of high performers produced. The line managers were trained and equipped with tools to keep track of personal challenges and aspirations of all members in their team. Their performance reports included metrics on potential high performers on their team with recommended suitable movement plan, and a retention plan for productive but potentially unhappy employees. These performance reports were discussed at higher levels and acted upon for proactive retention measures and talent identification. An incentive system was introduced, encouraging employees to attract their family and friends. The recommending employee was assigned as buddy to the new employee, to help the new employee to settle down. This reduced multiple issues that newcomers in the organization normally faced.

Psychological Ownership

Consistent with the mission of the company to grow as a family in the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, the psychological ownership of the company was widely distributed. Employees understood the moral imperative of growing this company. The employees acted fearlessly using their own initiative and discretion according to certain principles, even if it meant ignoring some rigid rules. This was unlike most service businesses which operate using a very well-defined and scripted processes, and where employees are required to strictly adhere to an optimized process. When employees understood and owned the role of their work and its impact of quality of service, they went the extra mile to fix customer issues at their end. Instead of taking an easy route of transferring the problem to another section, they would themselves solve it in the customer's first call. This avoided repeat calls from customers thus releasing a huge capacity to serve more businesses and generated greater satisfaction for both the customers and employees.

Employee SN reported to us, “We had a very people-focused leadership, which laid the foundation to a very engaged work culture. We were early adopters of diversity. We were encouraged to hire diverse candidates. We had braille visiting cards. We consistently took employee polls and acted on the results.”

Employee AN recounted: “There was a semiformal group of extended management members, without involving any of CEO’s direct reports, which met every month with the CEO chairing the sessions. This forum developed trust for the organization to work together effectively. Personal connection between the members became better, and people started to think out of silos.” This is an example of creating a starburst of leaders.

Diversity and Inclusion

Women faced special challenges in this work environment as they had to manage their homes as well as perform well in the company. The women were especially supported in taking the initiative to build strong networks for safety and personal growth.

Employee RV recounted: “The CEO had prompted the handful of women in his organization to pursue networking opportunities for leadership development and women empowerment. He tactfully suggested the idea of putting together a women’s forum outside the organization, as an independent entity. The CEO had visualized the futuristic role of women empowerment in social inclusion and economic development at this scope and scale. We embarked on the journey without fathoming the huge beneficial impact it would create in the society in a short span. Now we have a solid enterprise driving social change through women empowerment.” This helped women to make a difference.

Employee JH recounted a similar women’s project. “The CEO supported a proposed initiative for our staff to join with volunteers from other companies to go out and provide a mobile cancer breast screening service for women. No proposal was considered too small for discussion or too remote from delivering IT services. Although that particular initiative did not go very far, it set the tone for the staff for how we could partner even with competitors, and it clarified the inclusive and caring values of the company.” This shows that many initiatives were encouraged to build coalitions across the community.

Inviting Opponents into the Circle of Care

This state of Kerala in India is known for industrial disruption through labor strikes. On any point of dispute with state or central government, trade unions would call for a strike. Such strikes usually lasted for 12–24 h, and would range from the city to the whole state level. During strikes, roads were blocked, and people were discouraged from traveling to work. This state had as many as 100 such strike days in any given year. This led to a significant negative on industrial production and customer support activity. These factors had historically led to manufacturing industry being forced to walk away from this state for many years. Many service companies however worked around the problem by working on the weekends in lieu of a strike day. While that worked for some businesses, it was generally not an acceptable solution for customer service business, where customer calls are based on working hours of European and global business customers. Any unreliability in serving customers would threaten the operations of the global company itself.

The CEO adapted by changing the mindset and attitude of the employees from a family perspective. He explained to them that the business losses incurred during such strikes were a threat to that entire business. The employees understood the implications and vowed to fight the evil together. Many employees made efforts to be at office on strike days even if it meant walking a long distance because of lack of availability of public transportation on days of strike. Many employees would sacrifice their vacation and come to office to support the organization. Everyone behaved as if their organization was their family, and as if their own job and everyone's growth was at stake. The CEO made sure of leading fearlessly from the front. He would bravely face the risk, drive down to office as usual, and take a stroll in the office so that everyone noticed his presence. He also appreciated employees' efforts in coming to office. Employee morale was so high that often attendance was higher on strike days compared with normal working days. All teams collaborated actively to improve the process and delivery of services, and the customers of the company did not face any interruption. In this CEO's stewardship of more than 10 years, the company did not lose any day of business on account of strike.

Competitors and Trade Unions Join the Circle of Care

A few other businesses in the city liked this company's approach and they started similar campaigns with their employees. The company shared its policy and procedures to handle frequent strikes and trained a large number of employees and support staff in other companies. This company's rulebook became a guidebook for many other companies in the state. The CEOs of those companies started following the same practices. They took support from police to provide protection to convoys of their office transport vehicles.

These small steps grew into a movement. The companies realized that the fear of strikes was much bigger in their minds than in reality. Gradually the message of inclusion began to resonate with the trade unions also. They accepted that this company's business should be considered as an essential service. Trade unions also realized that they will not get any support from employees working in this company, and relented and ensured that their vehicles would not be blocked from reaching the workplace. Joint working teams across companies shared each other's facilities and resources, and this helped deliver excellent results for all the companies in the region.

These successes raised the confidence of the parent company in Europe in this subsidiary company's capabilities. They considered many more functions to transfer to the Indian company, and this created more jobs and growth for them in India.

Suppliers Join Extended Circle of Care

Suppliers were welcomed as a part of the family, and were respected and appreciated for their services. This is in contrast to the usual practice where businesses try to extract every possible benefit and simultaneously reduce down the payments for services to a supplier. Instead of developing a mindset of distrust and wariness and to avoid a wasteful procedure of multiple checks and controls, the CEO decided to treat some of their core suppliers as partners and dealt with them in a fair and transparent manner. The company treated the suppliers' employees as part of their own operations. This resulted in many of the suppliers' employees preferring to work at this company's office. Everyone's business grew, and both continued to complement each other in a win-win partnership, saving many unproductive steps and costs.

VG, a vendor's employee, shared a mentoring story. "We were a small company. We requested our client CEO to conduct a short workshop for our leadership team on coping with growth challenges. He took the time out from his busy schedule and had an engaging and insightful half day session that made a big difference in our team's journey. He did this *pro bono* based on his intent to help a team of young entrepreneurs grow their business."

Employee AP shared a story about caring for the vendors working onsite. "We had an office boy, who used to stay back even after his working hours, just so he could provide extra touches to the office. He used to stay back late in the evening, and since the office was far away from the city, often had difficulty going back home. Being a very dedicated person himself, even the CEO used to stay back after his employees had left and would see the boy provide more finishing touches. This happened every single day no matter the conditions. One day, the boy was walking to the nearest bus stand to catch a bus for home; when the CEO noted and stopped his car by him and told him to get in. He sat with the CEO, who dropped him to the city, on the way to his own house."

Auditors Join the Extended Circle of Care

Audits are generally considered to be structurally antagonistic to their clients, as their task is to unearth irregularities and to certify that everything is according to the law. Company employees are usually wary of their company's auditors. However, this CEO instituted many kinds of mandatory as well as internal audits. By taking an extended family approach, the company decided to make audit into a friendly process. Many of the company's own employees were added as virtual members of formal external audit teams. Employees were trained on the audit procedures and they earned certifications for it. All high-performing employees were given an option to become a virtual auditor and join the audit of the business processes that they themselves have worked on in the past. Since they knew the business processes intimately, they thus played a much larger role in reviewing and improving the overall process than merely finding lacunae. The employees acting as internal auditors were incentivized to identify non-value-add components of the process to help redesign the process for a higher and better throughput. This was a win-win scenario for both auditor and auditee that benefitted the organization and the customer alike.

Employee JJ reports an incident: “We faced some audit and compliance challenges. I was the most junior person in the leadership team at that time. I made some recommendations. The CEO listened to it carefully and took the decision to create a project under my leadership to resolve the above situation with all my fellow leadership team members being part of my team. I was so overwhelmed with the trust and confidence the CEO showed in me and the support he always gave during the project in dealing with some of the senior colleagues in the team.”

Company Becomes Dream Career Destination

The company embarked on a journey of transformation to a ‘great place to work,’ to an ‘employer of choice’ to a ‘career destination’ and finally to ‘my company.’ With a humble beginning of intentionally promoting the concept of career instead of a mere job, the company gradually adapted a framework of ‘great place to work.’ They further progressed to a framework of ‘employer of choice.’ The employees started showing signs of not only developing their careers but began to believe that this company was their dream career destination. They thus gave full dedication to the company. There was very low attrition in the business. Ultimately with a large proportion of employees being highly engaged and determined to build their careers, it led to a campaign of the company becoming ‘my company.’ This was a game changer in behavioral aspects, leading to an exponential increase in performance of employees. It was a rare combination of achieving high efficiency with high effectiveness.

Customer Perspective

The net result of increased morale was in increased choice by customers to prefer to be served by this company. The customer service function had its serving capacity distributed both in the UK and India. Instead of the company selecting who would answer a call, the customer was offered a choice. An Interactive Voice Response (IVR) message greeted a waiting customer in the call queue with options to wait for longer in the queue to be served in the UK or to get served from an agent in India immediately. Over time, a sustained happy experience from being served by Indian team led to many customers preferring to be served by Indian team even before the IVR system provided them the options.

Employee UK stated that “Almost all decisions were taken in an inclusive way. The decision to expand the Board of Directors was taken in a more consultative way. Normally, this decision could have been taken at highest level and communicated to all concerned. But when the executive team was consulted and the rationale was explained, the decision of nomination for expanding the board was unanimous.”

Respondent RK reported a productivity enhancement project and said that quality was imbibed in the organizational culture. He says, “We were bringing in lot of change in the organizational processes. The CEO wanted the active participation of the project managers and team leads so that everyone in the organization would be passionate about the quality of products we deliver. Quality became everyone’s responsibility.”

Employee SJ reported that the entire set of constructs such as ‘policy governance’ was a great example of how the CEO brought in the members from across the organization to decide how to run very important organizational initiatives. They were received extremely well by the employees.

Senior Management Join the Extended Family

The inclusive *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* philosophy of leadership broke many myths about the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in India. It was presumed that business process offshoring is a cost saving strategy that leads to job losses in parent company and a drop in customer experience. In this company’s case, their business became a significant revenue-generating and value-adding strategic asset in the parent company’s portfolio. Moving an industry’s perception from being a liability to an asset is a big game changer.

The CEO, acting as a role model and personally fully involved in fearlessly taking risky but the right actions, earned the trust of employees. Open and transparent communication with the parent company managers helped, with additional support in standby mode, just in case the solutions did not work.

The Group CEO of the parent company recounted positive experiences related to productivity and culture. “These events were not directed by him (the CEO) but the opportunity was extended to those who had the imagination and drive to deliver. The freedom and scope offered was initially a surprise, but the response achieved was generally so beneficial that it merited support and encouragement rather than constraint. The scale of such productions grew with the company.”

SUMMARY AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In summary, this case study shows how the Vedic mindset of inclusive oneness, and following one's mortal duty, can help achieve improbable missions. This also illustrates that empowering the employees has many benefits such as that they willingly engage with any challenges facing the organization. The extended family, coupled with alignment toward a collective objective (or threat), can overcome huge challenges with ease. The CEO's full belief in the efficacy of Vedic principles helped them to grow to 50 times the planned size, winning them national awards for their superlative achievement. This story is especially remarkable in the contemporary environment of tribalism and nationalism rising, around the world.

This paper makes two major contributions. First, it shows that ancient Vedic knowledge in the hands of the right leaders can work very well even for western style businesses. Vedic leadership principles are not a set of initiatives to be executed but a set of principles that influence one's thinking. Vedic principles should be applied with full conviction or else they may not work out as expected. In this case, the company operated out of the practical social and inclusive concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, to operate as one large extended family.

Lord Krishna guides Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita to focus on doing his without worrying about the fruit of action. When a situation is complex, ambiguous, and risky, it is important to exercise what Simpson et al. (2002) call a 'negative capability' of reflective inaction. A more relaxed response to an ambiguous situation would help take a broader perspective to determine the right course of action. This is an important principle that should guide management education as well as practice to address the grand challenges of our times.

The second contribution of this paper is two dynamic models. One model is the SALT model of Vedic leadership as spirit in action. This cyclical model shows how new leadership capabilities develop through successive iterations of this cycle. The other model is V-theory that helps transcend surface differences and work toward the oneness underlying everything.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

This paper may open many potential future fields of inquiry relating to the efficacy of Vedic principles for business and society. There are more Vedic principles that were considered in this paper. These principles could be applied to leadership for organizations in the domains of health, education, arts, architecture, defense, etc. In the future, a more comprehensive and nuanced Vedic leadership can be developed as more such case studies become available.

Secondly, there could also be research to quantitatively compare the practice of these Vedic principles with validated quantitative inventories of leadership potential and practices. The creation of additional leaders by Vedic leadership could be tracked and correlated with financial performance at the individual and the firm level.

In conclusion, this paper presents a simplified Vedic leadership model, and a case study of the practice of this model. By operating from a self-realized state of wholeness and broad vision, leadership is assured of the most appropriate guidance to the right action. From that level of consciousness, the natural approach would be to treat the whole world as one family, and to work for the welfare of all.

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Creating Coherence in Collective Consciousness for Universal Flourishing: Automatic Self-Transcending for Reducing Conflicts and Improving the Quality of Life in Society

David W. Orme-Johnson 

INTRODUCTION

Between the years of 1911–1929 a series of five conferences collectively called “Copenhagen I” were held in which physicists Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Max Planck, Erwin Schrodinger, Sir James Jeans, and many others, including 11 Nobel Prize winners, grappled with integrating a

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surprising new finding from quantum mechanics into science's purely physical model of the universe. The central concern was the "collapse of the wave function" a phenomenon in which subatomic "particles" appear to spread out like a wave and do not take specific locations as particles until the consciousness of the observer impinges on them. This led one leading physicist to speculate that "the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine" (Jeans, 1932, pp. 185–186). Max Planck, the father of quantum theory, stated "I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness" (Planck, 1918). This led Einstein to devote his later years to search for a single unified reality at the basis of the universe, the unified field, which could be seen as the fountainhead of all the laws of nature.

The idea of a universal field of pure consciousness at the basis of natural law and the role of collective consciousness in society is found throughout the cultures of the world (Chandler, 2017, 2019; Nader, 2015; Pearson, 2012). In classical Greek civilization, the choruses in the plays of Sophocles represent the perspectives, mores, and feelings of society, the collective consciousness, the wholeness against which the actions of the individual major characters are juxtaposed and elucidated (Kitzinger, 2015). In Plato's philosophy, the fundamental structures of natural law are the transcendental *Idea*, the *Forms*. The fountainhead of the entire hierarchy of *Forms* is called *The Good*, the supreme, the dominant principle of wholeness and harmony at the basis of natural law.

William James, the father of contemporary American psychology, argued that none of the empirical findings of science about the brain contradict the notion that the brain may serve to reflect or transmit a transcendental, infinite continuity of consciousness underlying the phenomenal world (James, 1898/1997). Emile Durkheim, a founder of modern sociology, described "collective consciousness" as the mind of society that is created when "the consciousness of the individuals, instead of remaining isolated, becomes grouped and combined" (1951). For New England Transcendentalists, the unified core of America (and of all countries) is the transcendental Self. As the U.S. drifted inexorably toward civil war in the 1850s, Walt Whitman conducted a "language experiment", which he believed would re-unite the Union by providing its citizens with a transcendental aesthetic experience of the transcendental self, enlivened through his poem, the *Leaves of Grass* (Anderson, 2010).

In 1992, a committee of the National Institutes of Health Office of Alternative Medicine (NIH-OAM) proposed the term biofield as "a

massless field, not necessarily electromagnetic, that surrounds and interpenetrates the human body and the human physiology”. The weight of experimental evidence supports that humans can remotely see, hear, know, and do things at a distance beyond the range of ordinary sensory and motor functions (Radin, 1997; Radin et al., 2015).

MEDITATION AND COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

The Vedic Tradition of India, the oldest continuous tradition of knowledge, proposed a theory of collective consciousness that potentially has immense practical value. Patañjali’s *Yoga Sutras* (Egenes, 2010).

तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः

Tat sannidhau vairatyāgaḥ

tat that (coherence, Yoga) *sannidhau* in the vicinity *vaira* hostile tendencies *tyāgaḥ* are eliminated

In the vicinity of coherence (Yoga), hostile tendencies are eliminated.

Yoga Sūtra 2.35

Here the word *yoga* means *union*, the union of the individual mind with the cosmic mind, the unified field described by physicists. Maharishi Patañjali explains that the union of the individual mind with the unified field is attained in deep meditation when the fluctuations of the individual mind (thoughts) settle down to experience the silent transcendental pure consciousness at the basis of the human mind, which is held to be the direct experience of the unified field of natural law. Patañjali states: *Yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*. Breaking it down word for word, this Sutra means that *yogaḥ*, union or transcendental consciousness, occurs when *citta-vṛtti*, consciousness fluctuations (thoughts), *nirodhaḥ*’ cease or are completely settled. That is, *Yoga is the complete settling of the activity of the mind* (Egenes, 2010).

Thus, according to Patañjali, when during meditation the individual mind settles to experience transcendental consciousness, and hostile tendencies in the surrounding environment are eliminated.

Another ancient work from the Vedic tradition, *Yoga Vasishtha*, generalizes the effect to not only hostile tendencies but to holistic effects on the health, progress, and prosperity of the larger society. In this work, the sage

Vasishtha instructs the young princes Ram and his brother Lakshmanan that the key to creating and maintaining a harmonious and prosperous society is regular meditation morning and evening by at least five percent of the population. *Vasishtha* further explains that the effects of meditation on society are even more powerful when people meditate together in a group, practicing together the more advanced meditation techniques called *siddhis* techniques (the word *siddhi* means perfection). *Vasishtha* states in his *Yoga Sutras* that the effect is squared by the number of people practicing the *siddhis* together (Freund, 2018).

When people transcend, they enliven transcendental consciousness in their awareness and their influence will enliven transcendental consciousness lying dormant in the minds of even non-meditating members of the population. As the number of meditators in society rises, the harmonizing influence of their common denominator, the unified field, will override the disharmonizing influences. When there is a sufficient number of meditators, harmony will dominate over disharmony in society. If the meditators sit together in close proximity, it will multiply their effect, similar to the stimulated emission in ruby lasers. Transcending in one of the meditators will set off a cascade of transcending by others in the group, in a chain reaction that will result in a “super radiance” effect, a powerful wave of coherence that will harmonize all the diverse tendencies and behaviors in society to be mutually supportive and evolutionary, for each individual and for society as a whole.

AUTOMATIC SELF-TRANSCENDING (AST)

In the modern scientific literature, the meditation technique from the Vedic tradition that Patañjali and *Vasishtha* were referring to is called automatic self-transcending (AST). Travis and Shear (2010) classify three types of meditations that differ in their goals, procedures, and associated EEG signatures. These are focused attention (FA), open monitoring (OM), and automatic self-transcending (AST) (Travis & Shear, 2010). In this section, we review the neurophysiological effects of AST and document how it increases flourishing in the individual, reducing their stress, behavioral problems, and addictions, and improving health and self-actualization (Orme-Johnson, 2021).

As described by Patañjali, the goal of AST techniques is to transcend active cognitive processes to experience transcendental consciousness, the silent mind. AST is associated with frontal dominant alpha1 (8–10 Hz)

EEG. The Transcendental Meditation technique (TM) is the most well-known and researched example of AST, there now being over 650 studies on TM conducted in more than 200 universities and research institutions in 30 countries (Orme-Johnson, 2021).

By contrast, both FA and OM techniques involve control of attention that keeps the mind active, which disallows transcending to transcendental consciousness. FA requires focusing on an object of attention. Examples include compassion meditation, Qigong, and some forms of Zen. FA is associated with higher EEG frequencies of beta and gamma (13–50 Hz). Open Monitoring (often referred to as mindfulness) involves directing dispassionate, non-evaluative awareness of ongoing experiences, which may occur during sitting meditation with eyes closed or during activity. The goal of OM is to train the mind to be more aware of the present moment and not to react irrationally and emotionally to traumatic memories. The EEG frequency associated with OM is theta (4–7 Hz) (Travis & Shear, 2010). The studies reviewed in this paper all used TM as the independent variable. We did not locate any papers on the effects of FA or OM on collective consciousness.

The Neurophysiological Effects of AST

The alpha1 (8–10 Hz) EEG frequency in frontal cortical association areas seen during transcending is correlated with inner awareness and mental quiescence (Travis, 2001; Wallace, 1970a, b; Wallace et al., 1971). Alpha1 in association areas appears to represent the liveliness of the “screen of consciousness”, providing a context for grouping isolated elements into the unity of experience, which corresponds to the classic description of transcendental consciousness as unbounded awareness (Travis & Shear, 2010).

The effects of TM are in the direction opposite of stress. TM produces a unique state of “restful alertness”, held to be the fourth major state of consciousness, transcendental consciousness (Wallace, 1970a, b). “Restfulness” is indicated by reduced respiratory rate, basal skin conductance, cortisol, plasma lactate, and spontaneous skin resistance responses (Travis, 2001; Wallace, 1970a, b; Wallace et al., 1971). “Alertness” is inner awareness without thoughts or with greatly reduced thoughts, indexed by increased alpha1 EEG power and coherence (Dillbeck & Orme-Johnson, 1987; Orme-Johnson, 1973; Travis, 2001; Travis et al., 2004, 2010; Wallace, 1970a, b, 1972).

Evidence indicates that the effects of TM on thinking and behavior arise from increased brain integration, on both the level of the cerebral cortex as seen as increased EEG coherence (Dillbeck & Bronson, 1981; Levine et al., 1977; Orme-Johnson & Haynes, 1981; Travis & Arenander, 2006; Travis & Wallace, 1999), as well as on the level of improved connectivity within the deep brain areas of the default mode network and limbic system (Avvenuti et al., 2020; Travis & Parim, 2017; Travis et al., 2010). This view that the benefits of TM arise from brain integration contrasts to the theory that the benefits of mindfulness are based on cerebral cortical thickening (Grant et al., 2010; Lazar et al., 2005).

AST Effects on Business and Industry

Studies indicate that TM increases oneness and flourishing in business and industry by reducing psychological distress and increasing brain integration (Travis et al., 2018). A study of leadership found that TM subjects improved significantly compared to controls on all leadership behaviors. They became more innovative in their thinking, challenging existing processes, enabling others to act, and encouraging their fellow employees by using heart value to motivate others and by sharing the vision of the company's goals (McCullum, 1999). A control study of a Fortune 100 corporation found that TM decreased trait anxiety, job tension, insomnia, and fatigue as well as reducing cigarette and hard liquor use. The study also found that TM improved work and personal relationships, employee effectiveness, and work and life satisfaction (Alexander et al., 1993). The Japanese National Institute of Industrial Health found that industrial workers who learn the TM technique showed reduced physical complaints, increased emotional stability, decreased impulsiveness, and reduced smoking after five months compared with control workers (Haratani & Hemmi, 1990). Employees in a high-security governmental agency who learned the TM technique showed long-term decreases in anxiety and depression (Sheppard et al., 1997). See Chapter 2 by Nader and Maheshwari (this volume) for TM supporting purposeful leadership.

See the chapter on TM in the *Oxford Handbook of Meditation* for an overview of the 650 research studies and reviews conducted over the last 52 years on TM's effects on the individual (Orme-Johnson, 2021). These studies support the hypothesis that TM practice gives the experience of the unified field of consciousness at the basis of natural law through which

all areas of individual life—physiological, psychological, and sociological—flourish.

THREE KEY STUDIES ON COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

As reviewed in the introduction above, many traditions and research programs indicate that individuals are interconnected with each other on many levels, ultimately on the level of the unified field. Here are three studies which suggest that the unified field level of natural law can be enlivened through AST meditation to promote flourishing in society.

EXPERIMENT I: INTERNATIONAL PEACE PROJECT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The most thoroughly studied, commented on, and defended experiment on the effects of collective meditation on the quality of life and war was the International Peace Project in the Middle East published in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* out of Yale University. This study took place in Israel during the war in Lebanon for a two-month period, August and September 1983 (Orme-Johnson et al., 1988). The hypothesis of the study was that there would be a simultaneous positive holistic effect on all dependent variables as evidence of the unified field, which would change in proportion to the number of people in the group that day. The variables were diverse: traffic accidents, crime rate, fires, the Israeli national stock market, and the national mood, from content analysis of a major newspaper, and two war variables—war deaths and war intensity. All the data on these variables came from publicly available governmental statistics. The independent variable was the number of people in the group, counted each day as they entered the program halls. Predictions were lodged in advance with an independent review board of scientists in the U.S. and Israel. To ensure objectivity, records of the independent variable (the number of participants) were sent on three different occasions to members of the review board before any of the data analysis was undertaken.

Figure 6.1 shows the 61-day time series of the size of the group, indicated by the dotted line, superimposed by a composite index of the mean of all the standardized dependent variables (solid line). The chart shows that there was a clear covariation between the size of the coherence-creating group and quality of life indicated. The simple correlation was

0.57, a moderate-strong correlation in the social sciences. It is well known that correlation does not necessarily mean causation, so we explored many alternative explanations.

The results were statistically significant using alternative methods of time-series analyses, transfer function analysis, impact-assessment analysis, and cross-correlation analyses. The study showed that the effect was stronger for composite indices than for the individual variables, which could be explained by the presence of a common influence on all variables that was strengthened by signal averaging. Similarly, the variability *between* social indicators decreased when the coherence group increased, an outcome that would be expected if the group was causing a common influence on all variables (Orme-Johnson et al., 1988).

We also performed a factor analysis of the data and found two factors. Factor 1 may be interpreted as measuring a *collective-actor* because it loaded on variables that reflected the nation acting as a whole, such as the Lebanon-war variables, the national mood, and stock prices. Stock prices can be considered an index the national confidence in the economy. Factor 2 loaded on crime, fires, and auto accidents, and appears to represent *individual-actor* variables. To illustrate how collective action and

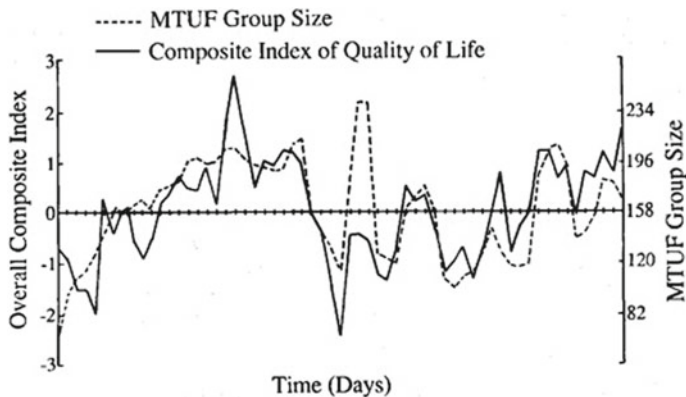


Fig. 6.1 The number of participants in the Transcendental Meditation-Sidhi program over a 61-day period (dotted line) and its association to a composite index of quality of life (solid line). As the size of the coherence-creating group increased, the quality of life increased, and when the size of the group decreased the effect was reversed

individual actions differ, compare war and crime. Killing and destruction by an individual are considered crimes to be prosecuted and punished by society, whereas a person who commits the same behaviors in defense of the nation may be considered a national hero. The effect of the coherence-creating group was twice as strong on Factor 1, the collective actor as it was on Factor 2, the individual actor. This can be considered as further evidence of the unified field, because Factor 1 can be seen as a “larger antenna” of the entire population to detect the effect compared to the “smaller antenna” of a single individual (Orme-Johnson, 2016). After the publication of the first paper (Orme-Johnson et al., 1988), a second paper showing seven different replications of coherence-creating groups was eventually published in another journal (Davies & Alexander, 2005).

The Unified Field of Consciousness: A Paradigm Shift in Science

Initially, the reaction to the 1988 study was very collegial and rational. In a highly unusual practice, the editor wrote a piece that preceded the paper: “... the hypothesis seems logically derived from the initial premises, and its empirical testing seems competently executed. These are the standards to which manuscripts submitted for publication in this journal are normally subjected. The manuscript, either in its initial version or as revised was read by four referees (two more than is typical with this journal): three psychologists and a political scientist” (Russett, 1988, p. 773).

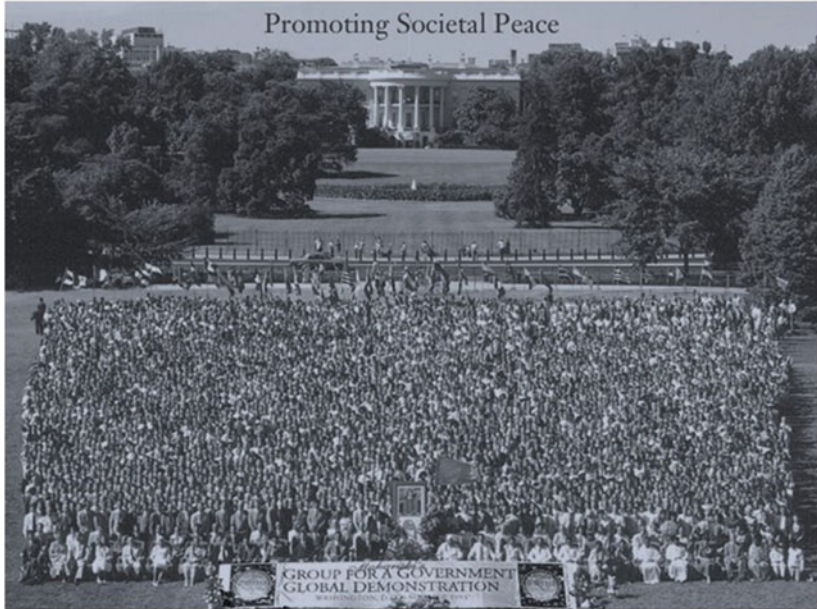
However, behind the scenes emotions ran high and there were efforts to block the publication of this research. In her doctoral dissertation at Harvard, Carla Brown conducted confidential interviews with the editors, reviewers, news media experts, and professional politicians involved in the Middle East on their reactions to this study (Brown, 2005). Only about one-third of the individuals interviewed said they were willing to look at further evidence for the phenomenon. The majority expressed irrational and highly emotional reactions to this research, and some tried to block it as well as trying to stop Dr. Brown’s dissertation. The most astonishing comment was: “People in the conflict resolution community know that this technology works: they just don’t want to see it receive funding” (competitive with their proposals). Personal communication, Carla Brown, Ph.D. 2/21/2018.

To put her findings into perspective, Dr. Brown cited the work of Thomas Kuhn, a philosopher of science, who has written about the irrationality that may be evoked by a paradigm shift in science. Kuhn wrote that there is an “arbitrary element” undermining the apparently open and data-driven scientific process (Kuhn, 1970). This element, he wrote, is the deeply held beliefs, faiths, and convictions that arise from the experience of the culture, and that are perpetuated through educational institutions that prepare and license professional scientists. In Kuhn’s view, much of scientific research comprises “strenuous and devoted attempts to force nature into the conceptual boxes supplied by professional education. Normal science...is predicated on the assumption that the scientific community knows what the world is like. Much of the success of the enterprise derives from the community’s willingness to defend that assumption, if necessary, at considerable cost. Normal science, for example, often suppresses fundamental novelties because they are necessarily subversive of its basic commitments” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 45; c.f. Brown, 1996, p. 17).

EXPERIMENT 2: NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The next major project was to test this technology of the unified field, was a high-profile large-scale demonstration project in Washington, D. C. in 1993. This was at the peak of the violent crime wave in the early 1990s, and Washington, D.C., at that time was known as the “murder capital” of the United States. This study used a prospective experimental design to test the pre-stated hypothesis that a group of TM and TM-Sidhi program practitioners assembled in Washington, D.C. for seven weeks would reduce the crime rate and improve the quality of life in that city. The research protocol was lodged in advance with the national and international news media and with a 27-member independent Project Review Board comprised of sociologists and criminologists from leading universities, representatives from the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department (DCMPD) and the District government, and civic leaders. Weekly crime data was collected from the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department, which is the source of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s *Uniform Crime Reports* for Washington, D.C. Statistical analysis considered and controlled for the effect of weather on crime, the impact of seasonal hours of daylight and temperature on

crime, and historical trends and annual crime patterns in the District of Columbia, as well as crime in neighboring cities.



Group photo of the Global Demonstration in Washington, D.C., a group of approximately 4000 participants in the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs, who came to Washington from all over the world at their own expense for the project, from June 7 to July 30, 1993. They were housed in hotels throughout the District, where they did their long meditation programs.

The number of participants increased in three tiers over the eight weeks of the project, from approximately 1000 to 2500 to 4000. Figure 6.2 shows that as the size of the group increased (dotted line) there was a percentage reduction in a composite index of homicides, rapes, and assaults crimes (HRA). This percentage was calculated by dividing the estimated weekly reduction in HRA crimes attributed to the group by the estimated levels of crime predicted to occur in the absence of the group. It can be seen that the downward slope of crime increases each time the size of the group increased.

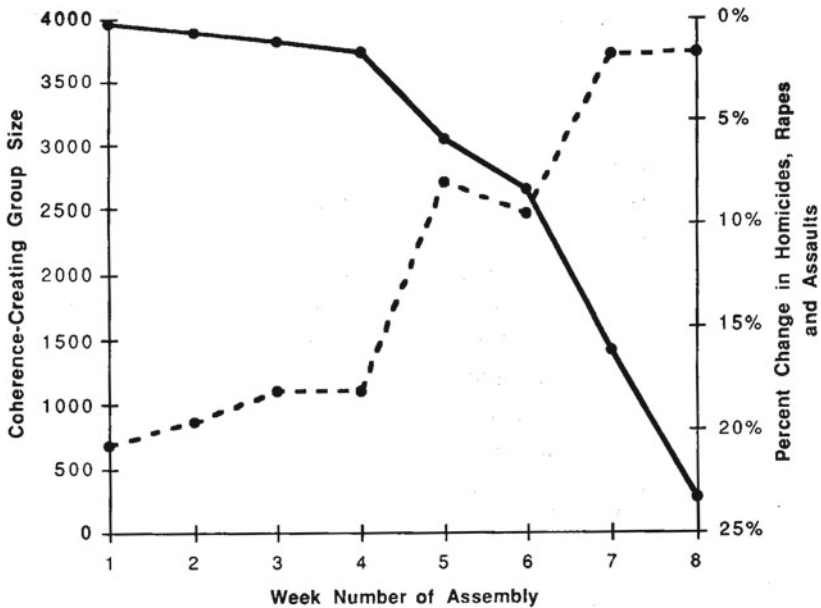


Fig. 6.2 This chart shows the TM and TM-Sidhi group size (dotted line) vs. % change in homicides, rapes, and assaults (solid line)

Figure 6.2 shows that as the size of the coherence-creating group increased, the level of HRA crimes decreased significantly, with the maximum decrease occurring during the last week of the Demonstration Project, when the group had reached its peak of approximately 4000. During the last week, HRA crimes (both actual crimes and the levels predicted from the model) decreased sharply below the levels predicted in the absence of the group.

Figure 6.3 shows the results of the time-series analysis, which modeled the crime rate based on prior trends and ambient temperature. Violent crime increases on hot days, as were found in the Middle East study, so this variable had to be controlled for in the study on Washington D.C. in the summer. The prediction was that actual crime would closely follow the statistical model until the intervention period, during which actual crime would actually be less than predicted because of the coherent influence of the group. The maximum reduction of HRA crime was 23.3% in 1993

and 24.6% when tested against a six-year baseline of 1988–1993 HRA data. These findings could not be accounted for by an increase in police staffing or other variables. Like the study in the Middle East, when the group size was diminished, in this case by the end of the demonstration project and everybody going home, the effect was reversed and crime began to rise again to predicted levels.

This project predicted in advance to the project review board that the large group in Washington would have global effects on multiple social indicators because the effect was hypothesized to be mediated by the unified field. This prediction was confirmed by significant reductions in measures of social stress in Washington D.C.: emergency psychiatric calls, hospital trauma cases, complaints against the police, accidental deaths, and a social stress index of the four variables. Time series structural break analysis indicated that all five variables showed significantly changed trends

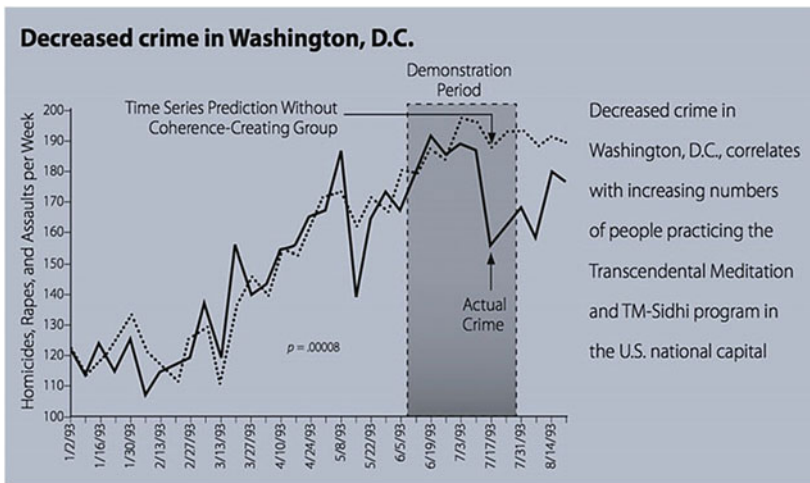


Fig. 6.3 Effects of the National Demonstration Project on 1993 HRA crime levels in Washington, D.C. The dark solid line represents actual HRA crime levels, the dotted line is the predictions (or “fitted values”) for HRA crime based on the time-series model, reflecting the effects of the coherence-creating group. The dotted line shows HRA crime levels predicted to occur in the absence of the coherence-creating group. The shaded area is the period of the Demonstration Project. It can be seen that after the end of the project, the effect was reversed and crime started to increase again

in the predicted direction toward greater positivity after the start of the project (Goodman et al., 1997).

Moreover, the effects of the group extended well beyond the local level of metropolitan Washington to the national level of the U.S. President Clinton's approval ratings and media positivity toward the President also began to improve, reversing prior downward trends. In addition, when the group was present in Washington, the voting patterns in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives showed more bipartisan cooperation. Data sets of all Senate and all House roll-call votes in 1993 were divided into three periods: before, during, and after the group assembled, and scaled utilizing Rice's (1925) Index of Likeness. Statistically significant results indicated that in contrast to the divisiveness that marked the spring voting patterns, the summer and fall voting patterns for both Senate and House reflected greater bipartisanship (Goodman et al., 2006). These results demonstrate that the effects of the TM and TM-Sidhi groups are global, supporting the premise that the effect rises from the level of the unified field. These results also support the concept of a collective-actor versus individual-actor variables, as were seen in the previous study, that the effect on Clinton's ratings in the media and his popularity in the polls, which are reflections of the nation as a whole, was much stronger than the effects on the variables reflecting individual actions represented in crimes, emergency psychiatric calls, hospital trauma cases, complaints against the police, and accidental deaths.

Journalist Sally Quinn in her blog in the *Washington Post*, commented on the change in Washington.

Well, in case anyone hasn't noticed, Washington at the moment, is in a lull – at least from the vantage point of the inmates. After months of terrifying, near-death experiences, things have settled down. Put another way, having completed the first eighth of a presidential term, the Clinton administration appears to have revived. You know this must be so because columns of newsprint have proclaimed it to be so. Suddenly, all you read about is that David Gergen saved the day, that Clinton 'captivates Japan,' that he is being tough with Saddam Hussein, that he is bringing relief to the flood states in the Midwest. Boring human interest stories ramble on. Washington has relaxed. But such a swift reversal of political fortune is not easy to account for. The inmates may logically wonder whether Clinton really turned things around or if something else is going on... almost mysteriously and almost overnight, in the face of government distress, the

press seemed to be transformed from a hostile, angry mob to a pack of fawning pussycats... (July 18,1993, p. C-1).

During a big celebration of all the participants at the end of the demonstration project, the governor of Ohio stood up and told the group with undisguised enthusiasm: “Many politician friends along with me have been watching the statistics reported in the press and in your ads with anticipation. That was the most important topic among us politicians. We were all fascinated. Even so, I can’t give you much hope that your programs will be introduced everywhere because every politician wants to keep his post. Many would fear for the reelection if they were to propagate the idea of reducing criminality with meditation in their community. They’d be afraid to look ridiculous in the eyes of their voters” (Pirc, 2021, p. 472).

EXPERIMENT 3: THE INVINCIBLE AMERICA ASSEMBLY

Even though presentations of this research were enthusiastically received by members of various business and civic groups, politicians, members of Congress, the Pentagon, and the United Nations, no one was supporting creating such a group of meditators. The exception to this was Drs. Howard and Alice Settle, who made the resources of their foundation available to provide stipends for individuals to devote their time to being in the group at Maharishi International University (MIU) in Fairfield Iowa, called the Invincible America Assembly (IAA). The studies of the IAA are the most recent, largest, and longest (17 years) demonstration that large groups practicing the TM and TM-Sidhi program together have global effects on multiple social indicators.

Since 1979, MIU had built and operated meditation two halls, golden domes for the expressed purpose of creating coherence for the United States. Studies. Over the years, research had shown that when the group reached the predicted $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the U.S. population, the global quality of life in the U.S. improved (Orme-Johnson & Gelderloos, 1988), national violent deaths decreased (Dillbeck, 1990) and when large enough, the group also improved the quality of life in Canada (Assimakis & Dillbeck, 1995) and even improved U.S.-Soviet relations (Cavanaugh & Gelderloos, 2011; Gelderloos et al., 1988). Thus, the intended purpose of the IAA study to improve the quality of life of the United States was predicted in advance and was widely publicized in the news media.

The Experimental Period for IAA lasted from 2007 to 2011 when the group size approached or exceeded the $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the U.S. population at the time, approximately 1725. The Baseline Period was the prior seven-year period from 2000 to 2006, and the Post-Experimental period was when the size of the group declined due to loss of funding, the five-year period from 2012 to 2016.

Results of Experimental Period

Drs. Michael Dillbeck and Kenneth Cavanaugh published a series of four peer-reviewed papers, which are some of the most robust, tightly controlled, and far-reaching scientific investigations of the IAA experiment to date (Cavanaugh & Dillbeck, 2017a, 2017b; Dillbeck & Cavanaugh, 2016, 2017). Their analyses employed time-series regression analysis of monthly data using a broken-trend impact-assessment model. Controlling for pre-intervention trends seasonality, and autocorrelations, they found highly significant shifts in trends, at the predicted time and in the predicted direction, for multiple variables: drug-related deaths, murder, violent crimes, motor vehicle fatalities, other accidental deaths, infant mortality. (See Fig. 6.4).

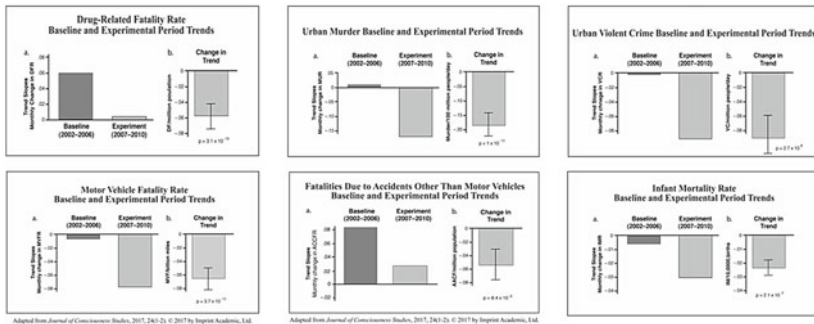


Fig. 6.4 The slopes of the variables during the pre-intervention and intervention and the change in slopes in the series of papers by Dillbeck and Cavanaugh, 2016, 2017. It can be seen during the intervention when the TM and TM-Sidhi group size was at least the square root of 1% of the US population, that there were highly significant simultaneous changes in the trends in all variables, supporting the interpretation the effect was mediated by the unified field

Eliminating Alternative Explanations

In their discussions of alternative hypotheses, Cavanaugh and Dillbeck documented that most factors that influence violent crime change slowly over time, whereas the effect of the IAA was immediate and predicted in advance. Unemployment, which usually increases crime, was high during the experimental period, yet crime decreased. During the experimental period of 2007–2011, prison admissions were slowing relative to releases, which would normally predict an increase in crime, but crime actually decreased. Percent of youths 18–25 in the population predicts increased crime. However, during the intervention period there was an increase in this population, yet crime decreased. Thus, the reduction in crime during the experiment could not be explained by other factors known to influence crime. If anything it countered those influences.

Results of the Post-Experimental Period

The most recent study we discuss here is on how the effect was reversed when the size of the meditating group decreased (Orme-Johnson, 2017, 2018, 2022). It replicates previous findings using annual rather than monthly data. Annual data has the advantage of showing long-range trends more clearly, unmasked by the large fluctuations of seasonal cycles seen in monthly data. This study included eight variables (murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, infant mortality, traffic fatalities, drug-induced deaths, and deaths by injuries in children and adolescents, ages 10–19 years) as well as a composite index of these. Data on all quality of life variables are drawn from official statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report or the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

In the present study, we included all the eight variables in one analysis to display the common influence predicted by the unified field. To visualize the results for all variables on the same scale, we standardized (z-transformed) them. Each variable was represented by a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1.0. Interrupted time-series regression analysis and linear-regression forecasting analysis were conducted on this standardized data.

Graphic Analysis

Figure 6.5 shows the group size (thick black line), the composite U.S. QOL index (thick dotted line), and the various individual dependent variables from 2000 to 2016. During the Baseline period, 2000 through 2006, the mean number of participants in the group was 622, only 36% of the required threshold. The Experimental Period occurred when the $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the U.S. ($N = 1725$) was reached in 2007 and maintained through 2011. The mean group size during the Experimental Period, was 1815, which is 105% of the $\sqrt{1\%}$ threshold. During the Post experimental period (2012–2016), the size of the group declined most steeply between 2013 and 2016. By 2016 the mean group size had shrunk to 628, again only 36% of the required $\sqrt{1\%}$ threshold, the level it was during the Baseline.

It can be seen in Fig. 6.5 that at the onset of the Experimental Period the slopes of all dependent variables decreased sharply relative

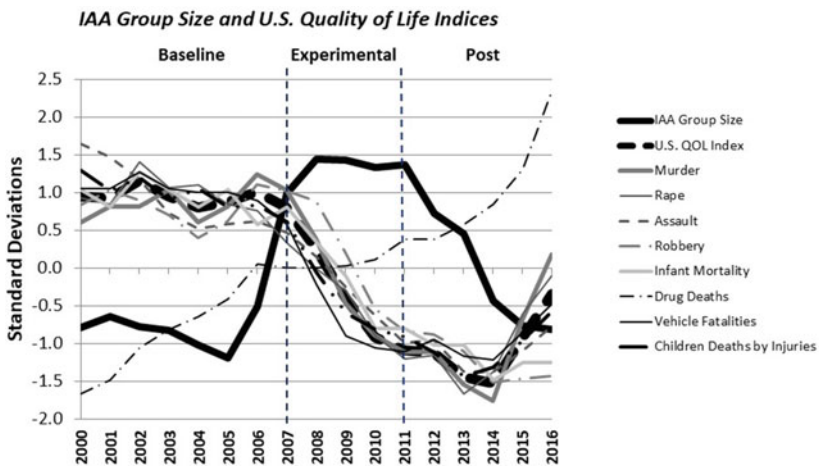


Fig. 6.5 Time series of independent and dependent variables. Normalized (Z-transformed) data for the size of the Group of TM and TM-Sidhi Participants (IAA Group Size) in thick solid line, the mean of the various social indicators in thick dashed line (U.S. QOL Index), and the various individual social indicators in different lines as identified in the legend. The figure shows a phase transition to a global reduction of negativity in the U.S. when the critical threshold of the $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the U.S. population was practicing the TM and TM-Sidhi program together in a group

to their slopes during the Baseline, indicating a simultaneous decrease in all negative trends. For drug-related deaths (the brown line), which were increasing rapidly during the Baseline period, the reduction was seen as leveling off of the slope during the Experimental period. The mean decrease in trend across all variables during the five-year experimental period, as indicated by the U.S. QOL Index, was approximately 2 standard deviations—a very large effect.

In the Post experimental period, when the size of the TM and TM-Sidhi group began to decline, the downward slopes of the dependent variables became less steep from 2011 to 2013. Then from 2014 to 2016, as the size of the group dropped precipitously, all negative social indicators increased sharply, by an average of one standard deviation, especially drug-related deaths.

These data support the prediction of a global phase transition in U.S. quality of life at the predicted time when the group reached the $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the U.S. population practicing the TM and TM-Sidhi program. Figure 6.5 shows that although the size of the coherence-creating group began to rise in 2005, no effect was seen until 2007 when the group reached the $\sqrt{1\%}$ of the IAA, which completely altered the time course of all the social indicators.

In a fuller analysis, we conducted interrupted time-series analyses of all variables, which provide statistical confirmation that all variables changed substantially and statistically significantly in the predicted direction, with $p = 0.0001$ for the overall QOL Index, murder, rapes, robberies, motor vehicle fatalities, child and adolescent deaths and drug-related fatalities; $p = 0.001$ for infant mortality; and $p = 0.01$ for assaults (Orme-Johnson et al., 2022).

Linear Regression Analyses

We used linear-regression analyses to assess the magnitude of the change in terms of crimes and deaths averted to give a sense of the human impact of the IAA as opposed to the results presented as the more abstract standard deviations. Figure 6.6 shows an example, using drug-related deaths. During the Experimental and Post periods, the actual number of events were $-33,136$ and $-46,805$, for an estimated total of $79,940$ fewer drug-induced deaths than predicted by the baseline trend. It can also be seen in Fig. 6.6 that by the end of the Post period, the number of drug-related deaths per year had returned to the predicted baseline level.

Drug-Induced Deaths in the U.S.

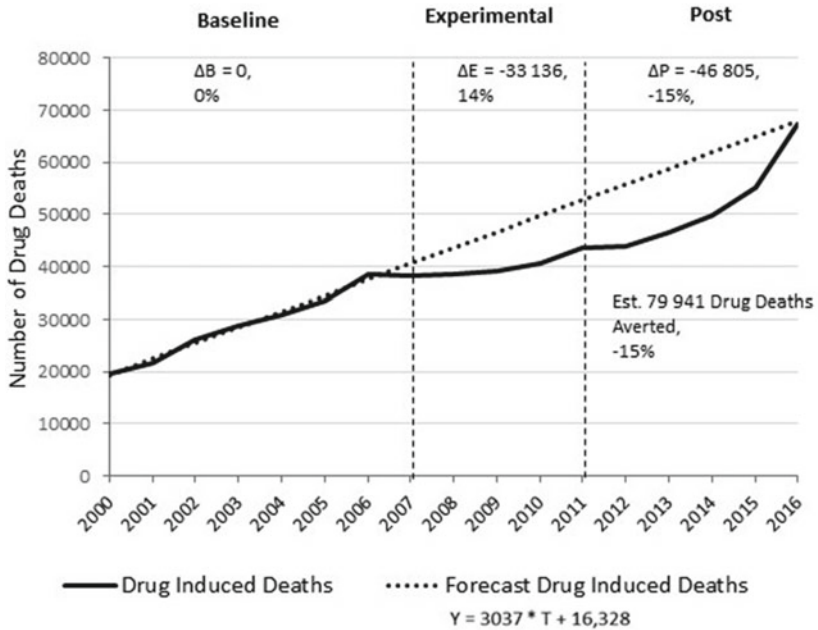


Fig. 6.6 An example of linear-regression analysis: the number of drug-induced deaths over time during the Baseline period (dotted line) was forecast into the Experimental and Post periods. The number of drug-induced deaths (black line) decreased below the forecast levels during the Experimental and Post periods, eventually returning back to pre-intervention levels by the end of the Post period

Similar findings were found for all variables. Table 6.1 summarizes the impact of the IAA on the eight primary variables. Murder, drug deaths, and vehicle fatalities had a positive slope, which means they were increasing during the baseline. The other variables had a slope of 0, indicating they were not changing. For them, the predicted level of events in future years was the mean of the baseline. The number of events averted was the actual number of events that occurred during the Experimental and Post periods minus the predicted level from the regression line or mean of the baseline period, shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Results of regression analyses for eight variables

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Intercept (number of events/ Yr.)</i>	<i>Slope (change in events/Yr.)</i>	<i>Events averted during experimental period</i>	<i>Events averted during post period</i>	<i>Total events averted</i>	<i>Total events averted per partic- ipant</i>
Murder	15,440	232	-10,425	-18,128	-28,553	-16
Rape	93,438	0	-25,271	-28,085	-53,356	-29
Assault	879,281	0	-339,583	-609,049	-948,632	-523
Robberies	419,253	0	-72,801	-412,909	-485,710	-268
Infant Mortality	28,081	0	-8,225	-23,505	-31,730	-17
Drug Deaths	16,328	3,307	-33,136	-46,805	-79,941	-44
Vehicle Fatalities	42,201	267	-42,381	-53,505	-95,885	-53
Child and Adolescent Deaths	86,348	0	-62,919	-95,999	-158,918	-88

Table 6.1 shows the heavy human toll of these problems on the United States during or at the beginning of the baseline as indicated by the first column, the intercept. For example, there were 15,440 murders, 93,438 rapes, 879,281 aggravated assaults, etc. The estimated number of events averted is substantial for all variables: 28,553 fewer murders, 53,356 fewer rapes, and 948,632 fewer aggravated assaults, to give some examples. Deaths by all causes were an estimated 395,027 fewer.

The last column of Table 6.1 shows the number of events averted on average *by each member* of the IAA group, estimated by dividing the totals by the average group size, which was 1815. Each member of the group was responsible for an estimated 16 fewer murders, 29 fewer rapes, 523 fewer assaults, 268 fewer robberies, 44 fewer drug deaths, 53 fewer vehicle fatalities, 88 fewer child and adolescent deaths, 218 fewer deaths by all causes. These results dramatically show the way to a highly effective new avenue whereby individuals deeply concerned with morals, ethics, and racism can engage to make social change. In this context, murder, rape, aggravated assault, and robberies can be considered as hard measures of moral behavior. What can be more immoral than murdering, raping, beating, and robbing other people? All of the changes shown in Table 6.1 can be implemented simply by learning the technologies to

allow the mind to settle into transcendental consciousness and practicing the technology with like-minded people.

Alternative Explanations

As documented by earlier research, the rapid onset and then offset of the socially beneficial effect at the specific times predicted by theory eliminates many potential alternative explanations of the results, and provides strong evidence of causality. The administration of President Obama implemented many new policies for social change, but this could not explain the results because the experimental period began in 2006 and Obama did not take office until 2009. By 2009, the improvements in U.S. quality of life had already been underway for two years. Moreover, the onset of the post-experimental period and the decline in U.S. quality of life began well before the end of Obama's second term in 2016, ruling out a change in government administration as an explanation of the results.

THE ROLE OF THE CITIZEN AND THE LEADERSHIP FOR A FLOURISHING SOCIETY

The three large-scale studies reviewed here provide strong experimental evidence that group practice of a specific AST technology, the Transcendental Meditation, and TM-Sidhi program, facilitates the flourishing of society. All studies were predicted in advance, all used objective, publicly available governmental statistics, all showed meaningful and highly statistically significant global effects on multiple social indicators at the specific times when the predicted level of group size was achieved, and all showed that the effect was reversed when the size of the group decreased below the predicted threshold. These studies provide strong evidence of causality and can only be explained as being mediated by the unified field of consciousness, the ultimate level of oneness underlying individual and collective life.

These results provide a new perspective for discussions of the role of citizens and the responsibilities of leadership. The primary responsibility of leaders is to provide effective policies and evidence-based technologies that promote the flourishing of individuals and society. This is the ultimate grass-roots approach to government, culture-free, and universally true. It fulfills the call for uniting science and spirituality to transform consciousness to meaningfully solve systemic threats to human existence (Laszlo

et al., 2021). It identifies the direct experience of the ultimate level of oneness, the unified field of natural law, as the most effective means of promoting flourishing in society.

In October 2019, the “Copenhagen II, 100 years after conference” was held, in which leading physicists asked quantum field theorist John Hagelin to update what physics has since learned about consciousness and physics I. Hagelin concluded that from all the current scientific evidence, the most consistent and parsimonious conclusion is that the fundamental reality of natural law is a universal field of consciousness (Hagelin, 2019), just as Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Max Planck, Erwin Schrodinger, Sir James Jeans, and many others had foreseen, the same perennial philosophy is at the basis of all major cultures.

Thomas Jefferson famously wrote in the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”. “Self-evident” has its deepest meaning as the experience of the Self, of transcendental consciousness. Transcendental consciousness gives the most profound and experimentally verified meaning to the phrase “all men are created equal”. Whatever our differences on the level of genetics and cultural diversity, at our core we are all pure unbounded creative intelligence. Recognition of this ultimate reality has been at the center of virtually all civilizations. Plato described it as the *One, the Good, the Beautiful*. His student Aristotle referred to it as *Being*, and it is called the *Kingdom of Heaven Within* in the Christian tradition. The philosopher Hegel referred to it as the *Absolute* and the American Transcendentalists Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman wrote of it as the *Oversoul* and *Self of all Beings*. Glowing experiences of transcendental consciousness, not intellectual conceptions of it, gave rise to these descriptive names, fueled these philosophies, and gave rise to the scientific research showing that it has immense practical benefits for mental and physical health on individual lives (Orme-Johnson, 2021) and through them, on societies (Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018).

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PART II

This Part Presents Leadership from Vedic
Scriptural Texts, Such as *Ramayana*,
and *Advaita Vedanta*



CHAPTER 7

Rama's Leadership with Consciousness: An Inner Journey with Virtues and Values

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LEADERSHIP IN TURBULENT TIMES

COVID pandemic crisis has brought quarantine and social isolation at work and in our personal lives. In addition to the disruptive changes in our exterior landscape, COVID also drastically impacted our interior landscape (Abraham & Mazumdar, 2021). It has forced many to explore their interior realities. This inner impact may be as significant or even more lasting than the more visible external impacts of COVID. Some experienced more fears and anxieties within their inner consciousness. Sister Teresa of Avila, a sixteenth-century Spanish Carmelite nun, referred this as visiting “*The Interior Castle*” (Kirvan, 1996). Swiss psychologist Carl Jung (1956, 1967) studied the relationship of the individuals with their own depth psychology. He underscored that the deepest part of our psyche is trans-personal, and part of a collective consciousness.

The current crises call for leaders who can be effective in the new reality of complex personal internal realities. Traditionally the research on leadership theories and practices has focused on the externally observable material actions and/or financial accomplishments of leaders (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass, 1990). This evaluation and classification is done largely at the materialistic level. The focus is also on the leader’s physical stamina, mental toughness, or intellectual brilliance. Their actions, sacrifices, and accomplishments of leaders are often hailed and applauded. A superhero’s extra-ordinary material achievements are lionized.

Thus, leaders have been traditionally classified as Transactional (Bass, 1990) and Transformational (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). However there has been a silent flourishing of interior-based leadership theories such as Resonant (McKee et al., 2008), Virtuous (Pearce et al., 2008), Servant (Greenleaf, 2002), Spiritual (Fry, 2003; Mitroff & Denton, 1999), braver (McLaughlin & Cox, 2015), and Integral (LaLoux & Wilber, 2014; Wilber, 1996). Gehani (2019) and Gehani and Maheshwari (2020) highlighted how the interior lives of Mahatma Gandhi, and others inspired by Gandhi such as Dr. Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela, played a significant role in their actions and their ground-breaking achievements. In this chapter we contribute to this growing trend by focusing on a paramount virtuous leader, Lord Rama, whose name is synonymous with

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perfect ruler, and whose reign called Ram Rajya is synonymous with flourishing times. We will describe Rama's leadership model as Resonant Virtuous Leadership model. We will use Maharishi Valmiki's *Ramayana* (MVR), one of the civilized world's oldest scriptures, compiled circa 1000–600 BCE, as our primary source for the Rama story. Based on MVR, Prince Rama's Journey too is often primarily explored with respect to his actions in the outer material world across the Indian sub-continent (Egnes & Reddy, 2016; Gehani, 2020). These actions include Rama, on the eve of his coronation, yielding his crown and accepting a 14-year exile by command of his father King Dashratha who wanted to uphold his father's promises to his youngest queen Kaikeyi to make her son Bharat the king. During Rama's long exile he confronted different oppressive ogres and ogresses, and had breakthrough accomplishments such as defeating the mighty king Ravana of golden Sri Lanka. Rama is also known for his inclusive alliances with other diverse species in Kishkindha capital of monkey-men Hanumana and Sugriva, large wise bears such as Jambavad, and birds such as eagle king Jatayu and Sampati (Egnes & Reddy, 2016; Gehani, 2020). We will explore how engagement with these key external characters in Rama's arduous journey may have affected Rama's less visible internal landscape.

OUR APPROACH: EXPLORING RAMA'S INNER JOURNEY

Rama's life can also be symbolically examined as a deep-diving journey within. In his 'Inner Palace,' Rama's consciousness discovered treasures such as the beautiful pristine nature, and intimate and almost spiritual friendship with other species such as friendly vultures (Jatayu and Sampati), monkey-men (Hanumana and Sugriva), and big bears (Jambavan). And Rama also encountered somewhat ambivalent relations between righteous Rama and his faithful Sita during the different stages of their challenging marital life together. In his journey through his 'Inner Palace,' Rama also encountered lustful and desire-driven oppressive mighty rakshasa' king Ravana along with his lazy monster brother Kumbha-Karan as well as their ogress (*rakshasa*) sister Surpa-nakha. Rama's relationships with all these key characters were informed by his inner development.

In this phenomenological hermeneutic research study based on a classic literature (Shamir & Eilam, 2005), we first identified the need to fill a significant gap for more research in the study of leaders' inner journeys.

We launch our qualitative research study by addressing the basic question: Who was legendary leader Rama? What were his traits and qualities, and why was he called *Purushottam* or the ‘Perfect Person’? This is followed by a brief review of Rama’s inner journey, characterized by his engagement and close encounters with a few key characters that include (a) his faithful wife Sita, (b) his devoted brother Laxmana, (c) his devoted follower Hanumana, and (d) Rama’s arch-enemy demonic king Ravana.

Next comes a brief review of Rama’s just and virtuous rulership. His reign is renowned as Ram Rajya, a sustainable ideal way to rule a kingdom, or an organization. Thus, with much reflection and some discussion we present a leadership model for Rama. This is the primary purpose of this chapter. Finally, we discuss some of the limitations with respect to translation, and some implications for future leadership research and practitioners.

RAMA THE PERSON

Rama in MVR is a mortal human being, just like other people, facing and overcoming his obstacles. He is the son of the aging king Dashratha of Koshala kingdom and his eldest queen Kaushalya. Rama has three younger brothers: Laxmana, Bharat, and Shatrughana. Rama is the most competent and inspiring of all brothers, and he is favored by his father, and almost everyone else, to be the next ruler of Ayodhya. On the eve of his coronation, Rama’s step-mother Kaikeyi demands two boons from King Dashratha that (A) Rama be exiled to distant demon-infested Dandaka forest, and (B) her son Bharata be coronated as the next king. King Dashratha passes away in grief, and even though Bharata pleads Rama to take over, Rama insists on honoring his father’s words. Rama’s faithful wife and devoted brother insist on accompanying Rama on his exile. Toward the end of their exile, demon-king Ravana abducts Sita. Rama and Laxmana take the help of monkeys and bears to wage a war against mighty Ravana, win the war, retrieve Sita, and return back to Ayodhya when Rama is promptly coronated after a 14-year delay—as planned earlier.

Interestingly, Rama is unaware of his godly incarnation or divine consciousness. If Rama was divine he would have known the fate of his wife Sita’s abduction by Ravana, well in advance. He would have known where Ravana had taken and hidden Sita. He would have known of her faithful purity and piety even after long captivity in kidnapper Ravana’s

abode. To serve his life's intended purpose, Rama had to be born as a mortal human, and he had to be unaware of any of his divine powers and supporters. This was mandated in order for a mortal Rama to be able to kill mighty demonic Ravana on a somewhat uneven playing field. Ravana had acquired divine boons and he was guaranteed protections from other super-powerful entities through his wisdom and penances (Egnes & Reddy, 2016; Gehani, 2020).

In MVR Book-4 *Kishkindha Kanda*, Chapter-12, when his wife Sita was abducted by demon-king Ravana, Rama is shown to be sobbing everyday just like another mortal man. In Book-6 *Yuddha Kanda*, Chapter-37 when Rama's dear brother Laxmana was critically injured and made unconscious by Ravana's magical super-strong weapons, Rama sobbed and cried where he would find another brother like Laxmana. At that time, Rama felt devastated as if he had lost the war.

In MVR Book-1 *Bala Kanda* chapter-1, Rama grew up as a powerful bull among men. When the sage Narada asks him to elaborate, Valmiki describes leader Rama as follows (Gehani, 2020, pp. 51–52):

*...he is brave and illustrious, disciplined
and renowned in all three worlds.
He is wise and well-versed in the science of polity
He is well-spoken and glorious.
This man, slayer of his enemies, has broad shoulders
and strong upper arms, a graceful neck and a strong jaw.
He is a skilled archer with a muscular body and long arms.
He holds his head with pride, and he walks with long strides.
Splendid and prosperous, he has smooth skin and large eyes.
His well-proportioned body is endowed with all auspicious marks.*

Rama was caring, compassionate, and forgiving others while serving—whether he was in prosperity or in adversity. In Book-4 *KishKindha Kanda*, Chapter-14 the newly reinstated monkey king Sugriva delayed organizing his monkey forces to search for Sita. He was reprimanded by his minister Hanumana. Laxman too cautioned Sugriva. Sugriva rushes and falls at the feet of Rama for forgiveness. Rama forgives Sugriva and advises Sugriva that,

*A friendship should help at the right time.
Only then the friendship will remain.*

From his early teenage years, Prince Rama became deeply aware of the virtuous *dharmic* injunctions he wanted to uphold under all circumstances. *Dharma* here means the righteous path. Firstly, as one born and committed to be a warrior class *Kshatriya*, his greatest virtuous *dharma* was protection of all his subjects from internal and external oppressors. Secondly, to establish virtuous *dharma* he took two major pious paths: *Satya* (Truth) and *Ahimsa* (Non-violence). The sages whom Rama admired had underscored in philosophical scriptures that whichever virtuous *dharma* path one follows with steadfastness, that virtuous *dharma* would protect one.

MVR provides insights beyond Rama's exterior physical attributes to show he developed his inner strengths and confidence. Valmiki (n.d.; 2020; Gehani, 2020, pp. 50–51) notes:

*...Rama is aware of his duties.
He is truthful and dedicated to the welfare of his subjects.
He is learned, virtuous, and single-minded.
...Rama has brilliant memory and a ready wit.*

*... Rama is generous
...ready to sacrifice everything for the truth.*

*...This courteous, brave, and wise man is loved by all who know him.
As all rivers flow into the sea, so all good and noble people come to Rama.*

Thus Rama has not only developed his exterior physical strength, mental toughness, and intellectual brightness, which are all tangible and transient, but he has also developed his deep inner consciousness, and strong spirit as well, which are intangible qualities and can be far more powerful. Rama continues this growth and development through the various individuals and entities he encountered during the different stages of his life and his epic journey during the 14 years of his exile.

RAMA'S INNER CONSCIOUSNESS DEVELOPMENT

MVR presents an inspiring life story of virtuous Rama, the choices he makes, and how he overcomes obstacles in his way as he upholds his virtuous *dharmic* duties to the best of his capabilities. One can consider

the inward “ME” journey of a leader in different phases: from subconscious to self-conscious to super-conscious; and from the sensory-physical consciousness of the individual alone, to vision-logic consciousness, and the causal universal one (Wilber, 1996). These are concentric circles or nested spheres of self-actualization holarchy of unfolding and enfolding. The journey continues from the crude to subtler deeper domains, while every successive stage transcends and includes the prior stages. This is Wilber’s (1996) holonic perspective. We explore this for Rama through his encounters and engagement with some of his closest associates.

Sita—The Faithful Misunderstood Wife

Rama married princess Sita, a mysteriously adopted daughter of King Janak, after winning her in a surprising bow-breaking contest (Gehani, 2020; Memon, 2001; Valmiki, n.d.; 2020). Rama and Sita fell deeply in love with each other. When Rama was exiled by his step-mother Kaikeyi, Sita insisted on accompanying Rama into the demon- and snake-infested Dandaka forest. MVR’s characterization of Sita is as a paragon of many virtues, most prominent being her faithfulness to Rama. Sita believed that her primary *dharma* or virtuous duty was to follow her husband. She preferred to die rather than to live away from Rama back in Ayodhya, under Bharat’s care and luxuries. She was extremely happy sojourning with Rama for the first 12–13 years of Rama’s exile. When Sita was forcefully abducted by demon-king Ravana, Rama cried everyday worrying about Sita’s safety. But after killing demon-king Ravana, winning the war, and after she was rescued from Ravana’s kingdom in Lanka, Rama developed a turbulent unsure relationship with Sita.

In the late stage of Rama’s exile, he encounters two critical situations where he questions Sita’s purity and her faithfulness (Gehani, 2020). Sita opens Rama’s eyes with her assertiveness, self-confidence, and courage. When Sita was forcefully abducted, and in ferocious Ravana’s captivity, she never swayed from her faithfulness to Rama. She suffered enormously and at times lost any hope of being rescued. She even once wanted to take her life, but decided to live on. Sita was therefore deeply hurt when Rama questioned her fidelity and accused her of being touched by another man in whose captivity she remained for so long. Rama told Sita that he could not take her back as his wife, and Sita was free to choose anyone else as a protector—including Laxmana or the ogre Vibhishana. Sita replied with great dignity and pride (Gehani, 2020, pp. 290–291),

*How harsh and cruel are the things you have said to me!
 You are no vulgar man, and I am no vulgar woman.
 Unworthy sentiments, I assert I am not what you suspect.
 Have faith, trust. I swear on my honor, and ask you,
 because some women go wrong, can you suspect the entire gender?
 Suspect me not.
 Remember your personal knowledge of me.
 How do you refer to Ravana touching my body?
 That was not of my seeking, nor even of my tolerating.
 That which I can control, my heart, has always been with you.
 As for my limbs, what could I do when they were overpowered?
 ...
 If you give me up, I am indeed lost, ruined beyond redemption.
 When you sent that hero Hanumana to search for me,
 why did you not send the fatal message of abandonment?
 If he had told me, I would have died before his eyes
 and spared you all this trouble.*

*Why undergo all these risks to your life and those of your friends?
 All these might have been avoided.*

*You have let your ill-temper run away with your judgment,
 and like a low-bred man, esteemed me lightly
 as though I was no better than the ordinary type of woman.*

*All this has not weighed with you so much as a feather
 before you condemned me and finally discarded me.*

Then Sita looked straight into Rama's face. When she saw no change in Rama's stern, cold stare, Sita then turned to Laxmana, who too was standing dazed and perplexed, and said,

*Build me a pyre, I pray you.
 Suspected and cast away by my husband,
 I cannot, I will not live any longer.
 Fire, consuming fire, is the only remedy for this woe.*

Sita successfully passed her fire test, and the Lord of Fire validated her purity and faithfulness. Rama was fully satisfied, and he accepted Sita back

as his dutiful life. Rama vividly saw the inner strength of Sita's faithfulness. But faithfulness is an intangible virtue, and sometimes hard to prove. It is therefore often suspected by the most trusting leaders. A perennial question to ponder is whether this doubt was fair on Rama's role as a husband.

A similar incident once again took place in Ayodhya many years later. Some citizens of Ayodhya murmured that Sita and Rama were setting a bad example for their wives, because Rama had accepted Sita back after she had lived with demon-king Ravana for many months. These people questioned Sita's purity, even after she had passed the fire test. Though Rama was shocked to hear this, to protect the stain on his reputation, Rama again asked Sita to take an oath of purity. Rama was willing to send her pregnant wife to far-off Valmiki's Ashram. This time it was too much for Sita. She chose to request Mother Earth to take her back, which it did. Why was a wise leader like Rama so harsh toward his dutiful wife? Sita made Rama realize that faith could not be doubted beyond a certain extent. When a leader crosses that limit, the faithful must leave and depart. The timid questioning leader does not deserve the faithful followers anymore.

Laxmana: A Devoted Younger Brother

Rama and Laxmana spent over a decade together in the dark demon-infested Dandaka forest. Laxmana has been interpreted to symbolize Rama's physical side. Many observers conjecture that Rama's love for his step-brother Laxmana was almost as deep as Rama's love for his wedded Sita (Sastri, 1994). Sita even tells Hanumana that Laxmana seemed dearer to Rama than herself. Laxmana never did anything without Rama's instructions.

Rama often proclaimed his passion and commitment for his duty, truthfulness, and honor. In Laxmana's relatively simpler outlook, *dharma* seemed too abstract. It had limited appeal or utility for him living his day-to-day life. In the battlefield of war with Ravana, Laxmana seemed more in favor of following *artha* or economic utility, than *dharma* or virtuous duty. Laxmana, being more physical-driven, was prone to occasional outbursts of anger. These were often followed by quick repentance. Laxmana's likes and dislikes, just like our bodies' likes and dislikes, seemed mostly tangible, transparent, and transient. Laxmana's attention, as a devoted watchful guard, rarely digressed beyond Rama's well-being and

safety. That is exactly what our body does too—protecting us and our inner spirit from the fluctuations of our surrounding environment and alien attacks.

Laxmana was also generous. He spoke little, and he was shy before women. Our physical bodies too may act in similar ways. For example, Laxmana admitted that he could not recognize Sita's discarded head or neck jewels as Laxmana always saw only Sita's feet—because his mother Sumitra had instructed Laxmana to treat Sita just like his own mother. Laxmana taught Rama as well as us that our physical body, though transient, must be cherished as a treasure. However, our chattering physical desires and temperament must be carefully regulated. Furthermore, upholding virtuous *dharmā* is a higher purpose of our core human consciousness than the upkeep and survival of our physical body.

Hanumana—A Developed Servant Follower

In *MVR*, the wise monkey-man Hanumana was the prime minister of the exiled and reinstated king Sugriva, and played multiple pivotal roles in Rama's victory over ogre king Ravana. Everybody in *MVR* seems to have an occasional flaw—except for the devoted servant follower Hanumana.

Similar to Rama's unawareness of his divine qualities, Hanumana was cursed in his childhood that he would not be conscious of his super-powerful strengths unless he was reminded and made conscious of his super-powerful strengths at the right needful juncture by someone else (Sastri, 1994, p. 252). Therefore, Hanumana did not know that he could stretch his shape to become huge like a mountain, or turn it miniscule like a common monkey, or even smaller so that he could slip under locked doors in Sri Lanka without any palace guards noticing Hanumana (unless he wanted them to do so).

Hanumana was not only physically powerful, but he was also a strategic thinker. Hanumana single-handedly planned and executed many of Rama's big strategic projects. Hanumana was also creative in using his burning tail to destroy Ravana's strategic weapons and other resources stored in different parts of Ravana's Golden Sri Lanka. Hanumana showed alternate moods of optimism and pessimism. All the qualities of Hanumana, and his immense sincerity, endeared Hanumana to Rama, Laxmana, and Sita (Sastri, 1994, p. 289). Sita gifted Hanumana her precious pearl necklace at the time of Rama and Sita's belated coronation in Ayodhya after their homecoming.

Hanumana taught Rama and us the dignity and delight of self-less devotion to our role model. Hanumana was blissfully happy serving Rama unconditionally—no matter what Rama needed. Rama was so overjoyed by Hanumana's service that Rama gave a boon to Hanumana that whenever Rama's life story is recited, Hanumana will also be always present and prayed. Therefore, we note that wherever we see Rama, Laxmana, and Sita, we also see Hanumana—as Hanumana pleaded. Hanumana is a paragon of servant leadership not only for Rama, but for all of us in modern times.

King Ravana—Mighty, Wise, but also Perverted

In MVR Ravana is described as one who achieved material greatness, and much intellectual wisdom, without caring for nurturing his spiritual goodness. Ravana was highly learned (with 10 heads worth of intellectual wisdom), and became highly knowledgeable and intellectual. However he did not develop humility. In his arrogance about his material strength and looted wealth, he disdained and ignored less physically endowed humans. He, therefore, did not even bother to ask protection from humans and monkey-men, to his great detriment. Ravana had abducted many beautiful women from many far-off kingdoms. They were imprisoned in his palaces for his periodic pleasure. In the last year of his life, a lustful Ravana was infatuated with possessing a beautiful and much younger Sita, who was lawfully married to Rama. Ravana considered Sita his lawful prey because she was in the territory he controlled with his might and ogres. Ravana's carnal desire was, however, frustrated in front of Sita's chastity and faithfulness to her husband Rama. In MVR Book-6 *War Yuddha Kanda*, Chapter-5, Ravana's brother Vibhishana cautioned his demonic and arrogant brother to return Sita to Rama with a sincere apology. Instead, Ravana insulted and kicked his brother Vibhishana in the chest. Vibhishana and his assistants then sought shelter with Rama.

At his deathbed in the battlefield, Ravana saw Rama standing humbly near his feet for receiving Ravana's last words of wisdom (Chikhalikar, 2003; Fallen, 2009; Valmiki, n.d.; 2020). Ravana raised his hand to salute Rama, congratulating Rama for his hard-fought victory. And then Ravana generously offered the following advice to victorious Rama (Shah & Shah, 2021, p. 35):

if only I had more time as your teacher than as your enemy.

*(You) Standing at my feet as a student should,
unlike your rude younger brother,
You are a worthy recipient of my knowledge.
I have very little time so I cannot share much,
but let me tell you one important lesson
I have learnt in my life.*

*Things that are bad for you, seduce you easily;
you run impatiently to them.
But things that are actually good for you fail to attract you;
you shun them creatively,
Finding powerful excuses to justify your procrastination.*

*That is why I was impatient to abduct Sita
but avoided meeting you.*

*This is the wisdom of my life.
My last words.
I give to you.*

Rama learned from Ravana how not to be ever attached to one's material strength, weapons, and possessions.

RAMA'S LEADERSHIP STYLE

Thus, Rama learned many significant lessons from his inner journey and his close meaningful encounters with (a) his faithful wife Sita, (b) his devoted brother Laxmana, (c) his devoted follower Hanumana, and (d) his arch-rival, wise but misguided, demon-king Ravana.

What kind of leader did that make Rama? Having considered Rama's inner journey and his key encounters, we next analyze Rama's leadership style. We do this by testing Rama's leadership philosophy and practices against some of the popular leadership theories such as resonant and virtuous leadership (RVL).

BEYOND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Muniapan (2007, p. 104) explored the leadership style of Rama in MVR because "he (Rama) has transformed and continues to transform millions

of Indians even today.” Muniappan (2007) uses 4-I dimensions of Bass and Avolio (1994)’s model of transformational leadership to study Rama’s leadership. These include: Inspirational Motivation (IM); Idealized Influence (II); Intellectual Stimulation (IS); and Individualized Consideration (IC). Muniapan employs the definitions of Burns (1978, 1982) and Bass and Avolio (1994) that a transformational leadership process appeals to higher ideals and moral values of his followers. Based on above analysis, Muniapan (2007), and others (such as Krishnan, 1990) have classified Rama as surpassing a Transformational Leader (Krishnan, 1990). We however wish to employ hermeneutic qualitative research that is often employed to interpret classical literature. Compared to leadership styles in the twentieth century, we discuss two promising dynamic, innovative, and positive forms of leadership models for the complex environment of the twenty-first century.

RESONANT LEADERSHIP

Resonant Leadership inspires people by creating hope through shared vision for immediate as well as distant futures (Mckee et al., 2008). Few leadership researchers have focused on the subjective side of leaders: how do leaders lead, how do they energize themselves and others with inspiration and motivation, and how do they unleash maximum creativity and talent of their associates and followers. Leaders develop shared values and virtues to inspire mutual respect and trust. As evidenced earlier, Rama illustrates and exceeds all the key attributes of Resonant Leadership. He goes deeper into his commitment for his *dharmic* virtues and values. And, finally, Rama is very effective in defeating oppressive demons and their king Ravana, and fulfilling his purpose of restoring the balance between the good and the evil in the world.

VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP

Aristotle (384 BCE–322 BCE) proposed that virtues of a leader are created and cultivated over a substantial period of time through habituation (Aristotle, 1985; Barnes, 1984). Aristotle’s virtue theory postulates that the purpose of life (or leadership) is to maximize flourishing and overall well-being (of self, others, and the organizations) by living in harmony (Neubert, 2011). He leveraged four key foundational virtues

such as: (1) courage, (2) justness, (3) self-control, and (4) wisdom (Annas, 1981; Bachmann, 2019; Plato, 1961).

In view of the rampant violations and the ethical compromises of leaders in the upper echelons of many businesses, many organizational researchers have shown interest in the field of virtuous leadership (Pearce et al., 2008). Based on their review of the world's leading thinkers, these researchers noted that virtuous leaders have preference for (a) caring, (b) compassion, (c) integrity, and (d) wisdom. These must be balanced with the conventional measures and drivers of organizational performance such as (e) return on investment, (f) efficiency/productivity, and (g) competitive advantage.

Based on these classical philosophers' theories, McLaughlin and Cox (2015, p. 75) proposed that in modern organizational context, virtues are "contextual, learned (internalized) habits that reflect and involve discriminating moral judgment and deliberation." Virtuous leaders discern right and wrong decisions, and actions that ensure honesty and justice. They inspire all stakeholders to connect with their higher meanings and purposes (Cameron, 2011).

RAMA AS RESONANT VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP (RVL)

An ethical righteous leader's role, like Rama's, is enigmatic and hard to fathom clearly. Rama wanted to resonate with his people and fulfill his promises to his subjects even if it demanded a high sacrifice. Rama was willing to be virtuous and stand-alone, separate from his loving wife, just to preserve his *dharmic* duty. As a result of such caring and virtuousness, Rama's reign or Ram Rajya is considered as ideal reign. Since his time, Ram Rajya has stood for the perfect virtuous rule of a leader that ushers in widespread well-being for all in a kingdom or a nation (Richman, 2007). Rama's ministers had open discussions about the prosperity of the common people of the land. Rama listened to his followers, even when they criticized him. Considering his injustice to Sita, as a personal penance, Rama too switched to sleeping on a bed of grass on the floor in his palace.

Egnes and Reddy (2016, p. 346) retell idyllic Valmiki's description of Rama's reign in a highly aesthetic poetic form:

*In the reign of Rama, no woman was ever a widow,
No one suffered from sickness or disease or old age.*

*In the reign of Rama, there were no thieves,
no calamities, no pain in childbirth,
and no parents buried a child.*

*In the reign of Rama no one felt greed,
No one felt poor, no one felt hungry,
And all were contented to do their duty,
Whether their status was high or low.*

There was widespread social justice, environmental sustainability, and climate control in the reign of Rama (Egnes & Reddy, 2016, p. 347).

Rama's virtuous *dharmic* rulership (Ram Rajya) has been seen for a long time as the perfect epitomization for a resonant virtuous leader that wishes to usher in widespread well-being to all the people of his or her kingdom (Richman, 2007). Rama cared for every single subject in his kingdom, across caste, race, gender, and class. From this annotated review of Rama's life and epic journey, and the attributes of Rama listed by sage Narada in the 1st Book of *Bala Kanda*, five key distinctive pillars of Rama's leadership attributes have emerged. As discussed below, these may be collectively hypothesized as Rama's Resonant Virtuous Leadership (RVL) Model.

RAMA'S RVL—VIRTUOUS VALUES

Rama was an upholder of virtuous values. For him right values always trumped over everything at all costs, at all times. For example, in the thick of the battle with demon-king Ravana, his brother Vibhishana and his four followers sought Rama's refuge. Rama gave them refuge, even though some of Rama's advisors suspected them to be Ravana's tricksters or spies (Muniapan, 2007, p. 111). This is trust and forgiveness. Another core value of Rama's RVL is fair play. In the thick of battle in war *Yuddha Kanda*, Chapter-38, when Rama had destroyed Ravana's chariot, and Ravana seemed exhausted and helpless, Rama could have easily killed Ravana and ended the war. But Rama let Ravana go home, recuperate, and reflect carefully whether he should continue his immoral and unethical war or surrender (Gehani, 2022, p. 268). Like Rama, other RVL examples include Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and more who also held tightly to their core unique values (Gehani, 2019).

Rama's RVL—Mindful Presence Here and Now

In a highly dynamic reality of war and turbulence, RVLs like Rama must always stay focused on the present and now moment. Rama was waging an intense battle against mighty demon-king Ravana, who had superior armed forces and weapons. Ravana's demons were also fighting on their home island turf. Rama, supported by monkeys and bears, was fighting against tough odds. He also had to be always well-aware of the magic and tricks Ravana was capable of and deploying everyday. But Rama's constant self-awareness won the battle.

Rama's RVL—Breakthrough Visionary

Even while present in the moment, Rama was always also thinking far beyond the short-term horizon of now and tomorrows. The prime example is that Rama incarnated as a mortal human to restore the disturbing imbalance of oppressing materialist demons, overpowering and oppressing the sages and knowledge-seeking common people of Ayodhya. All of Rama's actions were fully committed to that long-term vision. Similarly, one worthy long-term breakthrough vision in the world today could be social equality and world peace.

Rama's RVL—Inclusion and Diversity

Rama's RVL leveraged the total talent pool available to them. When in need, Rama did not hesitate to seek the help and refuge of even other sub-human species such as monkeys and bears. Similarly, high-performance organizations in the twenty-first century must not limit themselves to a partial pool, using men or women only, or whites only, or Christians, or Muslims, or Buddhists only as filters. Everyone can add strength to the achievement of the vision.

Table 7.1 Rama's resonant virtual leadership model

<i>Rama's RVL attributes</i>	<i>Brief descriptions</i>
1. Upholds virtues and values	Grant refuge, honor fair play
2. Mindfully present	Attentive and alert to here and now; changes
3. Breakthrough visionary	Long-term and innovative orientation
4. Inclusion of diversity	Leverage total talent pool; all strengths
5. Caring and compassionate	Generous in helping and sharing

Rama's RVL—Caring Compassionate and Generous

Rama was caring and compassionate to all those who sought his help and refuge. In MVR Book-4, *Kishkindha Kanda*, Chapter-7, Rama was willing to help dethroned king Sugriva and kill his stronger older brother Vaali who had abducted Sugriva's wife and kingdom. When Vibhishana sought his refuge, Rama consulted with all his advisors, took everyone's opinions, and then decided to give refuge to Vibhishana and his four demon associates—just because they had sought Rama's shelter. Rama believed that his *dharmic* virtue was clear that anyone who comes to him for sanctuary must not be turned away. Table 7.1 shows a model of Rama's Resonant Virtual Leadership (RVL).

In conclusion, these are the five pillars of Rama's Resonant Virtuous Leadership. We believe that these pillars are likely to perform as well in the twenty-first century, as these did in Rama's troubled times in c.7th century BCE, in the Gangetic Plains of Ancient India, based on the examples of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., who practiced RVL in the socio-political arena (Gehani, 2019). Hopefully the courage and values of RVL will show their benefits and impact in corporate settings as well.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study road-mapped leader Rama's inner journey to help us with our transformation as a better leader for our increasingly dynamic, uncertain, and complex times. In this chapter we found inspiration, motivation, and practical suggestions to help us become a more empathetic, caring,

and inclusive leader. With these values, our improved relationships would help sustain our effectiveness. We explored the key leadership practices of Rama to develop a solid foundation for a new model of Resonant Virtuous Leadership (RVL) in the twenty-first century.

SANSKRIT TRANSLATION CHALLENGES

A word of caution: a thoughtful translation from East to West often involves carrying over ideas across cultural boundaries and barriers. This may lose some of the essence and their contextual meaning (Egenes & Reddy, 2016; Gehani, 2020). Translating and hermeneutically interpreting an epic ancient poem like *Ramayana* in an ancient Eastern language such as Sanskrit, to a modern western language such as English, introduces additional space and time-related hardships and misunderstandings. Some scholars suggest that our much-cherished classics need to be re-translated every generation or about 20–25 years with current idioms to make the translations relevant, useful, and more meaningful.

Translating Indian classic literature, such as *Ramayana*, *Mahabharat*, or *The Bhagavad Gita*, demands translating and interpreting unique Sanskrit words such as *Atma* (consciousness), *Param-atma* (super-consciousness), *Dharma* (duty), *Karma* (actions), *Purusha-arth* (purpose for humans), *Prakriti* (nature), etc. This is further complicated by the fact that many Sanskrit words are heavily conjugated, and these need to be split in their appropriate parts.

There are also many culturally loaded exotic phrases that need to be retained in translation. For example, Sita is described as walking with the swaying gait of an elephant, and Rama had the strength of a bull among men. These metaphors may have been clear and much appreciated many centuries ago, but these may seem somewhat offensive to contemporary readers. Over more than 100 generations since c.700 BCE when Valmiki etched his *Ramayana* on Tamra tree leaves, many phrases in epic classic poems have been refined and re-refined till they became superlative and larger than life with a grandeur of emotions—which to some readers may seem somewhat excessive for our contemporary lives.

Abridging translation from the original 25,000 verses of Valmiki's *Ramayana* may also lose or add some of the original grandeur. For a textual analysis of MVR see Subramaniam (2023). This chapter focused on just four of the main characters around Rama, while *Ramayana* is replete with hundreds of other characters. We must, therefore, read

various remarks and interpretations in this research study with an open mind, and some cultural respect and tolerance. Our focus is on the core meaning intended, rather than the finer minor nuances that may vary significantly from one geographic region to another, from one context to the next. *Ramayana* can be better seen as a book of inspirations rather than as a manual of instructions. Rama and Laxmana can be better referred as Rama and Laxmana, as they are reverently called in everyday life in India.

Shah and Shah (2021, p. 13) have reported that peace and harmony are rare in today's times because "a large majority of leaders" in the upper echelons are primarily "engaged in self-serving pursuits of personal glorification and enrichment." These researchers, therefore, focused their attention on ethics and governance in the time of *Ramayana* by taking some of its "characters and situations." Their purpose is to motivate young generation and help faculty introduce new ideas into their class discussions (Shah & Shah, 2021).

Deeper non-dogmatic research studies of India's ancient literature *Ramayana* (and *Mahabharata*) with the help of more recent developments and innovations of sciences can help enormously (Subramaniam, 2023). Their interpretations with qualitative and quantitative analytical methods can provide us much more satisfactory answers than the sporadic controversies of ancient classics in India and in other traditions sometimes generate for selected few misguided people's political motives and their interest to influence or misguide gullible millions.

Valmiki's *Ramayana* is a rich ancient literature which has withstood the test of time and space over centuries and long continental distances. This research study demonstrated and contributed to the outcome that Rama's inner journey of self-realization and consciousness, with close encounters with a wide variety of individuals and other entities, is even more inspiring for the leaders around the world who may be struggling with the social distancing 'New Normal' demanded by COVID pandemic. This chapter may provide hope for leaders who are struggling and searching for greater inspiration.

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A Qualitative Examination of the Leadership Traits of Rām from Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ

Ravi Subramaniam

INTRODUCTION

Trait theories of leadership have explored whether certain traits differentiate leaders from non-leaders. Through the first half of the twentieth century, trait theory dominated leadership research. Then Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) expressed their skepticism, stating that the trait lists were exhaustive and inconsistent. After these reviews, researchers' attention shifted to behavioral and situational aspects of leadership (Blanchard et al., 1993; Fiedler, 1978; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977, 1988; Kerr & Jermier, 1978).

Some psychologists, however, continuing to study personality traits synthesized the exhaustive lists of traits by applying factor analysis and created a five-factor model—Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness—(Goldberg, 1990; McCrae &

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Costa, 1987, 1997). This big-five model has been used extensively in management research, such as in explorations of the personality correlates of leadership (Bono & Judge, 2004; Judge et al., 2002).

During the same time, researchers introduced new theories identifying “extraordinary” traits, such as the qualities of charisma, moral reasoning, servant, authentic, spiritual, motivational, transformational, and transactional (Yukl, 2013). Though traits theory had this resurgence, researchers were concerned whether these leadership traits could address complex business situations (Gordon & Yukl, 2004).

UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP: A HISTORICAL QUEST

The search for understanding the traits of leadership pre-dates modern management. Zaccaro et al. (2004) found leaders’ traits specified in different ancient civilization’s literatures. They quoted examples from *Lao-tzu* in Chinese literature, dated 6 BCE, describing leaders as selfless, hardworking, and honest. They also gave examples describing attributes of heroes given in early and medieval mythology like Homer’s *Illiad and Odyssey*. Further, they identified leadership qualities of wisdom and capacity from Plato’s *Republic* and seeking virtue from Aristotle’s *Politics*. Bass (1990) in his historical review of leadership traits acknowledged that leader’s attributes have been discussed, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, the Rāmāyaṇa, Babylonian stories, and Icelandic sagas.

My study explored the leadership traits from the Eastern classical book of wisdom on leadership, *Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ*. My interest in studying leadership in the *Rāmāyaṇ* comes from my cultural background. Since my childhood, every April during the nine-day festival of Rām’s birthday, I joined my family in chanting the original Sanskrit text of the *Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ*, hearing some lectures about Rām and his royal family, and relating his story to contemporary life. This inspired me to explore what are Rām’s leadership traits, so that the role model of Rām might be applied to contemporary complex business situations and society.

The story of Rāmāyaṇ has been told throughout time for its greatness as an example of the qualities of leadership as found in the incidents referring to Rām, his brothers, King Daśaratha, King Janaka and Sītā. *Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ* has always had a significant place in the minds and hearts of Indian peoples.

Prior management research by Muniappan (2007) applied a hermeneutic method of qualitative analysis to one volume of *Shrimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ* (Bala Kand). Using this interpretative method of study, he analyzed the original text in the light of transformational leadership characteristics. In the volume of studies on the Rāmāyaṇ from the perspectives of leadership and management (Gupta et al., 2016), none of the authors suggested any techniques or solutions by which an individual could develop the ideal leadership traits of Rām. Abidin and Joebagio (2018) identified nine values or principles from the Indonesian Rāmāyaṇ that a contemporary leader could use in developing personality traits to become an altruistic leader.

The aim of this research was to identify all the traits, including the core trait, that exemplify Rām's leadership and to present a scientifically validated technique to help modern business leaders develop these traits.

QUANTITATIVE STUDY METHODS

To comprehensively understand the nature of Rām's leadership, a qualitative research method was employed. In-depth qualitative research allows one to question preconceived notions within the field of leadership. Qualitative approaches are preferred for understanding the complex and embedded phenomena in leadership (Klenke, 2008).

I used the grounded theory approach to qualitative research which was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for the purpose of constructing theory grounded in data. The uniqueness of this method is that the constructed theory is derived from the data collected during the research process rather than being conceived a priori to the research study. The intent of a grounded theory study is to inductively generate an abstract analytical schema of a phenomenon grounded in the concrete evidence of the qualitative data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell, 2013).

DATA SOURCES

The data collected for my study originates from the Sanskrit text, *Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ*, and translations written by authors Hari Prasad Sasthri (1952) and Gita Press (2014), as well as the word-by-word commentary by the late Rao Shahib P.S. Krishnamurthy Iyer (2013). Data sources included segments of text in which characters talk about Rām's traits and

attitudes, incidents in which Rām displays his leadership personality, and Rām’s own statements, advice, comments, or views about leadership traits.

I read the entire original Sanskrit text of *Shrimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ*, using English translation when needed, and created codes in English. Passages from the Sanskrit text and translation were compared with the codes and categories that emerged by analyzing the text, the process that Glaser and Strauss (1967) call constant comparative method of data analysis.

CONSTANT COMPARISON METHOD

Analysis of the incidents in the text proceeded through three steps of the constant comparative method: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In open coding, incidents, events, or activities that happened in the text were considered as raw data, and codes were derived from those data. Coding was not done based on just words or sentences, but on the level of incidents or events in the story. Throughout the process of the research, whenever I analyzed an individual event or incident, rather than viewing it as an isolated event, I connected that event with the broader context of the whole *Shrimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ*. Inferences were drawn based on the text, bracketing (putting aside) my own preconceived notions about Rām and others (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

As reading the text, I created open codes of leadership traits. “Futuristic,” “intellectual,” and “ethical awareness” are a few examples of initial open codes that were identified. Qualitative data analysis software (atlas.ti) assisted me in connecting codes to textual material. During the open coding process, I created memos and notes so that later I could explore the meaning in more depth to help in creating categories. Memos detail why and how decisions are being made related to all aspects of coding process (Chun et al., 2019). In the next stage (axial coding), codes were analyzed to determine which ones had common characteristics and thus could be merged into categories. During this phase also a core category begins to emerge (Chun et al., 2019). For example, the open codes of “communication skills” and “intelligence” were explored further to find the connections between them that then created the category of “eloquent.”

Finally, at the selective coding stage, one produces a theory that is grounded in the data (Chun et al., 2019). In reviewing all the categories that I had identified in axial coding, I determined which category was

most central to explaining Rām’s leadership. “Self-realized” emerged as the core category linking all the other categories. I then explored if the text supported the theory that emerged: If one possesses the Self-realized trait, they would naturally possess all other leadership traits identified in this research. For this purpose, the memos, notes, and categories that I had developed or evolved during the process helped me develop this central theme with a deeper understanding.

CATEGORIES IDENTIFIED FROM GROUNDED THEORY CODING

Unless stated otherwise, the referenced passages are from Shastri (1952). The reference is given as the book number, chapter, and page number (e.g., Book 1, chap. 1, p. 4). When clarification was needed, I referred to the Gita Press and P. S. Krishnaswami Iyer commentaries. These will be referred to as follows. Gita Press is referred to as Gita Press (GP), Year (2014), Volume, book-chapter-verse (e.g., GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 59, 1-1-3). P.S. Krishnaswami Iyer is referred to as PSK Iyer, Year, Vol. number, page number, chapter number, and Verse number e.g., PSK Iyer, 2010, Vol. 1, p. 1, 1-1-3).

The categories identified from the data included: Self-realized, *Ethical (Dharma)*, *Trustworthy*, *Humble*, *Developmental*, *Knowledgeable*, *Fore-sighted*, *Eloquent*, *Appreciative*, *Benevolent*, *Attractive*, and *Invincible*.

Self-Realized

The foremost trait that emerged after reading and coding the Rāmāyaṇ was the trait “Self-realized,” or “possessed of the higher Self.” *Ātmavān*—a Sanskrit term for Self-realized—is used in the Rāmāyaṇ to describe Rām (GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 1, 1-1-4). The following passages illustrate data from different incidents, phrases, and citations that exemplify this core category and its sub-traits.

The preeminent significance of the trait of being established in the higher Self can be found at the very beginning of the Rāmāyaṇ where Sage Vālmīki posed to Sage Nārada the question: “Is there a leader in the world who has subdued his self? who has conquered his anger? who is possessed of splendor? and who is above fault-finding? (*ātmavān ko jīta krodho dyutimān kaḥ anasūyakah*) (GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 1, 1-1-4). Sage Nārada replies that Rām is such a leader, who “meditates on his

own essence” (1-1-12), meaning ever united in his *Ātma* or higher Self. Being established in the Self (*Ātma*) is the basis of Rām’s leadership traits.

In Book 2, *Ayodhya Kanda*, when Rām’s father King Daśaratha listed the traits of Rām, he identified traits such as “*Nityam pragrahavān*” meaning “always exercised self-control and practiced purity/morality both internally and externally” (GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 196, 2-1-14). Even opponents openly called Rām a “high-souled personality” (*Mahātmane*).

The term “high-souled” is used by various characters in the *Rāmāyaṇ* to refer to Rām. In Book 1, *Bala Kanda*, Sage Viśhvāmitra asks Rām’s father Daśaratha to allow Rām to protect his sacrificial fires (*yajya*) from demons who spoil them by spilling impurities. While conversing with King Daśaratha, Sage Viśhvāmitra praises Rām as follows: “there is no match for high-souled Rām” (GP, 2014, p. 60, Vol. 1, 1-19-12). In Book 6 *Vibhishana*, the younger brother of the demon king Rāvaṇ, after being expelled by Rāvaṇ because he was supporting Rām, warns Rāvaṇ to return *Sītā*. *Vibhishana* runs towards Rām as shelter and surrenders at his feet. Before meeting Rām, he meets Rām’s friends and utters, “Do thou inform the high-souled Raghava (Rām), that magnanimous protector of the world, that I, *Vibhīṣaṇah*, have come hither” (Book 6, chap. 17, p. 37). This trait of “high-souled” was also noticed by other characters such as *Mārīcha* (golden deer demon), *Sugrīva*, and *Hanumān* on different occasions.

Here we will consider a few other examples suggesting Rām expressed his thoughts and executed actions from the level of consciousness which realizes the connectedness of ultimate reality of the Self with the essential being of others. In Book 7, *Uttara Khand*, recognizing the efforts and support given by his allies and friends, Rām addressed the assembly in a sweet voice, glancing at each one: “You are my friends, my brothers, My very Self! It is you who have saved me from misfortune, O Dwellers in the Woods! Happy is King *Sugrīva* to possess such excellent friends” (Book 7, chap. 39, p. 514). Rām addressed the gathering as my very Self (*sukurthey bhavanthaksha ca shareera bhratharasthatha*) and claimed all of them as his own brothers. By the expression “my very Self (*bhavanthaksha*),” he identified his own Self with that of others. One can understand that this is the fundamental trait which gives rise to other traits found under different categories.

Rām, during another incident, instructed *Hanumān* (the monkey servant) to go to the palace to announce his arrival to his brother *Bharat*. *Bharat* was waiting to see him after 14 years. Rām asked *Hanumān* to

meet his friend Guha, the boatman, on the way. He referred to his friend Guha as “*Ātma Samah Guha* (My very Self, Guha).”

Rām treated all the populace as his own relations. In Book 2, when Rām’s father Daśaratha decides to appoint Rām as his successor, he gets the opinion about his decision from his senior people in the kingdom. The seniors expressed how Rām feels everyone’s emotions as his own. “Rām suffers with the afflicted and rejoices like a parent when his people hold a festival” (Book 2, chap. 2, p. 154). When Rām was ordered to go for exile by his queen mother Kaikayī, the entire city of Ayodhyā citizens followed him to the forest. This shows how his love and affection toward his subjects inspired their reciprocal love.

One of the highly appreciated traits of Rām is being emotionally controlled. Rām displayed this trait in many instances irrespective of whether it was a great pleasure or a great sorrow. One incident took place when Rām was announced by his father and senior mentors as successor for Ayodhyā. When this message was told to Rām, he just said “so be it” (Book 2, chap. 3, p. 154). This incidence demonstrates that Rām was unshaken even the when great pleasures such as the kingdom were offered to him. The next morning, the event took a different turn. Kaikayī, one of his stepmothers, convinced Daśaratha to withdraw the ceremony and offer the kingdom to her son, Bharat. In addition, she also wished that Rām go to the forest and live in exile for 14 years. Hearing these words, Rām showed “no sign of distress” (Book 2, chap. 19, p. 199). The following lines clearly show the trait of being emotionally controlled:

The slayer of his foes, Shri Rāmachandra, hearing the words of Kaikayī, keen as the pangs of death, was in no way moved by them, and answered:
 "Be it so! To honour the promise made by the king, I will leave for the forest immediately, with matted locks, attired in raiment made of bark,
 (Book 2, chap. 19, p. 199)

Rām never displayed any happiness or sorrow in either situation, whether being given a kingdom or being banished to the forest. The way in which he received the news of his father giving him the kingdom and his mother’s word to go in exile to the forest was the same. Be it so! This clearly demonstrates his trait of being emotionally controlled.

Once Rām received the command from his father through his step-mother Queen Kaikayī, he accepted her command to enter the forest soon. Then, he returned to the palace to inform his mother Kausalyā

about his decision to follow the command. Not knowing the happenings between Queen Kaikayī and Rām, friends were waiting along the doorstep of King Daśaratha’s palace to give Rām his royal umbrella, fans, and chariot. Rām gently refused them, did not reveal any sorrows, and with courage and full mastery over his Self (Ātmavān), entered his mother’s palace. Thus, the verse shows his traits of being “courageous” and “emotionally stable,” as attributes of being “Self-realized.”

Ethical

The data revealed that Rām displayed the trait of “ethical leadership,” which I coded as “dharma.” Rām is considered as the embodiment of dharma. “Dharma” comes from the Sanskrit root dhri, which means “to hold, preserve, or maintain” (Sands, 2013, p. 62). Dharma has been defined as “that invincible power of nature which upholds existence. It maintains evolution and forms the very basis of cosmic life. It supports all that is helpful for evolution and discourages all that is opposed to it” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1969, p. 26).

In this research I found an example of how Rām was perceived to be the embodiment of dharma and thus upheld the evolution of society. The Rākshasa (demon) *Mārīcha* referred to Rām as “virtue incarnate” (Book 3, chap. 37, verse 13).

*Rāmo Vīgrahavān Dharmah Sādhuh Satya Parākrāmah |
rājā sarvasya lokasya devānām iva vāsavaḥ || 3-37-13*

Rām is virtue incarnate, pious, and of unfailing prowess.

He is the ruler of the entire humanity as Indra is the ruler of gods.

(GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 639, 3-37-13)

Rām is called “*Dharma Ātma*,” meaning Self-realized in ethics or Virtue-souled. Here one can see the explicit connection between the core category of being Self-realized and the trait of ethics. By not deviating from the path of righteousness, he was truly valorous. The question of his defeat did not arise because he was always following the path of evolution of society.

Rām also supported dharma in honoring his father’s promise made to Kaikayī to exile him. On his departure to the forest, Rām uttered the following words to Queen Kaikayī, “I wished to preserve dharma. Know me, like (equal to) the sages, to be a protector of dharma” (Book 2,

chap. 19, p. 200). One could infer that Rām was merely obeying his mother’s promise, but the deeper meaning of this incident is that Rām’s exile brought him to the forest where he destroyed the negative forces (demons) which were hindering the path of evolution of society—an example of how Rām’s actions were spontaneously in accord with dharma, or natural law.

Another example of how Rām was appreciated as one supporting the evolution of the universe was given by Sage Nārada in his reply to Sage Vālmīki. Sage Vālmīki enquired, “Who is the best dharmic leader today?” Sage Nārada answered, “Rām is the protector of his people, pleasing to look upon, supporting the universe, the destroyer of those who contravene the moral code” (Book 1, chap. 1, p. 3).

Rām demonstrated naturally his moral awareness of the duty of a king to *protect his subjects and make them live happily. An example is given in the following verse. In the context of considering Rām as the future king of Ayodhyā, both King Daśaratha and his counsellors praised Rām’s ethical knowledge. King Daśaratha described Rām as “Neither bearing nor speaking aught against Dharma,” “Never uttering falsehood,” “Well-versed in public and individual responsibilities,” and “Ever seeking weal for his subjects.” The senior ministers, counsellors, mentors described Rām as “satyadharmaparāyaṇaḥ” (Verse 29) meaning interested in dharma and truth, “dharmajajñāḥ” (Verse 31) meaning one who knows what dharma is, “dharmārthanaiḥpunaiḥ” (Verse 36) meaning one who is expert in dharma (ethics) and political economy (Book 2, chap. 2, p. 154). The senior ministers also attribute to Rām other traits of ethical leadership, such as keeping promises, integrity, speaking no ill about others, self-controlled, respecting every virtuous heart.*

When Bharat was appointed as king instead of Rām, because of King Daśaratha keeping his promise as demanded by Queen Kaikeyī, Rām consoled his mother Kausalyā and younger brother Lakshman regarding his decision to go to the forest. Kausalyā in grief orders Rām to stay in Ayodhyā and perform duty to her. In reply to her and to Lakṣmaṇa, Rām uttered.

*Dharmah Hi Paramah Loke Dharme Satyam Pratiṣṭhitam |
Dharma Saṅsritam Etac Ca Pitur Vacanam Uttamam ||
(GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 275, 2-21-40),*

Dharma is the highest good on earth, truth and dharma are one. My father's command is founded on dharma; hence it is superior to my mother's ruling.

(Book 2, chap. 21, p. 207)

The dharmic knowledge of Rām was clearly exhibited later through his actions when he maintained his promise even after his father's demise. First, while king Daśaratha was living, Rām honored his father's promise to Queen Kaikayī to exile him to the forest for 14 years and appoint Bharat, her son, as king for Ayodhyā. Then, after their father's death, Bharat with his ministers and mentors came to the forest in search of Rām. When they found Rām, the ministers and mentors tried to persuade Rām to return to Ayodhyā and take back the kingdom. However, Rām told that he promised his father that he will be in the forest for 14 years and then come back. Rām was steadfast in sticking to his promise given to his father. His action of following the path of truth displays Rām at the height of his moral development.

Not only did Rām advise his family members about dharmic knowledge, but he instructed kings as well. After shooting an arrow on the monkey king Bali to punish him for his immoral behavior, Rām instructed the dying King Bali about dharma and the consequences of his immoral behavior. Rām emphasized that, "It is the duty of a king to develop the art of government, be established in virtue [dharma], be endowed with valour and know how to estimate time and place" (Book 4, chap. 18, p. 211). Rām described for Bali what dharmic action he should have followed, what he missed, and why he is punishable in the eyes of the law. Even while punishing his enemies, Rām was following dharmic codes.

Trustworthy

Rām also exhibited the trait of being "trustworthy." Trust is based upon the "positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). Rām is trustworthy because others experience that he has only positive intentions toward everyone. He is established in the Self-realized trait; therefore, he can spontaneously behave in this way.

Conscientious is an extension of the trait of trustworthiness. Conscientious means that the leader displays the tendency of being thorough, organized, controlled, dependable, and decisive (Northouse, 2013). Rām

always was a conscientious leader toward the events and activities allocated to him. He executed them in a proper, well organized, and controlled manner. Let us examine a few incidents to understand these aspects of Rām's trait of being conscientious.

The search for his wife Sītā was executed in a well-organized manner in the epic (Books 4–6). Every incident, every event moved toward this goal. First, Rām delegated the authority properly. He sought the friendship with monkey king Sugrīva for this plan, won his friendship, and organized with him the plan to find Sītā. Sugrīva and all the monkey and titan troops would go in search of Sītā. Rām gave Sugrīva a primary role in helping Rām find Sītā.

Sugrīva assembled all the monkeys at the place where Rām was standing to get his command.

Rāma, these untold millions, who inhabit various mountain tracts, traversing land and sea, have come to place themselves at thy service. All are intent on their master's welfare and obedient to thy behests; they are at thy command; it is for thee to dispose of them as thou wilt. Though I am fully conversant with thy design, yet do thou order all as thou judgest best. (Book 4, chap. 39, p. 272)

In reply Rām says the following for the group and gently seeks Sugrīva to be the leader for the troop and lead the troop.

O Dear and Wise Friend, let us learn if Sītā still lives or no and ascertain in what country Rāvaṇ dwells. Then, having come to where Videha's daughter is to be found, we will adopt those measures that circumstances dictate, the hour having been fixed. (Book 4, chap. 39, p. 273)

The monkey king Sugrīva commands troops to go in four directions to search for Sītā. This incident shows how conscientious Rām was in being well planned and thorough in executing his mission.

When Sītā was found to be at Sri Lanka across the sea, again Rām with his friends and allied parties discuss how to cross the sea and organize for the construction of a bridge.

At Rāma's command, those lions among the monkeys entered the mighty forest with alacrity in hundred and thousand on every side and those

leaders of the simian tribes, tearing up the rocks, which in size they resembled, and the trees also dragged them to the sea and they covered the ocean with ... that immense causeway. (Book 6, chap. 21, pp. 53–54)

From these incidents, we can see that Rām is conscientious, being proper, controlled, and well organized in executing the plans to fulfill his goal to find Sītā.

Humble

YUKL (2013, p. 348), in his description of values of ethical leadership, defines a humble person as one who “treats others with respect, avoids status symbols and special privileges, admits limitations and mistakes, is modest about achievements, emphasizes the contributions by others when a collective effort is successful.” Rām treated others with respect, was modest about his achievements, avoided the status symbols and special privileges, and emphasized the contributions of others. The following incidents are examples of how Rām displayed the trait of humility.

Rām was noted for his obedience, his respect toward his elders. This aspect of the trait of humility was very well noted by his father King Daśaratha, who commented that Rām was always “seeking friendship with those eminent in wisdom, learning, age and conduct” and “honoring the learned and aged” (Book 2, chap. 1, p. 149).

Even the learned scholars, seniors, and elderly ministers in Ayodhyā advising King Daśaratha described Rām as “ever courteous, humble, and wise” (Book 2, chap. 1, p. 154). These qualities gave them confidence in appointing Rām as the future king for their country.

An example of the aspect of humility in avoiding special privileges and status is when Rām gave his position of leadership to his friend Sugrīva. According to their plan, a huge monkey troop was gathered by Sugrīva to search for Sītā in different directions. Sugrīva requested Rām to give them all the commands. Rām in his humility utters the following:

O Lord of the Monkeys, it is not for me to command this expedition nor for Lakṣmaṇa; it is thou who must direct it; thou shalt be its leader. Do thou, O Lord, take the command thyself in this matter, thou art fully acquainted with my purpose, O Hero. Thou, the second of my friends, art

full of courage, wise, knowing how to choose the fitting moment, devoted to my true interests, supremely loyal and accomplished. (Book 4, chap. 39, p. 273)

Although Sugrīva was waiting for Rām's command, Rām gave Sugrīva the authority to decide what is right for the situation and to act for the benefit of everyone. One could infer how gently, how humbly Rām gives the full authority to Sugrīva to act according to the situation.

Developmental

Rām led in such a way that he cultivated the development of leadership in others. In Book 6, Vibhīṣaṇaḥ, the younger brother of the demon king Rāvaṇ, wanted to join Rām's force, as he understood that Rām was fighting for truth and righteousness. Rām assembled all of his friends, the army of monkeys and bears, and his younger brother Lakshman. Rām initiated their participation in discussing whether Vibhīṣaṇaḥ could be accepted to join the team. After opening words by his monkey king friend Sugrīva, Rām addressed the gathering of monkeys with the following words:

You have heard for yourselves what your Sovereign has expressed in judicious words of deep significance regarding the younger brother of Rāvaṇ; in times of crisis one should always receive the counsel of one who desires the welfare of his friends, and who is intelligent and prudent. (Book 6, chap. 17, p. 38)

Rām Thus Invited More Views from Other Members of the Monkey Troop. The Other Monkeys Expressed the Following Words to Rām:

Nothing is unknown to thee in the Three Worlds, O Raghava; it is in deference to us that thou dost consult us as friends. Thou art loyal, brave, pious, established in heroism and dost act only after thou hast considered the matter in accord with tradition with full confidence in thy friends. Let all the intelligent and experienced ministers debate this matter thoroughly, each in his turn. (Book 6, chap. 17, p. 38)

This passage clearly indicates that the monkeys understood that Rām knew what was right, but he loved to gain full confidence from his friends through their participation. During this conversation, initially his friend Sugrīva was opposing the idea of admitting Vibhīṣaṇaḥ as a teammate. After everyone had participated in the discussion, Sugrīva was convinced that Vibhīṣaṇaḥ could become their teammate. The goal of

allowing everyone to participate and agree on admittance of Vibhīṣaṇaḥ was achieved.

In the same way, most of the major decisions, such as *building a bridge across the ocean, searching for Sītā, discussing Bharat's request for Rām to return to the kingdom, deciding on war tactics against Indrajit, and fighting against Rāvaṇ* were made with Rām initiating participation from all members of his troop. *With this quality of developmental leadership, he gained their support and concurrence in pursuing the next action.*

Knowledgeable

Throughout the Rāmāyaṇ, Rām showed familiarity with all branches of knowledge, including Vedic knowledge, geography, grammar, and scriptures. This was expressed by Sage Nārada to Sage Vālmīki when narrating Rām's traits (Book 1, chap. 1, verse 4).

A complete picture of Rām's all-round knowledge is given when he met his brother Bharata in the forest and enquired about everything—the city, administrative practices, security, water place, and also about the different sectors of people in city of Ayodhyā.

Do other monarchs know of thy decisions before they are applied? When thou hast determined upon what must and should be done, dost thou speedily accomplish it? Are lesser kings acquainted with thy determined resolve after the event or before thou hast set it in motion? Are thy forts well supplied with wealth, food, arms, water, armaments, and furnished with archers and bowmen? O Prince, does thy treasury contain more than is needed for thine expenditure? (Book 2, chap. 100, p. 370)

The quote clearly specifies how Rām gave importance for timely decisions and how to manage them. Rām's own timely decision for extending friendship to Sugrīva and accepting Vibhīṣaṇaḥ on his team allowed him to manage finding Sītā most efficiently.

Foresighted

The coding process revealed that Rām displayed leadership traits of being intuitive, strategic, and having the ability to predict future events. The

first incident was found in Book 1, chap. 30 when Rām was protecting the sacred fire performance in the forest for Sage Vishwāmitra.

On this, the two illustrious princes kept watch in the Tapovana forest continuously for six days without sleeping. Armed with bow and arrows they guarded the rishi and his sacrifice with firm resolve. Five days passed without interruption and on the sixth day Shri Rāmachandra said to Lakṣmaṇa:

“Brother, be prepared to-day.” (p. 65)

On the sixth day Rām had the intuition some danger will come to obstruct the fire sacrifice and warned his brother Lakṣmaṇ to be prepared for meeting enemies.

Another example of Rām’s intuition is when he was about to start fighting the brave demons Khara and Dhushan. From the bad omens he saw, he knew in advance the demons would be defeated. Addressing his brother Lakṣmaṇ, he said,

Meseems the cry of wild birds that frequent the woods foretells danger, nay, that the very lives of our foes are in jeopardy. Assuredly a great battle will shortly take place; the twitching of my left arm betokens it. O Hero, for us victory is imminent, and the defeat of the titan assured. (Book 3, chap. 20, p. 51)

Rām also possessed the trait of being strategic, another aspect of foresightedness, as shown in the above-mentioned event about his fight with Khara and Dhushan. Rām strategically planned that Lakṣmaṇ would move Sītā to a safe place and protect her while he dealt single-handed with the titans.

Eloquent

Rām was often identified as a great communicator. He never uttered any wrong remarks, nor did he criticize. Rām was noted by Sage Nārada as “eloquent” and with a “courteous disposition in speech” (Book 1, chap. 1, p. 4). His speech was noted for pleasant usage of words, soft words, and words appropriate to the situation.

One of the most striking incidents noticed in the data was when Rām was appreciating Hanumān’s communication skills. It demonstrated that Rām himself must be an expert communicator.

This is the minister of the King of the Monkeys, the magnanimous Sugrīva, whom I seek. O Saumitri, answer Sugrīva’s counsellor who is eloquent and warm-hearted and the sub-doer of his foes in courteous terms... His speech is neither lacking in fulness, depth, assurance or distinction; his voice issues from his breast in clear modulated tones. He expresses himself with admirable felicity without any hesitation; his tone is harmonious and moves the heart agreeably. What foe, having drawn his sword, would not be disarmed by the charm of that voice that enunciates each syllable so perfectly. O Irreproachable Prince, the king who employs messengers gifted with such talent is certain to succeed in all his undertakings, since they are enhanced at the very outset, by such *eloquence* [emphasis added]. (Book 4, chap. 3, p. 174)

In this passage about Hanumān’s speech, Rām gave importance to physical expression, including facial and body language. Furthermore, he suggested that ideal communication is full, with depth, assuring, and with clear tone, including perfect pronunciation of words and syllables. From this example of the category of “eloquent,” one can understand how Rām himself displayed eloquence.

Rām is referred to as a person “speaking soft words to all, never returning a harsh answer when treated with contumely” (Book 2, chap. 1, p. 149). King Daśaratha’s senior ministers, describing Rām, who could be a possible regent for the kingdom said,

Forgiving every injury, a comforter of the afflicted and the distressed, he addresses all with gentleness. Acknowledging every favor received in full measure, self-controlled, true to his word whatever betide, speaking no ill of others, of candid utterance, full of wisdom he ever reveres the aged. (Book 2, chap. 1, p. 154)

Rām was undisparaging in his own speech and also corrected his younger brother not to speak ill about others. In Book 3, chap. 16, when Lakṣmaṇ complained about his stepmother Queen Kaikeyī for sending Rām to the forest, he utters the following words:

“How can a woman as cruel as Kaikayī be his mother?” Lakshman says. Rām replies, “She who occupies the second place among the queens, O My Friend, should not be disparaged in any way whatsoever.” (p. 38)

In another incident, Lakshman expressed anger when he saw Bharat with his army force in forest. He felt that Bharat had come to attack his beloved brother. He talked ill about Bharat. Rām replied, “It is improper for thee to speak ill or harshly of Bharata. Those bitter things thou sayest of Bharata, thou hast in fact said of me” (Book 2, chap. 97, p. 374).

Appreciative

Rām also had the trait of appreciating others. In the beginning of Book 6, chap. 1 when Hanumān returns to Kishkinda after successfully finding Sītā at Lanka, the following words were uttered by Rām in appreciation:

The mission that Hanumān has carried out is of great significance and the most arduous in the world; none other could have achieved it, even in thought! Other than Garuda and Vayu, verily I know of no being able to cross the mighty ocean save Hanumān himself. (p. 3)

In Book 6, chap 19, when his brother Lakṣmaṇ was victorious against brave Indrajit, the son of Rāvaṇ, Rām spoke the following words in appreciation for this action:

Thou hast accomplished an auspicious and highly momentous
feat, O Thou whose exploits are beyond the power of others.

Vibhīṣaṇaḥ and Hanumān too, bore themselves with valour in the great
fight.

The conqueror of Indra having fallen in combat with thee, under thy
direction, O Lakṣmaṇa, neither Sītā nor the earth itself would be hard to
regain. (p. 267)

The following example displays how Rām appreciated even his enemy Rāvaṇ for his courage and bravery. As Rāvaṇ was dying on the battlefield, Rām consoled Rāvaṇ’s brother Vibhīṣaṇaḥ with the following words:

Nay, this hero has not succumbed on account of his lack of prowess! Endowed with burning courage in battle, having displayed the greatest energy, he fell without yielding. One should not mourn for those who, firm in their duty as warriors, for the sake of renown fall on the field of battle.

This path followed by Rāvaṇ was taught to us by the Sages and the warrior class hold it in great honour. The warrior who is slain in battle, should not be mourned, this is the law. He is as dear to me as thee. (Book 6, chap. 111, pp. 317–318)

Benevolent

At the opening of Srimad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇ, Sage Nārada mentioned benevolence as one of Rām's traits: "Wise, conversant with the ethics code, eloquent...ever-mindful of the good of those dependent on him; true to his promises, benevolent to his subjects, omniscient, renowned for his good deeds, pure, and ever responsive to devotion; meditating on his own essence" (Book 1, chap. 1, p. 4). The category of *Rām's trait of being benevolent encompasses codes like being charitable, friendly, sacrificial, service minded, and respecting elders.*

Rām was altruistic; he was always concerned about the welfare of others. Rām did not display any selfish motive throughout the epic. Rām was always concerned about his people, brother, his relatives, and creatures in the forest more than thinking about himself. Let us see some of the incidents when Rām was more concerned about others than for himself.

When his younger brother Bharat came to the forest to meet Rām, Rām greeted him by expressing his concern for Bharat. At the same time, his concern for the city is shown as follows: "Rām inquires about the city, its welfare and its protection for different classes of peoples living in it" (Book 2, chap. 100, p. 371).

Another aspect of benevolence is sacrifice. Rām had the mindset of sacrificing everything for the greatness of the society and his people. Rām in his promise to his father accepted his exile to the forest. Immediately, he was ready to sacrifice everything even his brother. He stated the following to his mother Kaikayī, "O Mother, by thine order, I am willing to surrender to my brother Bharata, not only the kingdom, but also Sītā, together with every object of desire, my wealth and my life" (Book 2,

chap. 19, p. 199). For the sake of accepting ascetic life, he was ready to even give away all his belongings, desire, and also his life as a king.

Attractive

Throughout the epic Rām was appreciated for his charming physical features such as lotus eyes, long arms, brave shoulders, dark complexion, and hair locks matted on cheeks. Every character in the Rāmāyaṇ spoke of his physical features and beauty. For example, “broad-shouldered, long-armed, possessing a conch-shaped neck and prominent chin, eminent in archery, with a muscular body, arms extending to the knees, and a noble head and brow” (Book 1, chap. 1, p. 3). It is interesting to note that, whereas other characters often remarked about Rām’s physical features, when his father king Daśaratha lists Rām’s traits, he thinks of his behavioral traits of serving others, respecting elders, and his bravery.

Invincible

This category denotes Rām’s brave actions and victorious outcomes. He could not be conquered by anyone. Rām is described as *Dhairiyavān* (courageous) by sage Nārada in his conversation with Sage Vālmīki (Book 1, chap. 1, pp. 4–5), “All the wicked Rākshasas came led by Khara, Dushane and Trishira, to engage in combat with Shri Rām, and were slain by him. Shri Rām slew fourteen thousand Rākshasas who dwelt in that forest.”

In our time, the great challenge is to achieve happiness and success in an increasingly competitive society. To guide those who want to become invincible leaders, management techniques and rules have been proposed. For example, Harung (1999/2021) has presented techniques for developing one’s full potential through the development of consciousness. Okawa (2018) provides rules on how to become an invincible leader who can seize opportunities for continuous success in the face of any difficulty.

Rām expressed the trait of being invincible by performing brave acts. An example of how his bravery was appreciated by others is when he met King Janaka and accepted the challenge of breaking the bow in exchange for Sītā. Other kings couldn’t even lift the bow, but Rām bravely took it up and broke it without exertion.

Shri Rāmachandra with a slight effort, seizing the center of the bow, lifted it up in the presence of thousands of people and without exertion drew it. By the unparalleled strength of the illustrious Rāma, the bow broke into two parts and a sound resembling the fall of a thunderbolt rang forth cleaving the mountains asunder and causing the earth to shake, and on this the people on every side fell insensible, save only Vishwāmitra, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. (Book 1, chap. 67, p. 128)

When the monkeys and Rām's army were discussing whether to admit Vibhīṣaṇaḥ into their troop, everyone was warning Rām that he might be Rāvaṇ's secret agent. Rām showed his confidence in his prowess and capacity when he said,

Whether this titan be ill-intentioned or no, what does it matter, he cannot do me the least mischief. On earth, *Pisachas*, *Danavas* and *Yakshas*, as also the titans can be slain by me with the tip of my finger, if I so desire it, O King of the Monkeys. (Book 6, chap. 18, p. 42)

When Rām fought with ogres and demons and slayed fourteen thousand of them single handily, the angels from heaven were appreciating his invincible power:

Then the Gods and the Charanas assembled and, amazed and delighted, struck their drums, showering flowers on Rāma and saying: "In this great conflict Raghava, by means of his pointed shafts, has in instant slain fourteen thousand demons, able to change their shape at will, with their generals, Khara and Dushana. Great indeed is this exploit of Rāma, versed in the science of the Self." (Book 3, chap. 30, p. 64)

RELATIONSHIP OF OTHER TRAITS WITH THE CORE CATEGORY—SELF-REALIZED

Rām, being Self-realized was able to exhibit other traits naturally such as Appreciative, Humble, Benevolent, and Eloquent. *Being established in the higher Self, Rām is found to be emotionally controlled in all situations, whether pleasurable or painful. The most striking example of this was his emotional control when he was announced as the king and when it was then denied. Rām exhibits resolute intellect or steady intellect (Sthita Pragyah). This attribute is discussed in the Bhagavad-Gita (Chapter II, verse 55): "He whose mind is unshaken in the midst of sorrows, who amongst pleasures is*

free from longing, from whom attachment, fear and anger have departed, he is said to be a sage of steady intellect.”

When the kingdom was offered to him by his father, *Rām* uttered “be it so” and accepted it. On the next day when he was asked to leave the country and go on exile to the forest, then also he uttered “be it so.” Because he was established in the higher Self, *Rām*’s emotional response to both pleasure and sorrow was naturally even, maintaining balance of mind. *Rām* supported dharma, ethical conduct, in honoring his father’s promise made to *Kaikayī* to exile him. *Rām* said to Queen *Kaikayī*, “I wished to preserve dharma” (Book 2, chap. 19, p. 200). *Rām*’s positive response to his mother *Kaikayī*’s desire for him to go to the forest according to his father promise, showed his attitude that he wanted to preserve dharma rather than to acquire wealth and power. One can infer from this that *Rām* was Self-realized.

The text connects Ram’s quality of invincibility to the core category, Self-realized. Vishwāmitra praises Rām as follows, “I know the high-souled Rām as possessed of true prowess” (GP, 2014, Vol. 1, p. 60, 1-19-13). He also commented that there is “no match for high-souled Rām” (GP, 2014, p. 60, Vol. 1, 1-19-12).

Rām equated himself to the role of sages to protect dharma. A sage does not have to think about his welfare, but from his Self-realized state he lives for the greatness of the society.

From the incident with Queen *Kaikayī* one can also infer *Rām*’s trait of being benevolent. He did not intend to have the kingdom for wealth and power, which would be the usual expectation of one wanting to become the leader.

In the following incident, *Ram*’s trustworthiness is directly connected to his Self-Realized status. *Lakshman*’s mother *Sumitra* convinces *Rām*’s mother *Kausalyā* that she can trust *Rām* to return from the forest. She states, “wherever he dwells in the forest or the city, all is one to him” (Book 2, chap. 44, p. 256). She characterizes him in a supreme level of Self-realization when she declares “all is one to him.”

Successful developmental leadership is natural for *Rām*. Being Self-realized, *Rām* patiently allowed every teammate to voice his opinion and reflect upon the situation. Moreover, he never shut out or turned out anyone who was opposing his views. His soft communication, his patient behavior, and his ability to motivate others to participate in the team indicated that *Rām* displayed naturally the developmental leadership even in a time of crisis (Book 6, chap. 17, p. 42). As a developmental leader, he

usually had a mindset and a view, then he allowed all his teammates to reflect on the situation, and later he brought them all toward the goal which was dharmic to the situation.

The person who is Self-realized will naturally, spontaneously display the trait of being eloquent—soft speech that is pleasant, harmonious, and powerful (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1990, pp. 149–155). Rām’s eloquent speech can be found in many instances, for example, dealing Sage Parasuraman’s rage, meeting Sugrīva, communication with Sage Vishwāmitra, Gautama, Āhalya, and other incidents. One could see he was soft spoken and presenting the topic in a logical way.

From these analyses, one can understand that Rām was observed by every character in the Rāmāyaṇa as being established in higher states of consciousness. This enabled Rām to display the required traits naturally.

DISCUSSION

While grounded theory does not rely on prior scholarly literature to generate research propositions prior to data collection (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 49; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45), during the coding process consideration of prior literature can create theoretical sensitivity and provide insights into the data to get more clarity for theory building (Glaser, 1998). In this section of the paper, I relate the traits of Rām to two streams of extant literature: the first about constructive-development theory and leadership, and the second about Vedic science concepts pertaining to higher states of consciousness.

CONSTRUCTIVE-DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND LEADERSHIP

Developmental psychologists have identified that there is a range of possible stages of self-development. According to Loevinger (1976), the concept of a developing self refers to the progressive redefinition or reorganization of the self in relation to the social and physical environment and is conceptualized in terms of developmental change in the four domains: character development, cognitive style, interpersonal style, and conscious preoccupations. Loevinger considered it as the master trait.

Individuals at higher stages of self-development are found to display psychological autonomy and integration, wisdom, self-actualization, and moral awareness (Loevinger, 1976; Maslow, 1976). Higher stages of development enable leaders to understand the complex patterns of life

problems with a holistic approach toward the world. However, the highest stages have not been experienced by most individuals (Miller & Cook-Greuter, 1994).

The developmental progression identified by Loevinger has been applied to explain differences in leadership. Merron et al. (1987) observed systematic differences in managerial mindsets and practices among managers testing at different levels of development. Strang and Kuhnert (2009) found that the constructive-developmental stage predicted performance ratings from all rater sources—superiors, peers, and subordinates. Rooke and Torbert (2005) described these levels of development as a difference of action-logics which have consequences for organizational leadership. In these studies, developmental levels are, in effect, a master trait in that developmental differences help explain cognitive, affective, and behavioral differences among leaders.

Rooke and Torbert described some characteristics of a rarely seen highest level of development—which they called Alchemist: “Alchemists are typically charismatic and extremely aware individuals who live by high moral standards. They focus intensely on the truth” (2005, p. 72). Alchemists are leaders who can generate society-wide transformations. Certain leadership traits from our analysis of Rāmāyaṇ can be seen in this depiction of the Alchemist stage of human development.

Cook-Greuter (2000) analyzed empirical data to articulate characteristics of an uncommon advanced level of self-development which she called Unitive. Characteristics of this stage include a perspective on reality that is dynamic, global, and inclusive. The subjects in the research experience what Cook-Greuter calls self-transcendence, which deepens their sense of connectedness. According to Cook-Greuter (2000, p. 237): “The Unitive stage is conceived here as a potential gateway to the transpersonal or spiritual realm of knowing ... as described in the wisdom literature of the East.” The Eastern, Vedic tradition describes higher states of consciousness which are an extension of the range of psychological development beyond what is normally observed in Western psychology.

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND LEADERSHIP

As discussed in Subramaniam (2022), Maharishi Vedic Science describes four higher states of consciousness—Transcendental Consciousness,

Cosmic Consciousness, Refined Consciousness, and Unity Consciousness (Alexander et al., 1994; Orme-Johnson, 2000).

In Transcendental Consciousness one experiences pure consciousness, pure knowledge—“the simplest form of human awareness, which is the most intimate, most personal experience possible. There is nothing more simple or more natural” (Pearson, 2016, p. 44). “The knowledge gained in this state when consciousness knows itself, by itself, in its pure unbounded state is an absolute state of knowledge, knowingness” (Pearson, 2016, p. 47). When the state of Transcendental Consciousness is permanently maintained throughout all the changing states of waking, dreaming, and sleeping, one experiences Cosmic Consciousness. When the nervous system is further cultured to experience the finest manifest value of every object along with the permanent experience of the Self, perception of relative existence has been raised to its most refined value in Refined Cosmic Consciousness (Alexander & Boyer, 1989). This culturing takes place through the process of regular transcending to the level of pure consciousness, the Self, through a meditation practice such as Transcendental Meditation, which is in the class of automatic self-transcending meditation (Travis & Shear, 2010). In Unity Consciousness, one’s perception has expanded to the infinite level and one perceives that the essential nature of entire relative life is one’s own Self (Nader, 2012).

The Self-Realized trait identified from our grounded theory analysis appears to correspond with all the higher states of consciousness starting with Cosmic Consciousness. In our discussion of incidents in which Rām refers to others as his very Self, we find expressions consistent with the experience of Unity Consciousness, the highest state of consciousness.

Pure consciousness is viewed as the essential nature of life—an unbounded, unified field of pure intelligence, beyond space and time—which gives rise to all expressed values in the universe, both subjective and objective (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1969; Nader, 2021). The practical implication of opening one’s awareness to this field is said to be a skill in action which “consumes least energy and utilizes the total organizing power of Natural Law (Principle of Least Action) to hit the target with maximum speed and least resistance” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, pp. 171–172). The depiction in the Rāmāyaṇ of Rām’s exalted consciousness and his extraordinary leadership effectiveness is consistent with this Vedic knowledge.

A scientifically validated technique to help modern business leaders experience pure consciousness and grow in higher states of consciousness is Transcendental Meditation® (TM®), which has been shown to help develop the ideal leadership traits exemplified by Rām. TM is a simple, natural technique during which the active level of the mind “naturally and effortlessly settles to its own quiet, peaceful, transcendent state of awareness” (Roth, 2018, p. 35).

Some research findings on Transcendental Meditation illustrating the development of some of the leadership traits exemplified by Rām are presented here. Chandler et al. (2005) found high level of principled moral reasoning [ethical] among the subjects studied. Schmidt-Wilk (2000) in her qualitative research conducted among three European top management teams who practiced TM as a management development program recorded improved trust [trustworthy], communication [eloquent], and team relations [developmental], clarity of thinking [knowledgeable], and increased energy, greater resiliency in stressful situations, and improvements in physical and mental health [invincible]. Advanced TM and TM-Sidhi participants having frequent experiences of higher states of consciousness have shown developed intuition [foresighted] (Jedczak et al., 1990). Long-term practitioners of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi program reported that their meditation practice enabled them to cultivate inner experiences of an unshakeable, transcendental inner core, which led to enhanced intuition and broad awareness that embraced the wider interests of the community and environment (Herriott et al., 2009). Harung and Travis (2016) equated peak experiences of musicians, athletes, and successful managers with the experience of transcendence and concluded that such experience seems to bring more orderly functioning of the brain and results in higher moral reasoning [ethical]. With regular practice of TM, the peak experiences of transcendence can be more regular.

HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS MANAGEMENT

One model applying the development of higher states of consciousness to management is found in Higher Consciousness Management (Maheshwari, 2021), described as Consciousness in Action developed by regular transcending.

Principles of High Consciousness Managers that have been formulated by modern management researchers (Maheshwari, 2021) can be related to Rām's personality traits:

1. *Paradigm—Consciousness is primary.* Rām is established in pure consciousness, he is Self-realized. At the highest development of being Self-realized, he experiences the full awareness of perceiving the Self in everything, experiencing that consciousness is all that there is (Nader, 2021).
2. *Social/Interpersonal—Love is all we need.* Rām exhibits traits that express forms of love such as being benevolent, appreciative, trustworthy, humble, and developmental. The citizens of his country love Rām, reflecting his love for them.
3. *Individual—Unboundarize oneself.* Being Self-realized, established in unbounded awareness, acting in harmony with natural law, Rām's actions are always spontaneously right for the greater good and evolution of society. His perception, having expanded to the infinite level, realizes that the essential nature of everything is his own Self.

IMPLICATIONS

This research on the leadership of Rām has two implications. The first is to encourage leaders, scholars, and students of leadership to read the Rāmāyaṇ—not just for intellectual exploration about traits of leadership, but for personal transformation. From studying the Rāmāyaṇ one can uncover profound principles of management and leadership. Furthermore, the experience of reading this classic work is such that one feels that noble inclinations are being stimulated in oneself as one engages with the story. Sands (2014) commented on the value of applying the principles of the Rāmāyaṇ to every field of life.

The lessons of Rāmāyaṇ are not limited to general philosophies. There are ideas and principles that can be applied to any area of individual and collective behavior—to professions, academic disciplines, personal interests, and hobbies alike. Whether one is searching for answering to profound truths or seeking advice for life's daily challenges, there is a wealth of guidance available to everyone. (p. 1)

The second implication derives from understanding Rāmāyaṇ from the perspective of development of consciousness. This perspective encourages practices leading to the full development of consciousness. It is consistent with the causal model of spiritual leadership in Fry (2008), which locates spiritual practices at the core of spiritual leadership. As one becomes more Self-realized one will awaken in oneself greater degrees of leadership qualities—such as ethics, humility, benevolence, eloquence, and foresight—exemplified in the story of Rām.

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Exploring *Advaita* as an Essential Basis for Spiritual Leadership

Amit Hiray and Kirti Rajhans

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual leadership has emerged as a significant area of leadership research today. The spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003, 2005, 2008; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2013) empirically propounds that there is a strong relationship between spiritual values and practices, and leadership effectiveness. Reave (2005) asserts that the spiritual values such as honesty, integrity and humility positively influence leadership success. Fry et al. (2016, p. 2) referring to the revised spiritual model suggest that “an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by calling or transcendence of the self within the context of a community based on the values of altruistic love

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is fundamental to workplace spirituality”. According to Kriger and Seng (2005), the theory of spiritual leadership defines ‘spirituality’ as the search for self-transcendence and the feeling of interconnectedness with everything in the universe. Goleman (1995) also values the role of empathy in leadership as he defines leadership as an ability to influence people positively in order to achieve organizational goals. He underlines Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the most important pre-requisite for the twenty-first-century leaders. EI also strengthens interpersonal communication among people as they observe interpersonal sensitivity.

Now the question arises that how employees can be trained in spiritual leadership or empathetic leadership and effective interpersonal communication. It is crucial to investigate how the sense of oneness and mutual affiliation can be created among them. Enhancing interpersonal sensitivity or emotional and cognitive empathy too can play a vital role in developing spiritual leadership and fostering effective interpersonal communication among them. According to Fry (2008) inner life or mindful practice that positively affects spiritual leadership comprises hope/faith, vision and altruistic love. According to Fry et al. (2016, p. 4), “hope/faith in a clear vision produces a sense of calling and purpose that one’s life has meaning and makes a difference”. Spiritual leadership cultivates the organizational culture based on altruistic love. Leaders need to model these values through their own attitude and behavior so that their team members can develop a sense of membership. All these sources of inner life produce a sense of spiritual well-being and lead to enhanced organizational commitment, productivity and life satisfaction. On the other hand, Goleman’s (1995) model of EI is based on four major domains and competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Empathetic leadership scaling high on EI plays an important role in influencing people by connecting with them emotionally and handling their feelings and emotions efficiently. This can foster the feeling of interconnectedness among them.

This chapter will suggest that in order to implement these models of spiritual leadership and empathetic leadership based on EI, employee training in *Advaitic* consciousness and meditation would be a practically necessary approach. This requires understanding the *Advaita* Philosophy, *Advaita* Consciousness and the role of meditation in enriching the inner life/mindfulness, optimism which is essential for having a positive

vision and altruistic love toward all and everything around (Maheshwari, 2021). Let's explore these concepts in detail and investigate how they can support training employees in spiritual or empathetic leadership and enhance their interpersonal communication.

SIGNIFICANCE OF *ADVAITA* CONSCIOUSNESS

Advaita is a popular Hindu ontological philosophy that propounds the oneness of everything that exists. This philosophy of ancient Hindu origin was revived and advocated by Adi Shankaracharya (788–820 CE, hereafter referred to as Shankara), an eighth-century Indian philosopher and theologian. *Advaita* refers to the unity of the individual 'Atman' or 'spirit' and the 'Brahman' or 'universe'. According to Rambachan (2006) *Advaita* is the most widespread and influential of all the Indian traditions. Deutsch (1969, p. 3) calls it, "the most widely accepted system of thought among the philosophers of India, and it is, we believe, one of the greatest philosophical achievements to be found in the East or the West". Deutsch while explaining the concept of Brahman says, "Brahman is ultimately a name for the experience of the timeless plentitude of being" (Deutsch, 1969, p. 9). The *Advaita Vedanta* is not only a religious philosophy but also a practical guide to spiritual experience and thereby spiritual realization. Shankara while maintaining objectivity of thought and reason, strongly values perception and inference in direct experience. *Advaita* suggests that the Atman and Brahman are not separate. There is only one pure consciousness that pervades everything. The goal is to realize and experience this unity or oneness. All objects and subjects become one in such an experience in the absolute reality.

The present study attempts to explain, analyze and apply this unique principle of *Advaita* to develop and strengthen the existing concept of spiritual leadership and proposes a revised consciousness-based model of spiritual leadership. An extensive review of literature is conducted to enumerate the concept of *Advaita* as propounded by the ancient scholars as well as its interpretations and applications as given by modern researchers are explained in detail. Drawing from the literature, a revised spiritual leadership model is proposed.

Advaita is the oldest school of *Vedanta*. It dates back to many centuries and fell in disuse before Adi Shankara revived and popularized it. The unique teaching of this philosophy is that salvation or *Moksha* can

be achieved in this life even before death unlike the other Hindu philosophies that establish that salvation or *Moksha* can only be achieved after death. *Advaita* is essentially a secular philosophy and does not require its practitioners to follow a certain religion. It is rather a spiritual path toward experiencing the union of the individual atman with the absolute reality, *Brahman*. It shows a systematic path and propounds guidelines for the followers to experience this union and liberate themselves. Saint Dnyaneshwara a renowned saint and philosopher from the thirteenth century too considered *Advaita* as a significant philosophy and recommended it as a path to spiritual salvation, apart from teaching Bhakti or the path of devotion. Later on, many saints and spiritual masters preached the doctrine of *Advaita*. Swami Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi, Robert Adams, Nisargadatta Maharaj, Ramesh Balsekar and many others have practiced and advocated *Advaita* for self-realization.

According to King (1995), the term *Advaita* earlier had been referred to by different terms such as *Abheda-darshana* (view of non-difference), *Advaitavada* (Philosophy of non-duality), *Dvaita-vada-pratisedha* (denial of dual distinctions) and *Kevala-dvaita* (non-dualism of the isolated). Timalsinha (2009) argues that *Advaita* can be studied through various angles and it has multiple interpretations. He says, “*Advaita* can be approached as the doctrine that establishes the existence of a single principle, Brahman, embracing all entities that exist, including individual selves” (p. 17). He further asserts that, “*Advaita* can also be studied as an investigation of what is really cognized in the so-called instances of cognition. This approach eventually establishes non-dual Consciousness-in-itself as the essential reality of all cognitive modes” (p. 17). Timalsina (2009) studies in detail the arguments of eminent classical exponents of *Advaita* such as Surezvara, Vimuktatman, Sriharsa, Citsukha and Madhusedana, and focuses upon the epistemological aspects of the arguments that these authors advance to establish the truth of *Advaita*. He concludes that though there are different interpretations of the term *Advaita*, it ultimately develops an epistemology that establishes non-duality. According to Sharma (1993), *Advaita Vedanta* propounds that the self-knowledge or the knowledge of your own *Atman* can lead to liberation. Along with self-knowledge, it asserts that *Moksha* can be reached by the complete understanding of one’s true identity as *Atman*, the dispassionate and all-pervading observer, and the unity of *Atman* and *Brahman*. Menon (2012) states that *Advaita* establishes its non-dualistic philosophy, in part, from the oldest Principal Upanishads (sruti),

the Brahma Sutras, the Bhagavad Gita and many other Hindu texts. Since then, many ancient and modern scholars have interpreted this philosophy and have carried out analyses in relation to other doctrines and philosophies.

ADVAITA AND THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Advaita is a ‘consciousness is the only entity’ philosophy which has two major interpretations, (1) the essence of all that is seen is pure consciousness, which is non-dual in its nature, and (2) all that appears is the very *Brahman* manifest in myriad forms. Shankara’s *Advaita* conforms to the first interpretation. This paper considers Shankara’s *Advaita* for its discussion and understanding of consciousness in that context. The prime focus of phenomenology is to study the very nature of consciousness. Western philosophers have been studying the nature of consciousness for a long time, and still have found it difficult to establish its core properties. Sutherland in the Macmillan Dictionary of Psychology (1989) suggests that defining consciousness is a complex task. He writes,

Consciousness is a fascinating but elusive phenomenon: it is impossible to specify what it is, what it does, or why it has evolved. Nothing worth reading has been written on it. (p. 90)

Of late, Cognitive Science along with Psychology, Neuroscience and Neuropsychology have started studying the neural and psychological correlates of consciousness. Locke (1690) in his influential work, “Essay Concerning Human Understanding” defines consciousness as “the perception of what passes in a man’s own mind”. Block (1995) proposes two distinct types of consciousness viz., phenomenal (P-consciousness) and access (A-consciousness). P-consciousness simply refers to raw experience like moving, of colored forms, sounds, sensations, emotions and feelings. According to Block, A-consciousness is the phenomenon whereby information in our minds is accessible for verbal reasoning, and the control of behavior. Lycan (1996) classifies consciousness into eight distinct types viz., organism consciousness; control consciousness; consciousness of; state/event consciousness; reportability; introspective consciousness; subjective consciousness; and self-consciousness. Thus, there have been numerous western scholars who have attempted to study and define the nature of consciousness. This paper limits this discussion

only to the consciousness defined by Shankara in his doctrine of *Advaita Vedanta*.

According to Maharana (2009), the confrontation of the *Vedanta* with the phenomenological movement is of recent origin. Gupta (2004) argues that “It would be a mistake to claim that the theme of consciousness belongs essentially to modern Western philosophy, beginning with Descartes, and finally culminating in Husserl” (p. 119). Gupta asserts that the idea of consciousness has been well-explored in the Indian philosophy by the ancient scholars. Maharana (2009) confirms that there are notable parallels between Husserl’s idea of transcendental consciousness and the nature of consciousness propounded in the *Samkhya* and *Vedanta* systems. Gupta (2004) outlines the profound contribution of the Indian thought in defining and understanding the nature of consciousness, and compares the nature of consciousness depicted in *Advaita Vedanta* with Husserl’s idea of consciousness. Shankara in his *Advaita* philosophy systematically describes the nature of consciousness which is largely drawn from the Upanishads (Gupta, 2004). The Upanishads describe the nature of consciousness in the process of explaining the nature of “*Atman*” or “Self”. Gupta (2004, p. 120) makes a major observation that “In the Western philosophico-religious traditions, the term ‘self’ generally connotes a subject, the referent of ‘I.’ *Atman*, however, though usually translated as ‘self,’ does not refer to the ‘I,’ the empirical self. In the Upanishads, both ‘*cit*’ and ‘*Atman*’ refer to pure consciousness, a kind of trans-empirical consciousness, which not only is different from the empirical consciousness, but also forms the basis of the empirical individual”. The pure consciousness described in *Advaita* is the basis for the empirical consciousness. This consciousness alone exists and it is all pervading.

The most basic tenet of *Advaita* is that there is only one reality; the absolute reality. This one reality, as described in the *Upanishads*, is not only the same as the *Atman* or Individual Soul within each individual being called *jiva* but also the basis out of which all things are created. All the physical distinctions and identities are mere appearances imposed upon the one absolute reality by ignorance. Gupta (2004, p. 121) suggests that “this one reality is indescribable in language, unknowable by discursive knowledge; nevertheless, there are three concepts which are used to capture its nature: they are *cit* (consciousness), *sat* (existence), and *ananda* (bliss)”. According to Shankara, the absolute reality may be called existence, or consciousness, or bliss. This explains that according to the *Advaita* philosophy, consciousness can be called existence as well

as bliss. According to *Advaita Vendanta*, “*Cit*” or consciousness is self-luminous; it is always the pure subject and can never be called an object. “Not being an object, the categories that hold good of objects – for example, substance, quality, action, relation, and so on – do not apply to consciousness” (Gupta, 2004, p. 121). One more attribute of consciousness as per the *Advaita* philosophy is that it is beyond time and space; and therefore, it cannot be negated. The very act of negating consciousness is an act of consciousness. Thus, consciousness is eternal, all pervading and all that there is. Everything else is just an appearance imposed upon it and nothing can go beyond it.

Maharana (2009) states that though there are parallels between Shankara and Husserl with respect to their ideas of consciousness, there are several essential points of difference too. Shankara analyzed consciousness more for soteriological reasons whereas Husserl was interested in the epistemological domain of consciousness. Gupta (2004) also has carried out a systematic comparative analysis of Shankara’s pure consciousness and Husserl’s transcendental consciousness. Both Shankara and Husserl uncompromisingly reject all naturalization and objectification of consciousness and also reject consciousness as a spatial phenomenon. Despite these few points of agreement, Shankara and Husserl are completely opposed to each other. Maharana and Gupta have systematically elaborated upon the distinctions. “For Shankara, consciousness is not intentional, whereas for Husserl intentionality is the last word about consciousness, not only of empirical consciousness but also of transcendental consciousness” (Gupta, p. 125). For Shankara, consciousness is perfect purity, while for Husserl, it has an ego or belongs to an ego. For Husserl, consciousness is an act while for Shankara it is not an act. Consciousness is not temporal for Shankara whereas Husserl considers it temporal.

To conclude this section, it may be stated that *Advaita* refers to the experience of pure consciousness through self-realization; realization of the true nature of *Atman* which is already one with the *Brahman*. The one who experiences this unity is one with the absolute reality, the pure consciousness. The *Advaita* doctrine, as stated earlier is a spiritual path rather than a technical philosophy, though Shankara elucidates his philosophy with keeping reason at the forefront and by giving scientific and objective arguments.

MEDITATION AS A MEANS TO EXPERIENCE ADVAITA

Swami Vivekananda in his preface to Raja Yoga (ed. 2012, p. 7) summarizes *Advaita* as the conclusive teaching of all the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy. He asserts that, “all these systems have one common goal in view, the liberation of the soul through perfection. The method is by *Yoga*”. The word *Yoga* refers to union. The different *Asanas* (states of contortions of body) are recommended for preparing the body to achieve *Samadhi*, the ultimate state wherein the union of the *Atman* with the *Brahman* can be experienced. There are eight steps to be followed in Raja Yoga (Vivekananda, 2012, p. 13) beginning with Yama in which the aspirant is expected to adopt moral behavior by non-killing, non-stealing, continence and truthfulness. Next is Niyama which refers to cleanliness, contentment, mortification, study and self-surrender to God. The third step is Asana or posture; followed by Pratyhara, or making the mind introspective; Dharana or concentration; Dhyana or meditation; and Samadhi or super-consciousness. These prescribed steps indicate that the mind and body need to be prepared and brought to a certain higher level for meditation which will ultimately lead to the *Samadhi* or what may be called the *Advaita* experience. It may be stated that all forms of meditation are ultimately meant for this experience where an individual’s consciousness merges with what Vivekananda calls the all-pervading ‘super-consciousness’. The regular practice of meditation can help the aspirant expand their consciousness step by step to finally experience the oneness with the ‘pure or absolute consciousness’. These are the tenets upon which the idea of meditation rests. There have been numerous meditation techniques devised and recommended by various Indian and western practitioners and experts. A few forms of meditation may be discussed here in order to understand their nature, methods and objectives.

According to the Cambridge Online Dictionary, meditation means “the act of giving your attention to only one thing, either as a religious activity or as a way of becoming calm and relaxed”. Similarly, the Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as “focus one’s mind for a period of time, in silence or with the aid of chanting, for religious or spiritual purposes or as a method of relaxation”. Thus, the common understanding of the term is that meditation is either a popular relaxation technique or is done for religious or spiritual purposes.

Meditation or ‘Dhyana’ has its roots in the Indian Vedic Hindu literature and can be traced back to 1500 BCE. According to West (2016, p. 5), traditionally, meditation is being practiced to achieve self-realization or have a direct experience of God, oneness or the Buddha nature. He further asserts that over the past sixty years, popularity of meditation has increased manifold among North Americans and Europeans. Apart from spiritual reasons, many have learned meditation to relieve distress and for psychological well-being. According to Lutz et al. (p. 163), “Meditation can be conceptualized as a family of complex emotional and attentional regulatory training regimes developed for various ends, including the cultivation of well-being and emotional balance”. They discuss two major styles of meditation viz., “focused attention meditation, which entails the voluntary focusing of attention on a chosen object. The other practice, open monitoring meditation, involves nonreactive monitoring of the content of experience from moment to moment”. Travis and Shear (2010) present an additional third category of meditations called the automatic self-transcending type. Transcendental meditation (TM) is of this third type. The authors suggest that these styles of meditation can have a long-term positive impact on the brain and behavior. There are different practices recommended for following these styles. West (2016) discusses different styles of meditation like the ‘mantra’ meditation which involves repeating a sound either silently or aloud and focusing attention on it. This form of meditation is practiced by the Gaudiya Vaishnava cult and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). In India, not only Hindus have been traditionally practicing meditation for spiritual realization but also Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs have their own prescribed methods of meditation. This makes meditation a secular practice despite being a key technique to achieving liberation or enlightenment in different religions. Moreover, meditation is also prescribed and practiced in Taoism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism and many other religions across the world. The basic purpose of all forms of meditation practiced in these religions is to experience the absolute or oneness with the Supreme Being, God or pure consciousness.

Vedantic meditation practices aim at controlling and pacifying the mind which is usually unstable. Vivekananda (2015, p. 39) compares the human mind to the lake, “and every stone that drops into it raises waves”. In order to perceive the subtle nature of the Self, one must pacify one’s mind; it is the first step. Shankara (as cited by Vivekananda, 2012, p. 15)

recommends Pranayama as an essential stage before Dhyana (meditation) and asserts that “the mind whose dross has been cleared away by Pranayama becomes fixed in Brahman”. Therefore, different breathing techniques are recommended for the purification of body and mind before meditation. There are many sects that have devised and recommended meditation techniques for helping the practitioners achieve their spiritual goals and also gain relief from distress. A broad generalization about the spiritual purposes of meditation is that meditation is prescribed as a tool to achieve the union of *Atman* with *Brahman*, experience pure consciousness, super-consciousness or Buddha consciousness. Such an experience is also called the experience of ‘enlightenment’.

Many researchers have suggested different ways of using ‘Meditation’ as a tool to achieve ‘Consciousness’. For example, Heaton et al. (2016) in their research work on Consciousness-Based Education and refer to Transcendental Meditation as a means for direct experience of a consciousness of connectedness. Transcendental Meditation is a special meditation practice developed and taught on a regular basis to all its students at Maharshi Yogi University, U.S.A. The study by Heaton et al. (2016) further mentions that measurable increases in brain functioning have been found in practitioners of Transcendental Meditation, together with subjective reports of expanded consciousness. In his study titled, ‘An innovative approach to cultivate responsible next generation leaders: Transcendental Meditation in management education’, Heaton (2016) through empirical evidence proves that Transcendental Meditation and the growth of consciousness after practicing it on a regular basis gives rise to responsible business leadership to create a shared value that integrates the interests of shareholders and stakeholders. Harung et al. (2009) through their three research projects on world-class leaders strongly assert that leadership ability is closely related to self-development. According to them, the higher integration of the electrical brain activity helps us find more mature moral reasoning, and more frequent peak experiences which ultimately result in more accomplished performers. Their research also highlights the fact that techniques like Transcendental Meditation are useful as practical methods of psycho-physiological refinement and could be followed for the development of more effective leadership.

Broadly, all meditation practices appear to be based on the philosophy of *Advaita Vedanta* and aim at giving the practitioners the *Advaita* experience of oneness of everything that exists. Of course, as stated earlier, meditation is also widely practiced for purely non-spiritual purposes

like dealing with distress, anxiety, depression and also for improving concentration, discipline and overall mental and physical well-being. However, the practitioners of meditation whose aim is the *Advaita* experience or simply put, the ultimate experience of pure consciousness, also experience the benefits of regular meditation with respect to mental and physical well-being. It is, therefore, the process that matters more than the goal. Meditation is a process of being aware of consciousness through consciousness, and mindfulness; and hence helps enhance and expand one's consciousness. Although it is challenging to confirm the validity of such a subjective experience, the benefits of meditation and its positive impact on the brain and behavior, its significance in attaining psychological and emotional well-being have been empirically validated by researchers in Cognitive Science, Neuroscience and Psychology. According to Sedlmeier et al. (2012), there is growing empirical evidence of the therapeutic benefits of meditation. Walsh and Shapiro in their review (p. 229) mention that "meditation can ameliorate a variety of psychological and psychosomatic disorders, especially those in which stress plays a causal or complicating role". McGee (2008, p. 34) in his detailed review of literature on the therapeutic benefits of meditation has outlined several advantages of meditation in the psychological problems like anxiety, suicidal tendency, addiction, depression, insomnia and hypertension. According to him, "practicing meditation routinely has three immediate consequences: increased discipline, regularization of one's lifestyle, and increased commitment to one's own self-care". Goleman (1988) identifies that meditation invokes positive emotions such as love and joy, and reduces negative emotions like fear and anger.

This brief discussion on the nature of meditation, its depiction in the *Advaita Vedanta* and benefits can lead us to conclude the significance of meditation, and the *Advaita* experience through meditation in achieving mental, emotional and physical well-being. Although there are inadequate measures to validate such experience, it is the process and its advantages that count.

THE ADVAITA EXPERIENCE FOR GLOBAL HARMONY

As we discussed, *Advaita*, the union of the *Atman* with *Brahman* can be experienced in this lifetime and not after death, as stated by Shankara. This chapter briefly reviewed this philosophy, the nature of consciousness, the role of meditation in fostering the *Advaita* experience and its advantages.

The knowledge, awareness and practice of *Advaita* through meditation can enable individuals to elevate their consciousness and identify themselves as one with everyone and everything around. This feeling of fraternity is crucial for achieving global harmony. This *Advaita* experience can help people transcend the boundaries of discrimination and foster empathy and unity among them. When there is no difference between ‘you’ and ‘I’, people will develop the essential interpersonal sensitivity and understanding of each other’s feelings, emotions, ideas, views and needs. Though the philosophy is idealistic, its knowledge and a concentrated effort through meditation can nurture the feeling of universal oneness among people. Although we are yet to be sure of the ultimate experience of ‘enlightenment’ as there is no empirical method to measure it, the *Advaita* experience through meditation can certainly perpetuate global harmony. Goleman (1995) puts Emotional Intelligence ahead of Intelligence Quotient and states that the leaders, professionals and anyone working with people and organizations need to have a significant Emotional Quotient (EQ). He describes it as “awareness of own feelings and emotions”, “being able to handle own feelings and emotions”, “understanding others’ feelings and emotions” and “having the ability to handle others’ feelings and emotions” (Goleman, 1995, pp. 67–68). Here, Goleman refers to self-awareness and interpersonal sensitivity. He underlines the importance of our ability to understand ourselves and others. Elevated consciousness through meditation and especially, as stated above, the knowledge, awareness and practice of *Advaita* can foster one’s EQ, and thereby self-awareness and interpersonal sensitivity. This relationship between meditation and *Advaita* consciousness leads us to underline the significance of these concepts in the current model of spiritual leadership proposed by Fry et al. (2016) and the EI model by Goleman (1995).

A NEW MODEL OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

This proposed model is based on the spiritual leadership model (Fry et al., 2016) and the EI model propounded by Goleman (1995). It suggests that the intervention of meditation-induced *Advaita* consciousness leads to a peaceful inner life, mindfulness, self-awareness and self-management which are essential for self-leadership. Upon achieving this step, leaders/professionals can cultivate hope/faith, vision and altruistic

love which will further lead them to develop social awareness. Self-awareness also leads to social awareness as described in Goleman's model which in turn can make individuals develop hope/fairh, vision and altruistic love. Social awareness can lead to better relationship management with the professionals' developed feeling of 'interconnectedness' which in turn can make the team members feel more loyal and united. This feeling of oneness can also make employees develop a sense of calling or purpose to make a difference in their work. All this can result in better employee productivity and commitment, and life satisfaction. The proposed model is depicted in Fig. 9.1.

If we go by the essential aspects of spiritual leadership, the very first aspect is inner life or mindfulness. Goleman's model of EI also asserts the significance of self-awareness as the first step to enhancing one's EI. Meditation as discussed above can help individuals to be more self-aware and mindful. As leadership begins with self-leadership, leaders and professionals in organizations need to work upon developing their self-awareness and mindfulness so that they will be able to understand and handle their own feelings and emotions. It can support 'self-management' as Goleman calls it. *Advaita* consciousness is fostered by meditation

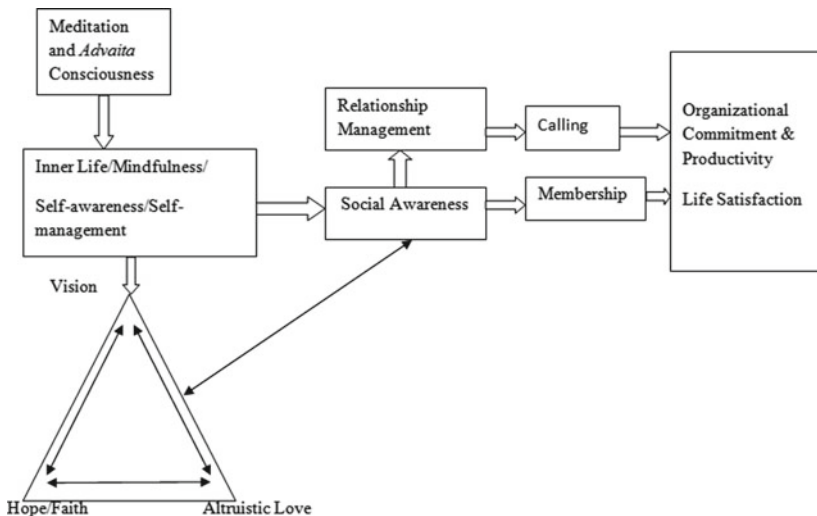


Fig. 9.1 Consciousness-based model of spiritual leadership

wherein one can experience ‘interconnectedness’ as prescribed in the spiritual leadership model. Goleman too states social awareness and relationship management as crucial aspects of EI. The feeling of interconnectedness can make one more empathetic to others’ feelings and emotions, and develop their social awareness. Similarly, the vital aspects of spiritual leadership such as vision, hope/faith and altruistic love can be nurtured through *Advaita* consciousness. Thus, this chapter proposes to add the regular practice of meditation as an intervention through training in order to help organizations practically exercise spiritual leadership or empathetic leadership. The idea of interconnectedness experienced through the *Advaita* consciousness realized through mediation can help form more cohesive and interconnected teams. Dissemination of the right techniques of meditation and knowledge of *Advaita* consciousness during employee training programs can support practical implementation of spiritual leadership or empathetic leadership wherein the employees would have more sense of loyalty, belongingness and membership leading to commitment, productivity and life satisfaction.

This feeling of fraternity is crucial for achieving team cohesion. *Advaita* consciousness can help employees transcend the boundaries of discrimination and foster empathy and unity among them. Goleman (1995) puts Emotional Intelligence ahead of Intelligence Quotient and states that the leaders, professionals and anyone working with people and organizations need to have a significant Emotional Quotient (EQ). He describes it as “awareness of own feelings and emotions”, “being able to handle own feelings and emotions”, “understanding others’ feelings and emotions” and “having the ability to handle others’ feelings and emotions”. Here Goleman refers to self-awareness and interpersonal sensitivity. He underlines the importance of our ability to understand ourselves and others. Elevated consciousness through meditation and especially, as stated above, the knowledge, awareness and practice of *Advaita* can foster one’s EQ, and thereby self-awareness and interpersonal sensitivity.

CONCLUSIONS

The study presents a thorough analysis of the *Advaita* philosophy, the nature of consciousness, and the role of meditation in fostering the *Advaita* experience and its advantages, through an extensive literature review. Based on the inferences drawn from the analysis of the literature a

new model of spiritual leadership is proposed which may serve as a practical guide on spiritual leadership for new leaders. The main contribution of the present study lies in addressing the issue of developing responsible leaders who are not only effective in their assigned roles but work with a high sense of interpersonal sensitivity and strive hard to maintain organizational and thereby global harmony. This would definitely add a great value to their leadership initiatives. Organizations need to develop among their employees a sense of oneness by training them in meditation techniques and highlighting the importance of collective consciousness, emotional and cognitive empathy. The proposed model may be useful in cultivating spiritual leadership at all levels of organizational hierarchy. The managerial implications of the study would be helpful to aspiring leaders to add value to their leadership initiatives.

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Wisdom Towards Unity: Developing Managerial Talent Through Development of Consciousness

Mohan Raj Gurubatham

INTRODUCTION TO CHANGE DRIVERS

Change drivers impacting both national and multicultural societies are relentlessly ensuing in the twenty-first century. The acronym VUCA means volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity were coined by the US Army War College in the 1990s (Mackey, 1992), and academia (Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Prahalad, 1995), to represent an unstable complex volatile and ambiguous environment that in the latter part of the twentieth century began to experience. Volatility involves the nature, speed, or tempo of change, its magnitude, and rhythm. Uncertainty involves the lack of predictability, complexity involves the confounding

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of factors, variables, or issues confronting an organization in the twenty-first century. Ambiguity involves the fuzziness of reality and the fraught interpretations in trying to understand scenarios. The impacts of VUCA are felt in strategy, leadership, and management (Bawany, 2016; Cavusgil et al., 2021; Nandram & Bindlish, 2017; Pearse, 2017; Rimita et al., 2020; van der Steen et al., 2021). VUCA demands flexible, adaptive thinking.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE DRIVERS

Friedman (2017) wrote about how the accelerating change flattens the world likening it to the Gutenberg press in the old industrial revolution. These drivers can morph and evolve from trends such as growing awareness of millennial shifts towards work values (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020) such as harboring mentoring expectations while being digitally savvy. The Covid pandemic has forced us to learn how to learn and work with remote and hybrid work and learning due to lockdowns because of health and safety concerns (Chafi et al., 2022). The challenges reported include social aspects such as loss of comradeship and relative isolation. The opportunities and benefits involve the acquisition of new skills and competencies, the flexibility afforded in the new remote learning environment with improved autonomy, and work–life balance with a renewed attention to redesigning workflows for effectiveness. Hybrid work was perceived to provide the best of both worlds, because of this the employees are given the support of the employers, organizations, and managers will adjust to new ways of working towards more effective job crafting for flexibility in redesigning the physical and digital workplaces (Chafi et al., 2022). Hybrid job crafting may mitigate burnout from stress in telework (Stempel & Siestrup, 2022).

DIGITAL GLOBALIZATION CHANGE DRIVER

The rise of East Asian ‘Tiger economies’ for the later part of the twentieth century and the entrance of China into the WTO also disrupted continuous change in the twentieth century to a sharp increase in manufacturing competitiveness in East Asia. China’s entrance into the WTO in 2001 began its rise and impacted global manufacturing with many jobs being outsourced to China thus leading to job losses in the USA. By the principle of reciprocity, China was expected to open its markets to Western

and international firms in manufacturing and services and comply with WTO regulations. Indeed, a win-win solution was idealized as the transfer of technology and know-how to China allowing affordable appliances and electronics manufactured in China that are commonly found in US stores, as well as access to China's market. The Covid pandemic has disrupted the supply chains from East Asia especially China. It impacts many layers of stakeholders such that some win and some lose. Online retail sales increased during the pandemic. The share of total sales increased from 16 to 19% in 2020 (Kofi Mensah & Simon Mwakapesa, 2021). However the US still dominates the overall ecommerce market globally ahead of both China and Japan (Kofi Mensah & Simon Mwakapesa, 2021). Nonetheless, we cannot afford to ignore the surge in electronic commerce in India and in Southeast Asia with ASEAN being the 3rd largest market in the world after China and India (Thirawat, 2022). Ecommerce growth in India is conspicuous. The surge in ecommerce during the pandemic is 17% and expected to grow further in sectors such as electronics, fashion and accessories, health and pharma with the FMCG showing a marked dynamic growth averaging of 133% in sales (Sharma, 2020). Further national cultural and individual differences may be important factors in ecommerce diffusion and adoption even amongst ASEAN countries (Ayob, 2021).

SUSTAINABILITY CHANGE DRIVER

The outcomes of strategic intervention from the past may be driven by the inertia of outdated mindsets which do not adequately frame wider thinking in sustainability. Yet, a wider more integrated balance from the older CSR between business, society, and the environment is required. The more tangible physical aspects of sustainability concerning climate change and its mitigation by human activity may be morphed into a statute that's a change driver, for example, as in the European Union (EU). Suggestions for environmental protection may be made into a law for compliance such with the Geneva-based ISO 14000 international standards for quality in many countries as in the EU efforts to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Specifically, the EU emissions trading systems requirements for accreditation to verify greenhouse gas emissions specify ISO standards for verification for the accreditation of verifiers while recommending standards for pertinent management systems.

The role of ethics and the preservation of cultural Integrity are also part of the promise of sustainability. Traditional people's lives are impacted. Are the cultural integrities of traditional peoples perceived as being important? Are dominant value systems being projected onto them, for example, in the deforestation of many countries in Southeast Asia? There is a need to understand how to engage in terms of their values on their own terms before seeking to resolve conflict in a win-win paradigm? All these point to a need for the development of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996), the development of wisdom, and the ability to be able to evaluate a diverse set of organizational stakeholders. The span of stakeholder management will need to be widened to go beyond organizational boundaries as extended social fields (Polman & Winston, 2021). A new perspective is to include the social, community, national, and global environments as global citizens. However, this needs to be done cognitively and also emotionally.

EXAMPLES OF CHANGE DRIVERS

An example from Malaysia, specifically East Malaysia, involving a traditional people called the *Penan* may be illustrative. The Penan are now world famous because of their near extinction as a traditional people by the steady and powerful encroachment of logging companies into their habitats in the rainforests. It could be argued that the economic growth through industrialization is more important for job creation and enriching the state and that the rights of a minority of so-called backward people should be discounted before they can be brought into the twenty-first century at best, even if that means changing their lifestyle and effectively extinguishing their culture. However, a Penan leader's *choice* best says it all: '*If we lose all the things the forest gives us, we will die*' (Gurubatham, 2021). Activists and the media played up the plight accusing the state government and the logging corporations of not being inclusive and thinking widely, not recognizing indigenous land rights, and appreciating the lifestyle and ecology of traditional peoples. What if the corporation and the state government, environmental activists, and the traditional people came together for a win-win solution where land rights are recognized and sustainable growing and harvesting of timber with strict standards of administration of sustainability are practiced? Could not this be a win-win solution? By ignoring and discounting the interests and rights of aboriginals, the major lodging logging company in East

Malaysia was forced to de-list from the Hong Kong stock market in East Asia and its timber was banned in certain European countries. The weak signal of environmental activism was ignored by corporations and state governments.

Another example or scenario was the hot-roiling Indian outsourcing industry in the technology space. About 300,000 tech jobs are outsourced annually by the US. The documentary film ‘The Other Side of Outsourcing’ explored the shift in values and lifestyles of young workers in India engaged in the outsourcing industry. Critical voices were seen and heard of the dilution of cultural integrity where young workers may begin to abandon the rituals of their faiths, and just become consumers by the trends of globalization, mimicking western accents for call center work (Bordia & Bordia, 2015), and experience separation from the extended family of traditional India. Even though employment is also desirable, stress and strain are inherent in these jobs.

DEVELOPING HIGHER ORDER THINKING AND WISDOM

This ability to think deeply and widely and foresee the long-range outcomes of decisions has been defined as wisdom (Sternberg, 2001). Education should be geared towards developing wisdom. However, can wisdom be operationalized? Research in intelligence has been widened beyond the dominant paradigm of just one narrow range of cognitive abilities that have been dubbed as rational, deductive intellectual abilities, to include contextual intelligence (Khanna, 2014), cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003), and fluid intelligence by Cattell (1963). The challenge is to harness these approaches to provide for genuinely sustainable learning with genuinely sustainable outcomes in a globalized twenty-first century that also harnesses technology for the benefit of humankind. Prahalad (1995) urged for a strategic intent where they urged organizations to amplify weak signals. That means looking at outlier trends coupled with strong missions.

Key Issues

Which layers of interest should be invoked to evaluate right from wrong? Whose perspective should frame the scenarios of fair versus unfair, wholesome versus fragmentation, growth versus decay, material standard of living versus quality of life, and economics versus ecosystems? Which

outcomes are more desirable and for whom? The answers to these and similar questions must spring from a wider and deeper awareness of the issues. It requires broad comprehension and sharp focus that is enabled by a clear mind. In addition, there must be transcendence to *unfreeze* from cognitive and emotional traps, inappropriate actions, and their consequences (Lewin, 2016). By unfreezing the individual's mind or the organizational structurally inert consciousness, it becomes easier to then introduce change with a fresh perspective. One can unfreeze from the conventional narratives of assuming that there is not much of a VUCA world. Unfreezing from the conventional narrative will allow an understanding of the acceleration of these change drivers and develop the ability to come up with effective frames to analyze, diagnose, and execute strategies. One can transcend the surface-level issues and reach the deeper themes.

MORAL DILEMMA FROM THE BHAGAVAD GITA

The notion of transcendence is found and explained as eternal wisdom in the classic moral and ethical dilemma scenario set in the Bhagavad Gita, the ancient Indian text (Maharishi, 1967). In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna is faced with a moral dilemma. He must decide whether to fight and do his duty and in so doing kill his kinsmen in the opposing clan in the war. He is paralyzed into inaction even though he is a noble prince and warrior. He inquires Krishna about the ruin of generations of his clansmen by killing which he contemplates has *adharmic* consequences. Such a moral dilemma is nothing new but has been present in our collective consciousness since time immemorial. Today military commanders discuss collateral damage and even clinically estimate the number of people that may be killed in a military strike with dozens of casualties or deaths. If the end justifies the means, it is also the means that one must live with as the ensuing consequences. In other words, our actions can taint our character, our minds, and our hearts. Can this be escaped or avoided? Can it ever be transcended?

TRANSCENDENCE

Transcend means to go beyond. In this case, it means going from a gross to a subtle view of reality. This could range from well-intentioned noble ideals and thoughts to grossly practical and lethal actions. Transcending

in effect means to unfreeze from the boundary, and to develop the ability to think deeply and widely and evaluate the long-range consequences of actions. Transcendental Meditation (TM) is proposed as the means for unfreezing from conventional thinking, and fluidly developing deeper and wider thinking. TM develops affect and empathy as the means for enlivening the nourishing and unifying effects of a wise discerning mind that unifies diversity into wholeness and inclusiveness.

The bubble diagram in Fig. 10.1 is part of the process of explaining transcending from the field of action, to thinking to the source of thought or 'pure consciousness' (Maharishi, 1966, p. 48).

Layer A represents the ordinary thinking level. It is commonly experienced as the conscious thinking level of the ordinary mind which is subject to working memory constraints (Kyllonen & Christal, 1990) in modern cognitive psychology. Working memory is also loosely dubbed 'short-term' memory (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974) involving verbal rehearsal, conscious processing, and the attentional devoted to conscious processing effort.

In Fig. 10.1, transcending involves a thought bubble diving vertically from W1 to W2 levels. The depths of the mind are experienced while transcending. Simultaneously scope, breadth, or 'horizontal field' is gained as

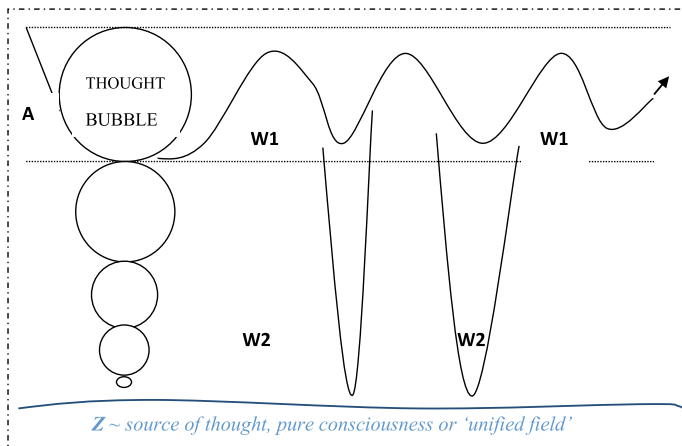


Fig. 10.1 Bubble diagram of transcendence (Source Maharishi, 1966)

the conscious thinking capacity is deepened and widened. Deeper integrative thoughts arise from the silent depths of the mind called the fourth state of consciousness or '*turiya*' in Sanskrit. This is considered to be the 'source of thought'. The bubble of thought arises from the most refined level or level 'Z'. By the time it arrives at the surface level 'A', it is appreciated as a 'thought'. The more refined levels of the thought below the conscious mind are not commonly consciously appreciated or are 'below threshold'. Maharishi (1966) further describes that 'if there was a way to experience consciously the progressively more refined or subtler levels' of thought at all levels of its development right through to its infancy and if it were possible to transcend or go beyond this experience, then this is 'transcending' going beyond even the finest level of thought at its infancy. The depth of the conscious mind is expanded and thoughts at more refined levels are experienced as more subtle yet more powerful. The power of the conscious mind would increase manyfold this way from W1 to W2. This then is the Vedic means of expanding conscious thinking capacity by a deep dive with Transcendental Meditation.

This process is accompanied by the experience of increasing happiness, feelings of power, and abundance. The 4th state of transcendental consciousness is said to be unbounded and eternal, beyond the experience of time and space, and unifying. It has also been described as the *Atma* (not the self as in ego), and as the unified field or Being.

TRANSCENDENCE AND VALUES

Conscious thoughts are nestled in concepts which in turn are embedded within cognitive structures called *schemas* in cognitive psychology. Schemas in turn are said to be buried deeply within paradigms deeper in consciousness. Paradigms or world views shape unconscious assumptions, ethics, and morals. They bias evaluation and are often silently guiding our hypotheses, frames of reference, and actions. This layering is represented in Fig. 10.2.

Hofstede (1980) revealed that East Asians have a powerful bias towards collectivism or group consciousness. The same research also reveals that the US in the west has the most pronounced bias for individualism. Ethics may then be perceived differently in different cultures because of different underlying assumptions concerning value systems. The unconscious underlying assumptions here concern individual versus collective priorities. These deeper layers of assumptions, values, and paradigms

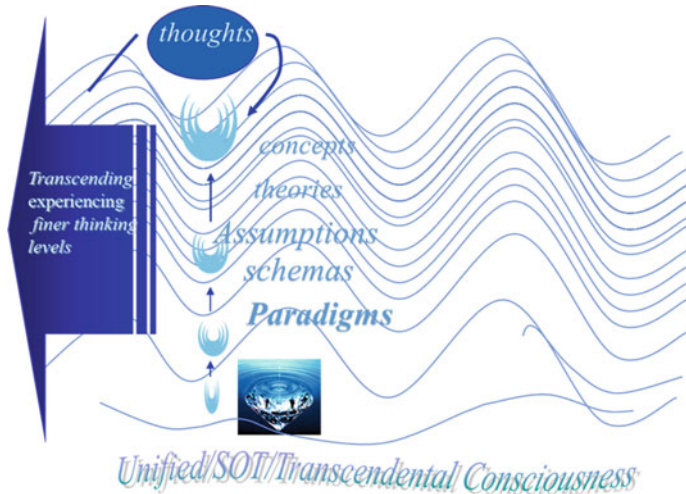


Fig. 10.2 Layers of thinking

become more transparent when the mind expands its thinking capacity. When thoughts and assumptions are made more transparent, ethical issues can be framed more widely to include the perspectives of those people who prioritize individuality and those who see collectivism as paramount. This is the ability to think widely with a wider and more refined global stakeholder appreciation.

While transcending is vertical in that the mind dives from the surface to the depths of the thinking process, there is also an accompanying ‘horizontal’ effect. Thoughts at the surface level of the mind are narrower in scope while thoughts deeper in consciousness have greater latitude or scope of impacts on the surface. Thoughts deeper in consciousness are also more unified as seen in Fig. 10.3. It is also worth noting that the thinking at deeper levels subsumes hierarchically their surface products.

For example, the assumptions and paradigms that value ‘unity in diversity’ at deeper levels of consciousness may subsume or underlie ethical thoughts and their actions on the surface that are inclusive yet recognize the freedom to have different expressions capturing diversity that overall are integrated into a higher order unification. Such a state of consciousness is dubbed *Vasudeva Kutumbaakm* meaning everything is near and dear to my Self, so that it is as if the world is my family. Freedom of speech



Fig. 10.3 The layered direction of transcending towards unity consciousness in the cognitive development towards wisdom

is understood with the refined wisdom of responsibility accompanying freedom so that we do not choose to offend, yet we value differences as part of wholeness. *Tenderness* as in refined feeling levels are part of the development of consciousness.

TRANSCENDENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

The influence is reciprocal in that just as refinement of thinking intimately correlates with refinement of physiology, the individual and the environment are also intimately connected. As consciousness evolves, the physiology also evolves. As individuals improve themselves, the environment also responds to the human impetus to evolve. Individual viewpoints, feelings, different cultural norms, and values vary even more than physical characteristics. Therefore, *ecosystems* also subsume differences in economics, culture, and philosophies. From this perspective choosing to find a way to integrate a diversity of viewpoints in a conflict that *maximizes* satisfaction for all parties is desirable. It can thus be appreciated that human rights are balanced with the needs of society.

Kohlberg's (1976) stages of moral reasoning are based on stages of cognitive development such as Piaget's. The higher stages of human

development commensurate with higher cognitive development. Higher moral reasoning is correlated with the ability to think abstractly and internalize, towards unitive and interconnectedness of the ego with others including even objects (Cook-Greuter, 2013). However much more than the ability to think abstractly and internalize as opposed to the need for reward and punishment as concrete agencies at lower levels of development is a striking development of higher states of consciousness in Vedic psychology beyond conventional moral development (Alexander et al., 1990). Alexander's model, based upon Vedic psychology, depicts 'post representational' stages as "higher states of consciousness" which are transcendental consciousness, cosmic consciousness, God consciousness, and unity consciousness (Alexander et al., 1987).

Studies on TM have shown increased field independence, which is indicative of perception that is not rigidly bound by the environment (Gelderloos et al., 1987); increased flexibility of perception and improved verbal problem-solving (Dilbeck, 1982); increased creativity along with increased fluid and culture fair intelligence (Dillbeck et al., 1986; Tim & Orme-Johnson, 2001). TM has also been found to induce higher levels of moral reasoning as shown in longitudinal studies with adult inmates in maximum security incarceration in California, according to Kohlberg's stage development mode as reviewed by Alexander et al. (2003); and culture 'wisdom' as shown in a 10-year longitudinal study (Chandler, 1990).

HIGHER STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Alexander and Boyer (1989) elucidated that transcendental consciousness is the state of pure consciousness. This is the state of least excitation of consciousness which lies beyond the subtlest level of feeling or ego, it is experienced as the unbounded 'Self'. It is also commonly referred to as the cosmic Self and the unified field by transcendental meditators. Cosmic Consciousness is then '*Perma-Self*', the state in which transcendental consciousness is permanently maintained along with the changing states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. The Self silently witnesses daily activity leading to God consciousness which is the exalted state in which the permanent experience of the Self is maintained along with the perception of the outer environment. The perception of the environment is imbued with refined feeling with the perception of objects at the most subtle levels. In *Unity* or '*Brahman Consciousness*' the grandeur

of creation is appreciated intimately as expressions of the Self; everything is near and dear as the Self. Indeed, the objects of perception are experienced in their infinite, unbounded value, as expressions of one's own Self or *Atma*. Here the gulf between the knower and the known has been bridged, both have been brought to the same level of infinite value. A state comes where the unity becomes inseparable from diversity. Unity in diversity becomes a living reality. And when unity in diversity becomes a living reality in one's life, in one's consciousness, in the field of one's experience, then the vision of God consciousness is said to have been accomplished. When the unity becomes dominant in the vision of diversity, then there is the unity and diversity. Unity means the unmanifest, absolute, eternal Being.

Diversity means all specified, individual existence in the relative field. When the unity becomes dominant in diversity, then the vision of oneness in the midst of diversity is the vision of God everywhere in this and that God is realized on the level of the senses. In all experience on the level of speech, thought, and everything in the relative field, what permeates and pervades for one is God, and that is God consciousness, a state of life that cannot be compared with any other state. It has its own specialty: that vision of oneness in the midst of a variety of perceptions and cognition.

DESCRIPTIONS OF HIGHER STATES

Even the growth towards unity is characterized by glimpses of unification and exaltation in consciousness as seen here in a meditating Muslim post-graduate student from the Maldives in Malaysia on the experience of transcendence and self-exploration, and fluidity in perceptions of unity in diversity. It is noteworthy that she was meditating for less than a year:

Now after several months of meditation, I am more lively, energetic and happy. I feel light and it's easier for me to concentrate and be attentive. I feel more motivated and hopeful towards life. On a second note, I noticed just after I meditate all my senses are sharper. The moment I open my eyes, I see things more clearly, as if I'm seeing for the first time. I take a deep breath and feel fresh air spill my lungs and I feel so great to be alive. I feel thankful for being me and appreciate every little thing that has made me who I am. The positive energy and clear consciousness and relating to the inner Being help me see the world in a different way and appreciate life. That makes me treat others and everything around me in a caring and loving way because the enlightened state of mind is awakened to appreciate

and care for every little thing in my surrounding. I feel responsible and connected to all life on earth. (Gurubatham, 2014, p. 247)

AMPLIFYING WEAK SIGNALS: BUSINESS CASES THAT SHOW HIGHER ORDER MISSIONS

Aravind Eye Hospitals in India is famous for achieving world-class eye care. It is the largest eye hospital in the world where 80% of its services are free. Aravind has innovated to dramatically reduce the price of intraocular lenses to their stakeholders and provide surgery to many of the residents in rural areas, small and large cities. At the same time, it is a business and not a charity (Gupta et al., 2018; Rangan & Thulasiraj, 2007). It does this by flipping the paradigm of Maslow's hierarchy of needs by going for the highest first. That means transcending an individual ego to extend to the environment and humanity to see others as an extension of oneself. Aravind innovates and achieves standards (Namperumalsamy, 2020) that are higher in ophthalmic health than the Royal Ophthalmic Society in the UK which consumes 1/3 of the cost of the National Health Service in the UK.

Sole Rebels was founded by Bethlehem Tilahun, a young Ethiopian woman and a social entrepreneur who decided to recycle materials from the war and conflict in Ethiopia and start a footwear business using the recycled materials (Nsehe, 2021). These are high-end designs sold on Amazon in Europe and America and provide employment for the material needs of the extremely poor in Ethiopia. So, in one stroke Bethlehem, by going 'for the *highest need first*', has taken care of the lower order needs as well as the transcendental needs in terms of thinking by an extended consciousness to encompass with compassion with the environment. Sole Rebels seems to challenge the paradigm that we first need to take care of the basics such as survival, and our physical needs.

CONCLUSION

How can one achieve the practical fulfillment of an ever-increasing diversity of populations and communities beyond cultural and intellectual hegemony? All the change drivers impact multicultural societies particularly intensely. It can be argued that both deductive top-down (dogma and schema-driven) and inductive bottom-up (inclusive and data-driven) cognitive processing for effective ethical decisions are key for wisdom.

Meditation can help in inductive thinking by unfreezing biases, schemas, or concepts and creating flexibility in identifying abstract patterns to reflect the diverse changing context as a whole. Recognition of new prototypes and models works well when ideals are held high and models are abstracted as subtle patterns of deeply shared universal values, but without an exact one-to-one template matching for existing ethical and problem-solving approaches. Nature appears to have a more subtle process of prototype abstraction, with evolution not based on mapping one frozen form to another rigid form. A mechanism of prototype abstraction from changing situations may be seen in Forsyth's (1980) Situationism's ethics and in the development of self-actualization, in individuals who show development of consciousness. These traits are examples of higher consciousness of self, God-consciousness, and appreciating unity in diversity (Nidich et al., 2000). Such an evolutionary mechanism of accepting and recognizing differences yet deeply sensing the underlying unifying themes develops an ability to abstract subtle patterns for the higher order unification of an ever-increasing differentiation and diversity in nature. Relativism is perfectly desirable when coupled with the high idealism of transcendence. Transcending helps free oneself from the attachment to lingering fruits of action thus yielding life-supporting results for all. A mind that is fully awake in higher states of consciousness can directly act appropriately according to higher ideals.

Ecosystems must also subsume wide differences as well as shared universal values in economics, culture, and philosophies. For example, the notion of human rights concerning the traditional *Penan* people in the logging monopoly corporation is often in conflict when group-level versus individual-level evaluations are invoked between western and East Asian contexts concerning sustainability ecology and human rights. To integrate these perspectives, unfreezing or transcending is necessary. Transcending and expansion of consciousness are necessary to examine and integrate the diversity of perspectives towards unification. As the individuals improve themselves, the environment also responds to their impetus to evolve. From a higher level of consciousness one can potentially find a way to integrate a diversity of viewpoints in a conflict that maximizes satisfaction for all parties. Prahalad (2014) in his book 'Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid' spoke about an inclusive type of thinking in business. Transcendence may be the way to achieve higher order thinking to achieve this.

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PART III

This Part Presents Leadership from Other
Scriptures such as Confucianism, Daoism,
Buddhism, and Thirukural



Dao and Management: A Consciousness-Based Understanding

Yick Oi Janet Ho and Dennis P. Heaton

LAOZI'S DAO DE JING

Dao De Jing (道德經), also transliterated as *Tao Te Ching*, is a renowned Chinese philosophical book. It is believed to be written by *Laozi* (老子), also transliterated as Laotzu, around 776–476 BC and is meant to be guidelines for sage rulers in China (Puett, 2009). The text of Dao De Jing has been translated, interpreted, and adapted over 100 times by English readers.

Dao (道) means the way. *De* (德) means the knowledge or understanding that is obtained (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 191; Wangbi & Lou, 2016, p. 106). *Jing* (經) means the scripture.

The “ambiguous and enigmatic” (Bebell & Fera, 2000) language used in Dao De Jing often makes it difficult for business practitioners to capture its meaning accurately. An example of ambiguity is *wu wei* “無

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為”, which means inaction. In Dao De Jing it is written, “Tao never does” (道常無為) (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 188). Wu wei is one of the major themes in Dao De Jing and is considered a power over the outside world. A writer in Mainland China considered wu wei equivalent to the designation of work to the subordinates in business (Chang, 2004). However, it is not the true meaning of wu wei in the teaching of Dao De Jing, as it will be discussed later in this paper. One of the examples that shows the enigmatic language of Dao De Jing is found in the chapter which says, “What is most perfect seems to have something missing, yet its use is unimpaired. What is most full seems empty, yet its use will never fail” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 198). It is a mystery how one can defeat strength through weakness (Puett & Gross-Loh, 2016).

Laozi is believed to be the author of the book Dao De Jing, as described by *Sima Qian* (司馬遷), the historian of the Han dynasty in China. In the Records of the Grand Historian or *Shih-chi* (史記), Sima Qian mentioned that it was Laozi who wrote the book in two sections, Dao and De. Laozi lived long before Sima Qian, under the Chou dynasty. When he realized that the dynasty was declining, he decided to leave his place. When he reached the western frontier, he was requested by the guard of the gate to write down his great thoughts. Then he wrote the scripture in approximately five thousand Chinese characters (Kohn & LaFargue, 1998).

DAO

Dao De Jing describes the benefits of living in harmony with Dao, the way of nature. In the classic book Dao De Jing, there is a description of the consequences to the human world when the knowledge of Dao is lost. It says, “It was when the Great Way declined that human kindness and morality arose” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 165).

This verse illustrates how the human world is changed when there is a loss of Dao. When Dao can no longer be aligned to, the whole creation does not stay the same.

It resembles the loss of balance in human body, in which substituting nourishments or medications are needed. The relationship among people will be guided by ethics instead, like benevolence or *ren* (仁) and righteousness or *yi* (義). When relations among members of a large family are strained, they need to be taught to show respect to the elders and be caring to the younger ones.

It also resembles the loss of harmony in relationships among countries, in which some compensating or competitive means are required. When the power of a country overrides that of the others, people in the weaker country may be demanded to be loyal and faithful to their ruling emperor (who is believed to be a representative of heaven). Only in this way will they be able to become united and strong enough to safeguard themselves from any attack by the stronger countries.

Regarding the meaning of Dao in Dao De Jing, much can be retrieved from the beginning statement in the text. The first statement that says, “The Way that can be told of is not an Unvarying Way” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 141), seems to suggest that the Dao (the Way) cannot be linguistically described (Allinson, 1994). Once Dao is linguistically described, the Dao that is described is not the Dao to which the author refers. The described Dao is not the real Dao since the description is different from the indescribable Dao.

Goodfield (2011) states that Dao is a unity underlying nature and society. Cheung (2017) argues that Dao of the Dao De Jing is a nonempty transforming unsummed totality constituted by its aspectual totalities which cannot be sensed completely and that Dao and its constituent aspectual totalities are unnamable. According to Cheung, Dao is neither a non-being nor a thing. It is metaphysical but has substantive content. Human use of Dao is not sufficient to exhaust its aspect of utility (Cheung, 2017).

Waley proclaims that Dao is itself the “always-so, the fixed, the unconditioned, that which ‘is of itself’ and for no cause ‘so’”. In the individual it is the Uncarved Block, the consciousness on which no impression has been ‘notched’; in the universe it is the Primal Unity underlying apparent multiplicity” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 55).

Inspired by such depictions of Dao, we have undertaken qualitative research to uncover the principles of Dao rulership in Dao De Jing.

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS BASED ON GROUNDED THEORY

This research is targeted to be a qualitative analysis based on Grounded Theory. It aims to understand the reality represented by the term “Dao” in the eighty-one chapters of Dao De Jing. The teachings in Dao, which is intended to be guidelines for sage rulers, are studied and observed as concepts in management that facilitate flourishing.

Grounded Theory

The distinctive feature of the grounded theory lies in its commitment to the inductive discovery of theory in contrast to a deductive exploration of a priori theories (Locke, 2001). In other words, the concepts that construct the research analysis will be derived from the data collected in the process of research. In this way, the results will be grounded in the data collected (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). However, though the concepts are not meant to be constructed before the process starts, the researcher's disciplinary sensitivity will also have to be considered (Locke, 2001).

In the use of grounded theory, the research analysis and data collection are closely connected. As soon as the initial data are collected, the researcher will analyze them. The derived concepts will form the basis for the data collection that follows. That means in the whole research process, the data collection and analysis will be going on in cycles (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) until all collected data are analyzed.

Sources of Data

As this research is on Dao as it is written in Dao De Jing, the data for analysis will be the original Chinese text in the ancient scripture. For the sake of the English readers, two selected English translation of Dao De Jing, supported by the Chinese text of the book with an early commentary, will be used as the sources of data in the research process.

The first selected translation was done by Arthur Dav Waley, one of the most important scholars and translators of Eastern literature in the twentieth century (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997). The second selected translated copy is from Gia-fu Feng and Jane English (Laozi et al., 1972). In this chapter, only the translation of Waley will be quoted for the sake of consistency and continuity in language flow. The Chinese text with commentary by one of the earliest Dao scholars, Wang Bi (王弼), is titled *Lao zi dao de jing zhu xiao shi* (老子道德經注校釋). It is given a glossary by Lou Yu Leh (樓宇烈) and published in 2001. A translation by Richard John Lynn of Wang Bi's commentary is also used as a reference (Laozi & Wang, 1999).

Research Procedure

The research started by taking text segments of varying lengths from Dao De Jing to be analyzed as data by means of constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In the initial process of analysis—open coding—the interpreted meaning of the data was represented by a code or concept name. These concepts were carried over and further developed in the coding of the upcoming chapters of Dao De Jing. Initial codes were sometimes abandoned or combined depending on how the new data was interpreted. More concepts were added as new chapters of the text were coded. As a result of comparative analysis, data similar in nature were grouped under the same conceptual heading. Each new datum that was coded under the same conceptual heading (or category label) was added to the properties and dimensions of that code (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

After the coding of all the eighty-one chapters of Dao De Jing, the text segments were coded the second time, using the complete code list obtained from the initial open coding. The next process—axial coding was then employed to develop and integrate categories and their properties into a framework, to depict the relationships of categories to each other (Locke, 2001).

Data Analysis

As the clusters of codes retrieved from the data are examined and categorized, it is seen that Dao reveals Itself in three aspects of human life: perception, activities, and achievement. There are descriptions of the essential nature of Dao perceived by the author; there are sketches of the standpoints or activities taken by the ruler or sage immersed in Dao; and there are also depictions of how the ruler or sage in Dao is naturally strengthened or supported to gain achievement without any purposeful effort.

Based on the research question—how teachings in Dao can be observed as concepts in management—the ruler or sage portrayed in Dao De Jing is taken as a role model of rulership. The data do not give the details of the method, the route, or the steps taken to achieve Dao, but there are illustrations of the nature of Dao and the phenomena when Dao is in effect on the ruler or sage. In the data analysis, three categories are identified from the code groups in relation to such a ruler:

- how the absolute nature of Dao is perceived by the sage ruler in Dao
- how actions are taken by the sage ruler in Dao
- how nature supports the sage ruler in Dao.

A more detailed report of the data analysis is illustrated below, and a summary is shown in Table 11.1.

FRAMEWORK OF CONCEPTS: DAO RULERSHIP

How the Nature of Dao is Perceived by the Sage Ruler in Dao

The verses under the first category of the code groups mainly illuminate the essential nature of Dao that emerges in the awareness of the sage ruler. Dao is perceived to be abstract, constant, and eternal. It is also incredibly described as nothingness that yields fullness. Moreover, Dao is the origin and basis of all creation.

Dao is Abstract, Constant, and Eternal. In Dao De Jing, there is a description of Dao as follows, “There was something formless yet complete, that existed before heaven and earth, without sound, without substance, dependent on nothing, unchanging, all pervading, unfailing”

Table 11.1 Framework of Dao Rulership in Laozi’s Dao De Jing

<i>Category of concepts</i>	<i>Themes</i>
1. How the nature of Dao is perceived by the ruler in Dao	i. Dao is abstract, constant, and eternal ii. Dao is both nothingness and fullness iii. Dao is the origin and basis of all creation
2. How actions are taken by the ruler in Dao	i. Pertaining to primal values ii. Disregarding Transient Gains iii. Actionless activity iv. Bringing his people to a higher level
3. How nature supports the ruler in Dao	i. Evolving on its own ii. Existing in harmony iii. Sustaining its simplicity/purity/nothingness

(Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 174). The nature of Dao, being “formless”, “unchanging”, and “unfailing”, is therefore abstract, constant, and eternal.

Dao is formless, so it is abstract. Its abstractness is also expressed as being “elusive”, “rarefied”, and “infinitesimal” as stated in the following verse: “Because the eye gazes but can catch no glimpse of it, It is called elusive. Because the ear listens but cannot hear it, It is called the rarefied. Because the hand feels for it but cannot find it, It is called the infinitesimal” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 159). Being “elusive”, “rarefied”, and “infinitesimal”, It can also be said as invisible, inaudible, and imperceptible (Laozi & Wang, 1999).

The abstractness of Dao is further emphasized in the verse, “The Great Form is without shape, for Tao (Dao) is hidden and nameless, yet Tao (Dao) alone supports all things and brings them to fulfillment” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 193). Though Dao is shapeless, hidden from sight, and cannot be named, “Yet within it there is a force, a force that though rarified is none the less efficacious. From the times of old till now Its charge has not departed but cheers onward the many warriors” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 170). As Dao keeps Its charge to support all things—to encourage the many warriors to go onward, it is understood that It has never been changed from the days of old. It is constant. It is the “Unvarying Way” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 141).

It cannot be known when Dao starts to exist. The inquiry was made in this verse, “Was it too the child of something else? We cannot tell. But as a substanceless image it existed before the Ancestor” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 146). The abstractness and constancy of Dao lead one to perceive Its eternity. It cannot be known when Dao would extinguish, for it is stated, “The Valley Spirit (Dao) never dies... Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 149). Never running dry, Dao sustains forever. There is no end to it. Another verse says, “Heaven is eternal, the Earth everlasting” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 150). Therefore, the “formless”, “unchanging”, and “unfailing” Dao is abstract, constant, and eternal.

Dao is Both Nothingness and Fullness. Apart from being abstract, constant, and eternal, Dao, “without sound, without substance”, yet “all pervading, unfailing”, is also perceived to be both nothingness and fullness. In *Dao De Jing*, it is written, “The Way (Dao) is like an empty vessel that yet may be drawn from without ever needing to be filled” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 146). Having nothing within and yet always able

to supply with what is needed, Dao is both nothingness and fullness simultaneously.

The nature of coexisting nothingness and fullness can be further demonstrated by the following verse, “Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water; but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 238). It can be understood that the nothingness of Dao is, like water, the softest of all that exists, and yet It possesses the fullest power, which nothing else can resist.

Dao is the Origin and Basis of All Creation. Besides being both nothingness and fullness, Dao is also said to depend on nothing, that is to say, it is not born or created by anything else. According to Dao De Jing, Dao Itself is the origin and basis of all creation. The first verse of the book says, “It was from the Nameless (Dao) that Heaven and Earth sprang. The named is but the mother that rears the ten thousand creatures, each after its kind” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 141).

Dao is considered as “the very progenitor of all things in the world” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 146). Similarly, in another verse, Dao is again described as “the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 149). Therefore, it is the origin and basis from which and upon which all things in the world come into existence.

How Actions Are Taken by the Sage Ruler in Dao

The second category of code groups displays the standpoint or actions taken when a manager keeps in his awareness the values of Dao. In all his deeds, he pertains to the primal values that are essential and true, disregards any transient gains, performs actionless actions, and brings the people he serves to a new level of life.

Pertaining to Primal Values. Born with the human right of exercising his free will, a ruler may choose to follow the values he is aware of or go against them. In Dao De Jing, a sage will choose to pertain to the primal values even if he must condescend himself under disadvantaged situations like the following, “To become full, be hollow. Be tattered, that you may be renewed. Those that have little, may get more, those that have much, are but perplexed. Therefore, the Sage clasps the Primal Unity, testing by it everything under heaven” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 171).

With the target of getting closer to the infinitesimal, the sage in Dao abandons flaunting himself, or insisting of his rightness, or boasting, or

stressing his own self-importance. The image of a tree may help to explain the above verse. The more branches a tree has grown, the farther away these branches are from the roots. The fewer branches it has, the closer the branches are to the roots. Similarly, the more one has, may it be wealth, or knowledge, or power, or fame, the farther he is from his authenticity of nature and so becomes perplexed. The less one has, the better he has access to his roots and eventually “clasps the Primal Unity” and sustains as the sole model to everything on earth.

Pertaining to primal values is to “Hold fast to the Unity, and never quit it” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 153), even disregarding any transient gains.

Disregarding Transient Gains. Holding onto the primal values of Dao—Unity, a sage contributes himself to the people and yet does not manipulate his power over his people for any impermanent advantages to himself.

It is the vision beyond life and death that breeds the wisdom: “He who has once known the contentment that comes simply through being content, will never again be otherwise than contented” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 199). A sage is immersed in this contentment. “Therefore the Sage knows himself but does not show himself. Knows his own value, but does not put himself on high. Truly, he rejects that but takes this” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 232). A ruler in Dao does not think himself unworthy of anything. He is fully aware of the true value he possesses, and what he may gain from it. However, he never considers the transient advantages to himself as anything that deserves his attention. Instead, he sacrifices himself to Dao.

Since it becomes certain to the sage that there are supreme values of existence on a higher level, he takes no deliberate actions to earn for himself praise, glory, and wealth as he bears all the responsibilities to which he is liable.

Actionless Activity. Taking no purposeful actions for the sake of his own advantages and glory, the sage ruler undergoes activities that can be called “actionless”: He “Does nothing, yet achieves everything” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 200).

What are actionless activities? An actionless activity or “wu wei” means to know Dao. Actions with the awareness of Dao bring fruitful results. This is fully elucidated in the verse: “Push far enough toward the Void. Hold fast enough to Quietness, and of the ten thousand things none but can be worked on by you” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 162).

How can actionless activities be beneficial? The value of actionless action is that it does not incur resistance: “Being substanceless it can enter even where is no space. That is how I know the value of action that is actionless. But that there can be teaching without words, value in action that is actionless” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 197). In this verse, the major characteristic of actionless activities are described. It is “substanceless” and so even the “impermeable” cannot go against it. Therefore, teaching can be “without words”, and action can be “actionless”.

Actionless activities start with the practice of Dao, through which one turns to be less and less reliant on actions that call for materialistic success and accomplishments: “Learning consists in adding to one’s stock day by day. The practice of Tao consists in subtracting day by day. Subtracting and yet again subtracting till one has reached inactivity. But by this very inactivity, everything can be activated” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 201).

Bringing His People to a Higher Level. A sage ruler taking actionless actions is modest and humble in outlook. Instead of being wrapped in an atmospheric upliftment of drums and trumpets, the people observe from him and his behaviors the following characteristics: “Circumspect they seemed, like one who in winter crosses a stream. Watchful, as one who must meet danger on every side. Ceremonious, as one who pays a visit; yet yielding, as ice when it begins to melt” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 160). Terms like circumspect, watchful, ceremonious, yielding, etc. are indeed illustrations of nothing ambitious and passionate.

Because of his actionless activity, the people he serves acquire a state of divine intelligibility and tranquility. Life on a superficial level of values is not a life of free will. In *Dao De Jing*, it is pointed out that, “The five colours confuse the eye, the five sounds dull the ear, the five tastes spoil the palate. Excess of hunting and chasing makes minds go mad. Products that are hard to get impede their owner’s movements” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 156). A sage ruler ensures that the people’s desire is not excited. “Yet through his actionless activity all things are duly regulated” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 145).

By helping his people to be free from the bondage of human desire, the sage, full of empathy, compassion, and love, brings them to transcend the suffering and hardship toward a divine level of life. A divine level of life is aligned to the wisdom in Dao, and the wisdom in Dao is nothing but all that is reflected in the creation that comes from Dao Itself.

Therefore, what reflected from out of the creation is Dao, and Dao is the way or the law that comes naturally from Dao Itself, without any

other interventions. In Dao De Jing, it is called “Self-so”, which means Nature. Being embraced in Dao, the sage is therefore supported by Dao Itself, or by Nature.

How Nature Supports the Ruler in Dao

Since Dao reveals the Law of Nature, a sage ruler tends to act in alignment to the Law of Nature and so achieves what Nature offers without deliberate efforts to make himself distinguished. In Dao De Jing it is found that the whole creation, guided by the Law of Nature, evolves on its own to glorify Dao, meanwhile enhancing harmonious existence and pure sustainability.

Evolving on Its Own. Dao is in alignment with Nature, as shown in the verse: “The ways of men are conditioned by those of earth. The ways of earth, by those of heaven. The ways of heaven by those of Tao (Dao), and the ways of Tao by the Self-so” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 174). The “Self-so” is Nature. Just as men do not act against the Earth, and the Earth does not act against the Heaven, and the Heaven does not act against Dao, Dao does not act against Nature. Nature is what Dao is.

The following verse describes how the Law of Nature spontaneously moves toward the revelation of Dao, and so supports the sage ruler in Dao. As a sage ruler performs actionless activity as in Dao, achievement naturally comes: “Yet Heaven and Earth and all that lies between is like a bellows. In that it is empty, but gives a supply that never fails... Far better is it to keep what is in the heart” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 147). It is the bellows-like quietness and emptiness lying in the heart of Dao that never fail to give a supply. The never-ceasing supply is nothing but the result of keeping such quietness and emptiness of Dao.

Since Nature is what Dao is, a sage ruler in Dao is naturally supported by Nature. “Great Tao (Dao) is like a boat that drifts. It can go this way; it can go that... The ten thousand creatures obey it, though they know not that they have a master. Therefore it is called the Great” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 185). The whole creation naturally moves toward the accomplishments of its own without being even aware of how they can achieve. It is merely the natural consequence produced by following what is acquired by Nature.

Eventually, Dao achieves without any interference to Its own Nature, as mentioned in this verse, “Tao (Dao) never does; yet through it all things are done” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 188).

As Nature is left to Its Own without interference, the actions of a sage ruler are supported as the whole creation is naturally kept in harmony.

Existing in Harmony. Since Dao moves in alignment with Its very own Nature, it is important that the sage never intervenes in what Nature does. As a result, he is naturally supported to maintain order and peace in great harmony.

In Dao De Jing a vivid picture of the whole creation reaching perfect harmony is depicted, “The impunity of things fraught with the “power” may be likened to that of an infant. Poisonous insects do not sting it. Nor fierce beasts seize it. Nor clawing birds maul it” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 209). Wang Bi’s comment on this verse says:

The infant is free from craving or desire and so commits no offense against the myriad things. As a result, no poisonous creature commits offense against him. It is because one who has profoundly internalized virtue does not commit offense against others that others do not try to make him lose his wholeness. (Laozi & Wang, 1999, p. 155)

Nature gives support to a sage ruler by providing benefits without doing harm, “For heaven’s way is to sharpen without cutting, and the sage’s way is to act without striving” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 243). The heaven’s way to “sharpen without cutting” means to give benefits without causing harm. In Wang Bi’s explanation, the heaven’s way is to produce and accomplish things. Since the sage acts in accordance with the heaven’s way, his actions do not rouse people to compete with one another (Laozi & Wang, 1999, p. 191). The whole creation stays in harmony as it provides strong support to the sage ruler.

Sustaining Its Simplicity/Purity/Nothingness. The sage ruler is supported by Nature which evolves on Its own and exists in harmony. He is also supported when Nature sustains Its pure state, as described in this verse, “Tao (Dao) is eternal, but has no fame (name); the Uncarved Block, though seemingly of small account, is greater than anything that is under heaven” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 183). The “Uncarved Block” literally means simplicity. Here it refers to the existence in its simplest state, which is also the state of pure nothingness. Though small it is, the “Uncarved Block” cannot be conquered by anything under heaven. The possession of such simplicity by the sage ruler leads to true governance as mentioned later in the same verse, “If kings and barons would but possess themselves of it, the ten thousand creatures would flock to

do them homage. Heaven-and-earth would conspire to send Sweet Dew. Without law or compulsion, men would dwell in harmony” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 183).

Eventually, when Nature is sustained in simplicity/purity/nothingness, the sage ruler fully accomplishes his cosmic goal, “Heaven’s way is like the bending of a bow. When a bow is bent the top comes down and the bottom-end comes up. So too does Heaven take away from those who have too much, and give to those that have not enough” (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 237).

Being fully supported by Nature, the sage ruler exceeds all boundaries that confine his openness and creativity. He is an unbounded individual. However, he does not want to show his worthiness. He preserves his humility and lowliness which is the foundation of his accomplishments.

In summary, the framework of Dao Rulership in Laozi’s Dao De Jing is illustrated in Table 11.1.

LAOZI’S DAO RULERSHIP AND MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI’S NATURAL-LAW-BASED-MANAGEMENT

The conceptual framework of rulership grounded in Dao De Jing leads one to a special realm of management, one that exceeds the manipulation of concrete resources and employment of human talents. The themes that emerged in Dao are very similar to the teachings of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who advocated a theory of Natural-Law-Based management.

In his book, *Maharishi University of Management: Wholeness on the Move*, Maharishi describes Natural Law as the infinite organizing power that sustains existence, promotes all things in the universe, and maintains the relationship among all things automatically (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995). In this book, Maharishi argues that when the managing intelligence of the manager is aligned with the supreme intelligence of the universe, his administration will be as automatic and problem-free as the universe governed by Natural Law.

In Maharishi’s analysis, the seat of nature’s intelligence is accessible through cultivating the experience of Transcendental Consciousness, or silent inner Being. The conscious mind can systematically go beyond thought and directly experience a state of restful alertness, the non-localized, non-material, non-changing field of pure existence at the source of the mind (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1967). This experience is described as Transcendental Consciousness because it transcends time, space, and all

Table 11.2 Parallels between Laozi’s Dao and Maharishi’s Higher States of Consciousness

<i>Dao</i>	<i>Higher states of consciousness</i>
How the nature of Dao is perceived by the ruler in Dao	Experience of transcendental consciousness
How actions are taken by the ruler in Dao	Taking actions in higher states of consciousness
How nature supports the ruler in Dao	Nature support in higher states of consciousness

relative, changing experience. Maharishi identifies this inner state of pure consciousness as the spiritual essence of life: “eternal silence, which is pure wakefulness, absolute alertness, pure subjectivity, pure spirituality” (1995, p. 271 fn.). Maharishi (1967) further describes how higher states of consciousness grow as Transcendental Consciousness remain established even when one engages in dynamic activity.

The three categories of Dao rulership in Laozi’s Dao De Jing are found to be parallel to the teachings of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Dao as described in Laozi’s Dao De Jing conveys similar depictions to what Maharishi presents about Transcendental Consciousness. Table 11.2 shows:

Experience of Transcendental Consciousness

Maharishi points out that Transcendental Consciousness is the experience of Being, the abstract and non-changing nature of existence. Maharishi’s description of the abstract nature of existence is markedly like the depiction of Dao in Dao de Jing. Maharishi (1963/2020) says:

Existence is abstract; that which exists is concrete. We may say that existence is life itself, while that which exists is the ever-changing phenomenal phase of the never-changing reality of existence. Existence is the abstract aspect of life on which are built what we call the concrete phases of life which encompass all aspects of the individual—body, mind, thinking, speaking, acting, behaving, experiencing, and influencing the surroundings, including all aspects of cosmic existence. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 3)

From Maharishi’s words, it is understood that all concrete aspects of life including the physical body and the actions of thought and speech as well

as all that can be seen and heard in the surroundings are only part of life. All these only belong to the phenomenal phase of life that is ever-changing. Existence, which is never-changing and abstract, is life itself. It is upon the abstract aspect of life—the Existence— those concrete phases of life are constructed.

In Dao, the usefulness of what is not captured by the senses (nothingness or wu) resembles how existence or Being is explained by Maharishi through the analogy of a business owner, “It is like a powerful business owner who is rarely found in the actual place of business, who remains obscure and yet effectively controls his business operations” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 7).

Maharishi’s words about the omnipresence of Being hiding Its nature, well illustrate how Dao works. Resembling the powerful business owner, Dao, the Nothingness that is not manifested to the senses endlessly yields fruitful outcomes.

Laozi expounds that Dao is the basis of all beings. Dao is the basis of all existence. In Maharishi’s writing, the state of pure consciousness is the experience of Being, the abstract and non-changing nature of existence. Maharishi again says,

Existence, life, or Being, is the unmanifested reality of all that exists, lives, or is. Being is the ultimate reality of all that was, is, or will be. It is eternal and unbounded, the basis of all the phenomenal existence of the cosmic life. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 3)

Taking Actions in Higher States of Consciousness

Striking similarity to the insights of Laozi regarding a ruler’s actions taken can be seen in the writing of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi about government and management. Laozi describes how a sage ruler takes actionless activity. Maharishi introduces action from the settled state of mind. He elucidates action from the settled state of mind, Transcendental Consciousness, as action in silence. Maharishi explains: “Action in silence is action from the level of infinite correlation—from the level of the ‘field’ where the total energy of Natural Law is utilized to fulfill the intention” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 172). Maharishi explains:

The infinite organizing power of Natural Law, through its lively, quiet presence (catalytic agent) in every point of creation spontaneously radiates the infinite organizing power of self-referral dynamism, and this is how the all-directional performance of the manager spontaneously achieves maximum results in a natural way through minimum effort. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 9)

Such expressions from Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's exposition of a consciousness-based theory of management provide a window for unlocking the meaning and application of the Dao expounded by Laozi. Laozi elucidates that one can access the hidden power of Dao, Natural Law, through a state of consciousness that is non-active—"make yourself inert, to become in the end full of life" (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 160).

The Way or Dao is a transcendental phenomenon in that "eyes gaze but catch no glimpse of it" (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 159). Yet it is the source of exceptional effectiveness—"Hold fast enough to Quietness and of the ten thousand things none but can be worked on by you" (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 162). Through the silent and unseen influence of the Dao, Laozi argues, "creatures will at once be transformed" and "the whole empire will be at rest" (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 188).

Similarly, one of the most important management principles advocated by Maharishi is the Principle of Least Action, borrowing a term from physics. According to Maharishi, on the level of action in SILENCE, the minimum effort will bring about maximum results, because the infinite organizing power of Natural Law is available on this level of action in silence (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 171). Maharishi again says, "action propelled from this level of silence consumes least energy and utilizes the total organizing power of Natural Law to hit the target with maximum speed and least resistance" (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 172).

In the light of Maharishi's works, we gain insight into Laozi's teaching that the supreme quality of management can be manifested in action from the settled state of mind—action from Transcendental Consciousness—action in silence.

Nature Support in Higher States of Consciousness

The term Support of Nature refers to a phenomenon in which individuals find that the fulfillment of their desires seems to come about by fortunate circumstances, not by their direct actions (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1967). This is possible because a link between the individual mind and the intelligence of nature exists within the consciousness of the manager. Maharishi explains that which enables the manager to engage the managing intelligence of nature law by describing “that infinite organizing power which sustains existence and promotes the evolution of everything in the universe, automatically maintaining the well-coordinated relationship of everything with everything else” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 8). Elsewhere, Maharishi refers to this sustaining or support aspect of natural law with reference to the Vedic term dharma: “‘Dharma’ is that invincible power of Nature which upholds existence. It maintains evolution and forms the very basis of cosmic life. It supports all that is helpful for evolution and discourages all that is opposed to it” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1967, p. 26).

Dao, demonstrating nothing of Its greatness, achieves greatness. Regarding this, Maharishi gives a fundamental explanation, “Natural Law functions through the Principle of Least Action. This means that the orderly dynamics of Nature is founded on the ground of eternal silence; that is why natural action does not create any strain” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, pp. 13, 271). The Principle of Least Action and the ground of eternal silence mentioned by Maharishi may help us understand more about the ruler or manager established in Dao.

In conclusion, the subtle ideas of Dao—that nothingness and inaction can be the ground for skill in action—could appear nonsensical to the field of management. Yet we find the same philosophy of management in Maharishi’s formula for powerful and balanced action through alignment with the managing intelligence of Natural Law. As the attention of management scholars and practitioners shifts to deeper levels of awareness—from action, through thinking to feeling and Being—the power of Dao management comes more clearly into view as an ultimately practical formula for holistic success.

Table 11.3 summarizes how the teachings of Laozi are largely parallel to that of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Table 11.3 Parallel teachings of Laozi and Maharishi

<i>Laozi</i>	<i>Maharishi Mahesh Yogi</i>
<i>How the Nature of Dao is Perceived by the Ruler in Dao</i>	<i>Experience of Transcendental Consciousness</i>
Dao is Abstract, Constant, and Eternal There was something formless yet complete, that existed before heaven and earth, without sound, without substance, dependent on nothing, unchanging, all pervading, unailing. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 174)	Existence is abstract; that which exists is concrete. We may say that existence is life itself, while that which exists is the ever-changing phenomenal phase of the never-changing reality of existence. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 3)
Dao is Both Nothingness and Fullness The Way (Dao) is like an empty vessel that yet may be drawn from without ever needing to be filled. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 146)	It is the omnipresence of Being that is responsible for hiding Its nature somewhere in seclusion, out of the marketplace of the world. It is the omnipresence of Being that is responsible for hiding Being behind the scenes and giving It the status of the omniscient, omnipresent supreme lord of the universe. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, pp. 7–8)
Dao is the Origin and Basis of All Creation It was from the Nameless (Dao) that Heaven and Earth sprang. The named is but the mother that rears the ten thousand creatures, each after its kind. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 141)	Being is the ultimate reality of all that was, is, or will be. It is eternal and unbounded, the basis of all the phenomenal existence of the cosmic life. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 3)

(continued)

DAO AND CONTEMPORARY MANAGEMENT THEORIES

Harung (1999) presented a typology of management approaches which can help us situate Dao in relation to other general management approaches. Table 11.4 shows Harung's model of the progressing evolution of organizations in terms of the development of consciousness. Awareness at stage 1 is task-based, concerning the performance of individual, concrete tasks. The second stage is process-based, integrating all the tasks to develop or accomplish a service or product. The third stage is value-based, stimulating intrinsic motivation and healthy corporate culture. The fourth stage goes beyond the above three. It is consciousness-based, also called natural-law-based management, the primary focus of which is to develop higher states of consciousness of all the members.

Table 11.3 (continued)

<i>Laozi</i>	<i>Maharishi Mahesh Yogi</i>
<p><i>How Actions are Taken by the Ruler in Dao</i></p> <p>Pertaining to Primal Values Therefore, the Sage clasps the Primal Unity, testing by it everything under heaven. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 171)</p> <p>Disregarding Transient Gains Therefore the Sage knows himself but does not show himself. Knows his own value, but does not put himself on high. Truly, he rejects that but takes this. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 232)</p> <p>Actionless Activity Push far enough toward the Void. Hold fast enough to Quietness, and of the ten thousand things none but can be worked on by you. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 162)</p> <p>Bringing His People to a Higher Level The five colours confuse the eye, the five sounds dull the ear, the five tastes spoil the palate. Excess of hunting and chasing makes minds go mad. Products that are hard to get impede their owner's movements. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 156). Yet through his actionless activity all things are duly regulated. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 145)</p>	<p><i>Taking Actions in Higher States of Consciousness</i> “Action in silence is action from the level of infinite correlation—from the level of the ‘field’ where the total energy of Natural Law is utilized to fulfill the intention”. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 172)</p> <p>“The infinite organizing power of Natural Law, through its lively, quiet presence (catalytic agent) in every point of creation spontaneously radiates the infinite organizing power of self-referral dynamism, and this is how the all-directional performance of the manager spontaneously achieves maximum results in a natural way through minimum effort”. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 9)</p> <p>“Action propelled from this level of silence consumes least energy and utilizes the total organizing power of Natural Law to hit the target with maximum speed and least resistance”. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 172)</p> <p>“This is the natural behavior of righteous people—they are never aggressive. If they appear to be so, they are only playing their role as instruments of the divine plan”. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1967, p. 36)</p>

(continued)

Table 11.4 depicts the analysis by Harung et al. of how management approaches can be mapped to levels of the mind. In this model, Consciousness-Based management is that approach to managing which predominantly uses the level of Transcendental Consciousness. This enables the organization to function “in accord with, and supported by, the laws of nature governing not only its own dynamics, but also the larger social environment and nature, as a whole” (Harung, 1999, p. 184). The model in Table 11.4 was informed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi’s theory of management, which has been discussed in this paper.

Table 11.3 (continued)

<i>Laozi</i>	<i>Maharishi Mahesh Yogi</i>
<p><i>How Nature Supports the Ruler in Dao Evolving on Its Own</i> The ways of men are conditioned by those of earth. The ways of earth, by those of heaven. The ways of heaven by those of Tao (Dao), and the ways of Tao by the Self-so. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 174)</p> <p><i>Existing in Harmony</i> The impunity of things fraught with the ‘power’ may be likened to that of an infant. Poisonous insects do not sting it. Nor fierce beasts seize it. Nor clawing birds maul it. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 209)</p> <p><i>Sustaining Its Simplicity/Purity/Nothingness</i> Tao (Dao) is eternal, but has no fame (name); the Uncarved Block, though seemingly of small account, is greater than anything that is under heaven. (Laozi & Waley, 1958/1997, p. 183)</p>	<p><i>Support of Nature in Higher States of Consciousness</i> The organizing power of Natural Law is that infinite organizing power which sustains existence and promotes the evolution of everything in the universe, automatically maintaining the well-coordinated relationship of everything with everything else. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, p. 8) When the Laws of Nature around the individual are completely in tune with the mind which is established in the Cosmic Law, then the entire nature around the individual is set free from any strain and disharmony. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963/2020, p. 197) Purity is life. Absolute purity is eternal life. Survival depends upon purity. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1963, 2020, p. 301)</p>

Table 11.4 Stages of organizational evolution

<i>Evolution of organizations</i>	<i>Dominant level of mind</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Stage 1: Task-based	Senses (Acting)	Command
Stage 2: Process-based	Intellect (Thinking)	Improve
Stage 3: Values-based	Identity (Feeling)	Inspire
Stage 4: Consciousness-based	Transcendental consciousness (Being)	Flow

Note Adapted from “Evolution of organizations in the new millennium”, Harung, Heaton and Alexander, 1999, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 20(3), 198–206

Stage 4 of this model certainly also refers to the Dao theory of management which we have brought out based on textual analysis of Dao De Jing. As we have seen, there are striking parallels between the writings of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the text of Dao De Jing.

Table 11.4 also provides a map for contrasting other traditional theories of management with consciousness-based management. For example, the scientific management approach of Taylor (1919) could be said to represent the task-based and process-based levels of this model. The argument in Harung et al. (1999) is that management knowledge and practice are evolving in the direction of deeper intrinsic levels of human potential and toward an emerging realizing of the power of a consciousness-based approach. Since the publication of Harung's model, a parallel depiction of stages of organizational evolution has been articulated by Frederic Laloux (2014). Laloux describes a shift to a form of organization that "happens when we learn to disidentify from our own ego" (Laloux, 2014, p. 44), and "comes with an opening to a transcendental and spiritual realm and a profound sense that at some level we are connected and part of one big whole" (p. 48). Laloux discusses the management shifts that are enabled as consciousness shifts to incorporate the transcendental level of the mind.

Another related model has recently been published by Tsao and Laszlo (2019), and Pavez et al. (2021). Tsao and Laszlo refer to this shift as crossing an ontological divide, resulting in visions and practices for full-spectrum flourishing (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). Pavez et al. highlight how a shift of consciousness from separateness to connectedness transforms business purpose and organizational practices to become Positive Impact Companies that support thriving and well-being. They call this mindset shift "crossing the big divide", represented as the evolutionary movement from us versus them mentality to "All of Us".

In our analysis, Laloux, Tsao, and Laszlo and Pavez et al. are all trending in the same direction as the consciousness-based theory of management which was advocated by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and which we find in our analysis of Dao de Jing. Thus, the Dao taught by Laozi, although ancient, is at the leading edge of management theory again today.

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Teaching Science and Technology of Consciousness to Management Students in China

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INTRODUCTION

The process of education takes place in the field of consciousness. The prerequisite for gaining complete education, complete knowledge—the prerequisite for knowing everything, experiencing everything, and doing everything—is to bring the awareness to the level of pure intelligence, pure knowledge, self-referral intelligence, self-referral consciousness, Transcendental Consciousness. (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1995, pp. 111–112)

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As the pioneer of Consciousness-Based education (CBE), Maharishi International University (MIU) has more than 50 years of experience in teaching CBE, and over 10 years of teaching in collaboration with university partners to management students in China. In recent years, MIU initiated a professional management degree program in China, which does not require a full presence at the MIU campus. MIU faculty travel to China to teach the required courses for some parts and deliver the rest of the courses online, as a Blended Learning (BL) program. BL is a combination of classroom teaching with online experiences (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). According to Fabry (2009), a major challenge of BL is designing comparable online and on-ground courses in order to ensure the goals, objectives, and learning outcomes are met in both delivery modes. While a lack of contact hours, relationship building, etc. are obvious challenges for BL programs, there is one challenge which is the uniqueness of the CBE model. CBE is where teaching is not just focusing on the object of knowledge—the known—but is also on the subject of knowledge—the knower and the process of knowing. “We are here to acquire for ourselves the great wisdom of integrated life, so that no aspect of life remains in dark, everything becomes full of enlightenment” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 1986, p. 138).

In section two of this paper, CBE will be explained in detail but to expand briefly the idea, that CBE “combines experiential, intellectual, pedagogical, and environmental features all aimed at developing students’ consciousness of connectedness with his or her own deepest self and, through that, connectedness with others and with nature” (Tiwari & Nafees, 2016, p. 140). It has both a theoretical aspect and a practical aspect. The theoretical aspect is the course on Science and Technology of Consciousness (STC). The practical element employs a technique called Transcendental Meditation (TM) to develop total brain potential. “Transcendental Meditation is the foundation of Maharishi’s educational programs. This technology has been found to prepare students to learn and teachers to teach by increasing their intelligence, creativity, and vitality” (Dillbeck & Dillbeck, 1987). TM needs one on one instruction for a student to master its practice. “Transcendental Meditation (TM) is an easily learned, natural technique during which the individual experiences the unified field of natural law in his own awareness as transcendental consciousness” (Alexander et al., 1987).

To the uninitiated, STC can be very abstract. It is difficult for Chinese students to make up their minds to take action and learn because none

of the modern education they have experienced has anything to do with developing brain potential. Meditation itself seems to be very foreign. With weekend programs, when faculty and students do not have a full presence on campus, the relationship between students and faculty is not as close as when all are on campus the whole semester. Lack of contact hours further weakened the bonding and trust that could be built up easily with full-time on campus programs. The lack of such close relationships makes it hard for professors to present abstract theories such as STC to students; it is hard for students to understand and accept something they have never heard of from professors with whom they have not built up a rapport.

Without a full understanding of the theory, it is even more challenging for the students to take up the learning of the TM technique. Understanding and practice go hand in hand. Knowledge will not be complete without a practical aspect. As mentioned earlier, STC is a required first course of any MIU academic program. In 2020 the pandemic made blended learning difficult. MIU had to fully utilize online teaching to carry out the programs in China. So, to address the challenge to teach STC courses to Chinese students, the authors identified an approach that proved to be effective and successful. Moreover, this approach may offer lessons for applying to teaching Consciousness-based education to students of other cultural backgrounds and countries.

This paper consists of five sections. After this introduction section:

1. The second section starting below presents a detailed explanation of MIU's CBE program and the STC course.
2. The third section identifies a unique approach in the Chinese traditional education system. This section will also show that this mode shares a great similarity with MIU's CBE.
3. The fourth section explains how this delivery of MIU's CBE was carried out in light of Chinese traditional wisdom. Students' responses were collected through an official standard survey administered by a third-party organization, which insured the anonymity of the responders. This assures the survey results are of strong validity. Direct feedback from students as well as from partners in China was also taken into consideration. The results showed the online offering of STC was as good, if not better, as full-time STC courses offered on-site before.

4. The fifth section expands on the results and proposes that STC can be taught in multiple modes, in BL or totally online. It can potentially be offered to students of other cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds by relating the development of consciousness elements to features that can be found in other cultures and all religions.

CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED EDUCATION

If we look into the process of gaining knowledge, we find there are two sides to knowledge: the object of knowledge, that which we seek to know, and the subject of knowledge, the knower. What the present system of education provides is knowledge of the object; what it misses is knowledge of the subject, knowledge of the knower in the knower's infinite capacity. When the knower is ignorant about the Self, the whole structure of knowledge is as if baseless.—Maharishi Mahesh Yogi¹

Llewellyn and Pearson (2011) indicated that CBE “represents a major paradigm shift in the history of education” (p. 8). They argued that shift involves going from an *instruction paradigm to a learning paradigm*. The instruction paradigm focuses on providing instruction: the teacher passes on knowledge to a student. It emphasizes knowledge. A learning paradigm focuses on student learning: the teacher guides students in the discovery and construction of knowledge. It emphasizes the process of learning. Maharishi pointed out that education has three basic elements: a knower (students), known (knowledge which is to be learned), and the process of knowing, which connects the knower to the known. A “Consciousness-based paradigm embraces the known and the process of knowing but places primary emphasis on the knower—on developing the knower’s potential for learning from within” (Llewellyn & Pearson, 2011).

MIU’s CBE consists of the following four basic components:

¹ <https://www.maharishischoolsa.org/academics/cbe/>.

Courses on Consciousness

The students take the STC course as the very first course. This course provides an intellectual understanding of the field of consciousness and “enables students to understand and integrate principles of consciousness and intelligence underlying all creation” (MUM, 2017). The students practice the TM technique twice daily at school. “Transcendental Meditation is the key technology of Consciousness-Based education—to develop holistic functioning of the brain so that every student can enjoy higher states of consciousness, enlightenment” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 2001, p. 338). The experience of transcendental consciousness can unfold individual full potential while dissolving accumulated stress and fatigue through deep rest gained during the practice TM technique. “Through this technology, students gain benefits that have been scientifically documented, including increased creativity and intelligence, improved memory, better academic grades, reduced anxiety, and improvements in moral reasoning and in self-development” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 2001, p. 338).

Study of the Discipline in the Light of the Knowledge of Consciousness

The students take the traditional disciplines: mathematics, science, arts, and business management, with additional distinctive instructional charts in the light of the knowledge of consciousness. The instructional charts include Unified Field Charts, Main Points Charts, Course Overview Charts, etc. which are uniquely MIU. “All these charts have in common connecting the individual topics and concepts in the discipline, with the broader, deeper reality of discipline; and the broadest, deepest reality—the Self of the student” (Dillbeck & Gorini, 2019, p. 93 all). This connection is important because the student will not lose themselves in the limited parts of knowledge, and never lose the sight of who they really are. As Maharishi commented “The study of any part of knowledge simultaneously serves as a direct approach to fathoming the depth of total Knowledge” (Dillbeck & Gorini, 2019, p. 94).

Consciousness-Based Teaching Techniques that Make Learning Easy and Fulfilling

The teaching and curriculum are organized according to Maharishi's fundamental principles of education—receptivity, intelligence, knowledge, experience, and expression. They ensure easy, efficient, and fulfilling learning. These principles not only strengthen students' holistic development in higher states of consciousness but also make learning and teaching easy and fulfilling.

Stress-Free Routine and Nourishing Educational Environment

A healthy and balanced daily routine maintains the students' bodies and minds in a restful alert state, thereby helping the students unfold their full potential. These include having an early bedtime, taking one course at a time (block semester system), and eating organic food. The block semester system is important because the students can have their full attention on one course instead of being exhausted with assignments and exams from five or more courses at once. Within this curriculum, the students have time to practice TM and yoga every day. "Campus buildings are constructed according to the principle of Maharishi Vastu Architecture which are said to promote mental clarity, health, harmony and good fortune" (Heaton et al., 2017, p. 222). Due to the group practice of TM programs, everyone enjoys a peaceful, happy, and harmonious atmosphere on campus and in the community.

As a result of this educational approach, students grow in the awareness that all streams of knowledge are but modes of their own intelligence. They come to feel at home with everyone and everything. Their creative genius blossoms with increasing confidence and self-sufficiency. They cease to violate Natural Law and grow in the ability to accomplish anything and spontaneously to think and act free from mistakes—the fruit of all knowledge—*Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*²

² <https://www.maharishischoolsa.org/academics/cbe/>.

THE DAO OF GREAT LEARNING (DAXUE)

Students at the MIU campus enjoy the full benefit of CBE. In searching for the best approach to teach STC to Chinese students in BL style, the authors turned their attention to traditional Chinese wisdom. The traditional Chinese education system was greatly influenced by the teachings of Confucius (551 BC) for more than 2000 years. The Great Learning (Daxue), written by Confucius' disciple, has fundamentally shaped not only the Chinese educational system but also Chinese social and political systems for centuries. The Dao of Great Learning is to illustrate illustrious virtue, to renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence.

Confucius' Teachings Have Never Faded Away Completely in China

There is a story about another Chinese sage, Wang Yangming (1472 AD), whose experience demonstrated the popularity and influence of Confucian teaching. Wang was considered a 'complete sage' by many scholars and politicians in China. Wang had many achievements in his life in the fields of philosophy, literature, calligraphy, military, politics, and education (Wang Yangming, 2004). Wang later advanced Confucian teaching by applying pure scholarship to action with his famous saying 'Knowing and acting in unity' (知行合一) Wang was not able to speak until he was 5 years old. His parents were very worried about him but could not do anything about it. When Wang finally opened his mouth to speak, he uttered the entire beginning sentence of The Great Learning (Daxue) which was that "The Dao of Great Learning is to illustrate illustrious virtue, to renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence." Very surprised, Wang's father asked him how could he recite the text? Wang replied, "Everyone here reads it every day so I know it by heart!" While there is no exact record to verify the exact exchanges of the event, the idea of the story is that The Great Learning (Daxue) was deeply rooted in Chinese daily educational activities. To understand the classics and to be able to act according to the teachings (integration of knowledge and action) was part of everyone's education if anyone wanted to make achievements in life.

Education systems and practices in modern China deviated significantly from traditional Confucian teachings due to political and historical reasons, but Confucius' teachings have never faded away completely. New students are inspired to "Follow the ancients who practiced integration

of knowledge and action. To pursue the highest ideal of life and to rest in highest excellence.” Traditional Chinese wisdom on how to cultivate people continues to exert influence on many who strive to achieve high goals in life.

*The Great Learning (Daxue) in Chinese Tradition Resonates
with CBE*

The teachings of The Great Learning (Daxue) in Chinese tradition resonate on a very high level with MIU’s CBE. As mentioned earlier, CBE pays attention to not only the knowledge of the object but also to the knowledge of the subject as well as the process of gaining knowledge. In practice, CBE pays special attention to cultivating individuals, the containers of objective knowledge. As noted by Maharishi, “Knowledge is structured in consciousness.” The authors realized great similarities between MIU’s CBE and traditional Chinese education. The very first paragraph of The Great Learning (Daxue) says:

What the Great Learning teaches is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence. The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained to. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose, there may be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired end. Things have their root and their branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught in the Great Learning. (Legge, 1861, pp. 220–223)

The Great Learning explicitly announced from the very beginning the source, course, and goal for education. The three keywords at the very beginning define what The Great Learning is about. These three Chinese words are ‘明明德’ (Ming Ming De—Illustrate illustrious Virtue). The first two words are the same word repeated with different shades of meaning. 明 (Ming) in Chinese means ‘bright, light, clear, illuminating.’ The first 明 (Ming) is used as a verb to mean ‘enlightening, illuminating, making it bright or clear.’ The second 明 (Ming) is used as an adjective to mean ‘well-known, the best, in the broad daylight.’ The third word 德 (De) means virtue. Thus, the first few words in the original Chinese text (大学之道在明明德) can be translated verbatim as ‘The Dao

(or Way) of Great Learning is to enlighten (bring out) the highest virtue (in a person).’ In order to enlighten the highest virtue in every person, it is necessary to understand the ultimate goal of life (Daxue). ‘To rest in highest excellence’ means to only rest or stop the pursuit (of life) when the full potential of a human being is attained. With this highest goal in mind, one will no longer wander. An undisturbed and settled mind will produce tranquility that makes full understanding of everything possible. Full understanding of everything means to understand the source, the course, and the goal because everything has a beginning, a process, and an end (Daxue). Here The Great Learning beautifully illustrated how complete knowledge of life is obtained. It starts with tranquility of the mind or the state of pure consciousness. CBE also starts with an undisturbed mind of the knower—a mind in stillness—which we call Transcendental Consciousness. This tranquil status of mind is achieved by the simple and effortless technique TM as discussed briefly in the introduction and elaborated in detail in part two of this paper.

STC being very different from their prior education experiences, some of the students in China were taking STC courses with great reservations and serious doubts in their minds. For teachers to be able to impart knowledge of STC to students through online delivery, the receptivity from students had to be established. Receptivity is the first element of Maharishi’s Principles of Ideal Teaching (Dillbeck & Gorini, 2019). With receptivity comes intelligence, knowledge, experience, and expression, the fundamentals of a good education. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that students are open to receive what teachers are going to teach.

Confucius’ Teachings Have Seen a Revitalization in China in Recent Years

Fortunately, traditional wisdom and Confucius’ teachings have seen recovery and revitalization in China in recent years due to high stress in modern life which result in tremendous wandering, confusion, and loss in many peoples’ minds and daily life. Even many ‘successful people’ in business feel lost and begin to look for the ‘highest virtues’ of life through Confucian teachings. STC taught in light of Chinese traditional wisdom made for an immediate and favorable reception with Chinese students. Every principle of STC was explained through the great teachings of Chinese sages. Students felt immediately at home with the themes of STC taught in their own ‘home language.’ The following translation

of the second paragraph of the Great Learning, by James Legge, further demonstrates a remarkable similarity with MIU's CBE.

The ancients, who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.

Traditional Chinese wisdom seeks complete knowledge for the ultimate purpose of achieving world peace, “the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy” (天下平, Peace under heaven). ‘China’ literally means ‘Middle Kingdom’ in Chinese. ‘Throughout the kingdom’ is traditionally considered as ‘the whole world.’ A fully educated person with illustrious virtue always has the whole kingdom in his heart and mind. Illustrious virtue came from mastering complete knowledge (of everything). As Daxue further elaborates, “from the Son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the root of people.” This is because “it cannot be, when the root is neglected, that what should spring from it will be well ordered.” Therefore, “it never has been the case that what was of great importance has been slightly cared for, and, at the same time, that what was of slight importance has been greatly cared for.” One must water the root to enjoy the fruit, as Maharishi said.

*The Most Enlightening Comments about the Great Learning (Daxue)
from Zhu Xi*

Complete knowledge is gained not from outside the learner, but from inside by going deep to be ‘sincere in their thoughts.’ ‘Sincere in thoughts’ in CBE language is called purity of thoughts, and purity of thoughts comes from purity of consciousness. Pure consciousness comes

from a stress-free mind which can be achieved through TM. Only when one is ‘sincere in thoughts,’ can complete knowledge be gained. Thus, pure consciousness is the source, course, and goal of education. This STC principle is eloquently illustrated in *The Great Learning* (Daxue).

Perhaps the most enlightening comments about *The Great Learning* (Daxue) came from Zhu Xi, ‘the preeminent Neo-Confucian (*Daoxue*) master of the Southern Song Dynasty (1126–1271), who is generally ranked as second only to Confucius (551–479 BCE) in influence’ (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). According to Zhu Xi:

The *Great Learning* itself states that world peace is impossible unless a ruler first regulates his own country, but no ruler can do this without first setting his own household in order. This action in turn presupposes that he has oriented his personal life by rectifying his heart and acquiring sincerity. These virtues are the natural consequence of the expanded wisdom that results from investigating all things. *The Great Learning* thus views good government and world peace as inseparably tied to a ruler’s personal wisdom. (Britannica, 1998)

The *Great Learning* makes it very clear that in order ‘to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom,’ one has to start from within and reach a pure state of consciousness. Pure consciousness is experienced during TM practice. Scientific research has repeatedly demonstrated that group meditation will create coherence, called the Maharishi Effect in scientific terms, that can influence the environment (Orme-Johnson & Fergusson, 2018). When one percent of the population practices TM and its advanced TM-Sidhi programs, it will create coherence for the entire population. Thus, world peace is possible through cultivating pure consciousness in every individual through TM and TM-Sidhi programs (Dillbeck et al., 1987). Development of total human potential, gaining complete knowledge without stress, and creating a sustainable world peace are the main themes in MIU’s CBE. With this understanding and the new finding of the similarities between CBE and traditional Chinese wisdom, the authors delivered STC courses to two groups of new students in China online during the pandemic.

RESULTS OF CBE DELIVERED IN LIGHT OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL WISDOM

Synthesis and analysis are the two essential approaches to gaining Total Knowledge. Complete knowledge of the Consciousness-Based principles of teaching requires both approaches (Dillbeck & Gorini, 2019). As discussed earlier, the authors began to teach STC by finding the common basis in the field of ‘purity of thoughts,’ or pure consciousness, where complete knowledge is located—the Self of everyone. From this level of complete synthesis, the teachers began to lead and encourage students to analyze and apply STC principles by understanding MIU’s mission, core values, and founding goals in light of Daxue and other traditional Chinese wisdom. The students had the freedom to do their own self-discovery and self-exploration of STC principles and compare them with traditional Chinese wisdom. It helped students to come to their own conclusions on why STC should be the very first foundation course and why CBE is the future of education. Critical thinking was strongly encouraged with group and classroom discussions. In CBE, any discipline points are related to the knowledge of the Self. There is a saying in Chinese that goes “Seeing the essence through the phenomenon” (透过现象看本质). Instead of giving out the STC principles to students, students are encouraged to go deeper and find out what is the ‘essence’ of any discipline point presented in class, as well as what those points have to do with ourselves.

It was delightful that students who were mostly top managers and CEOs showed strong interest in STC courses as they were provoked to think deeply about the essence of any discipline in relation to themselves, their families, and their work. Most of the students gave very positive after-course feedback as is illustrated in the two third-party survey reports below. Table 12.1 shows the official survey result of the first STC course offered completely online. The results are compared against regular onsite teaching on campus. Please note that MUM is MIU’s previous name.

Table 12.2 shows the survey result of the online offering of STC to a new group of students. The comparison is against the survey result of regular onsite teaching on campus.

As the two tables show, online teaching can be as good as, or even better than onsite teaching. Some students were so excited about STC that they could not wait until the onsite courses to learn the TM technique. They decided to learn from local TM teachers, and they also convinced their family members to learn TM as well! Our partners in

Table 12.1 Course evaluation scores, 2020 spring, 16 respondents

	<i>Question text</i>	<i>Avg.</i>
1	Gained valuable knowledge	4.9
2	Course was well organized	4.9
3	Challenged me	4.7
4	Good balance between knowledge and work	4.9
5	Obtained clear answers	4.9
6	Timely feedback	5
7	STC principles valuable	4.9

Table 12.2 Course evaluation scores, 2021 fall, 13 respondents

	<i>Question text</i>	<i>Avg.</i>
1	Gained valuable knowledge	5
2	Course was well organized	5
3	Challenged me	5
4	Good balance between knowledge and work	5
5	Obtained clear answers	5
6	Timely feedback	5

China also reported increased acceptance and positive feedback from students about STC courses. A few students commented that they now understood better how to deal with their employees and decided to apply what they learned in their STC courses to their own businesses.

Another student, who is a successful business trainer, expressed in class that STC made it clear to him his true goals in life. He said that his pursuit in these past few years has been just financial success. But that success came at the cost of his personal health and family relationships. He realized there are more important things in life than just money. A full life should be lived at 200%: 100% inner life and 100% outer life (Maharishi). This 200% of life can only be possible with the full development of human potential. To develop full potential means education has to pay close attention to the container of knowledge, the knower. Only when the knower is fully awake with tranquility in mind and experience of pure consciousness, can they expect to have complete knowledge to experience a fuller life. Many points like this in STC courses taught in light of The Great Learning (Daxue) enable students to think deeply and think hard

about the meaning of life. Established in pure consciousness, the Self, through the practice of TM, one will pursue financial gains better but will be with ‘illustrious virtue’ in doing so and with the betterment of the whole world as one’s goal!

CONCLUSION: POTENTIAL FOR TEACHING CBE IN OTHER CULTURES

The qualities of an inspiring and effective leader in online education are the same as in any other field, for the most part. As we have been living through a season of intense change, adaption, and managing chaos at times, it is worth considering how our concept of leadership has to include the realization that change, and the possibility of significant disruption is part of our new normal.³

Change and disruption are for sure our new normal now. We need to lead with a perspective of “dynamic stability” so that we can be prepared for unplanned change with resilience. Stability and adaptability are both required to make progress. Teaching STC courses to Chinese students in the past year with the sudden disruption of the pandemic, showed how the non-changing values in education should be retained while trying to dynamically adapt to the changing situation.

“Teach to cultivate people” (教书育人) and “Knowing and acting in unity” (知行合一) are non-changing values in China’s education field. Chinese traditional wisdom emphasizes on producing a full man with complete knowledge. Complete knowledge does not come from the outside, but rather from the inner investigation (mentally) of details on the origins of things when one’s mind reaches a tranquil status, a transcendental field where one is fully aware of everything. This is the status of all-knowing, a status of enlightenment. As Daxue expounded, whether one is a ruler of a kingdom or just one of the masses, one has to start from within. This kind of understanding is not just uniquely Chinese. It can be found in any culture or religion in any country in the world. CBE contributed a scientific understanding and a technique for every student to truly experience the tranquility of mind to ‘investigate’ the source of

³ <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/leading-in-a-time-of-change-the-need-for-dynamic-stability/>.

everything. Therefore, teaching STC in light of the traditional wisdom of each culture or religion will be, in the opinion of the authors, an easy entryway to deliver profound knowledge that MIU's CBE provides. 'The great Way is simplest and easiest,' as the Chinese saying goes (大道至简至易). Consciousness-Based Education proves to be simplest and easiest when it is taught in tune with the laws of nature of any culture or religion in the world. The world is one big family and consciousness is truly the underlying reality of all cultures or religions.

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Spiritual Intelligence as in Nichiren Buddhism: Implications for Consciousness-Based Leadership and Management

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INTRODUCTION

Never, from ancient times on, has anyone seen or heard of winter turning back to autumn. Nor have we ever heard of a believer in the Lotus Sutra who turned into an ordinary person. The sutra reads, “If there are those who hear the Law, then not a one will fail to attain Buddhahood”.

Nichiren Daishonin (WND-1, p. 536)

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In the above lines from *Gosho* (scriptural text of Nichiren Buddhism, founded by Nichiren Daishonin in thirteenth-century, Japan) Nichiren Daishonin (ND hereafter) tells his disciples that no matter what circumstances they are in right now, the situation will improve and attain the state of Buddhahood. He is giving ‘hope’ to them based on the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. The Lotus Sutra is believed to be the last scripture taught by Buddha and has been the most widely read and most revered Buddhist scripture in East Asia since the third century (Wang, 2005). Hope is closely related to optimism and motivation toward achieving one’s goals (Snyder, 2000) and is the basis of a happy life (Myers, 2000). The concept of spiritual intelligence (SI) could not be more relevant in the present times. WHO reported (2017)¹ that an estimated 322 million people globally were affected by depression in 2015 and India is home to an estimated 57 million people (18% of the global estimate). The positive impact of SI on our lives has been established in the literature (Fry & Wigglesworth, 2013; George, 2006; Ravikumar & Dhamodharan, 2014; Skrzypińska, 2021; Vasconcelos, 2020). SI consists of two terms: ‘spiritual’ and ‘intelligence’. To define SI, we need to understand the meaning and relevance of these terms, starting from the literal meaning of the two terms and exploring the journey of SI from ‘spiritual’ and ‘intelligence’ to ‘spiritual intelligence’.

SPIRITUAL

Spirituality is “a fundamental dimension of the human being(s)”, actualized in their lived experiences (Schneiders, 1989, p. 3). Because of the multidimensionality of spirituality as a concept, it’s challenging to mark out a clear-cut definition (Braam & Koenig, 2019). Broadly it is inextricably connected with the virtues such as caring, hope, kindness, love and optimism (Puchalskiet al., 2004). Pioneering investigations of religious and spiritual beliefs by psychologists date back to the start of the century (James, 1902/1961; Starbuck, 1899). It is difficult to find when the two got separated. Most of the academic literature at the start of the century had used them in a similar context (Hill et al., 2000). The distinction has been made between spirituality and religion from the past few decades (Roof, 1993). More recently, spirituality is viewed as more of a personal

¹ http://www.searo.who.int/india/depression_in_india.pdf, April 2020.

concept, with connectedness to oneself, community, environment and something sacred (Paul Victor & Treschuk, 2020). It also encompasses various positive emotions like faith, love, peace, inspiration, trust, motivation and hope, resulting in improved quality of life and coping with difficulties (Yeşilçınar et al., 2018). Thus, values, inner development, a sense of meaning and purpose in life and their fruits, such as the feeling of fulfillment, are essential aspects of spirituality (Rocha & Pinheiro, 2021).

The word ‘spiritual’ appears many times in *Gosho* (English). According to Nichiren Buddhism (NB hereafter), the two aspects of human beings, physical and spiritual, have to be one, as given in *Gosho*. For example, “The physical and spiritual, which are one in essence, manifest themselves as two distinct aspects; thus the Buddha’s mind found expression as the written words of the Lotus Sutra.” Also, in *Gosho* lines “a person who, having completely understood the principle of the causes and effects of the worldly and spiritual realms, is no longer in darkness” (WND-1, p. 86).

INTELLIGENCE

It is defined as the measurement of “an agent’s ability to achieve goals in a wide range of environments” (Chollet, 2019, p. 4). According to this, emphasis is given on two aspects: on ‘achieving goals’ and ‘a wide range of environment’. This puts the light on an agent’s ability to not only perform a task but also adapt to the respective environment, where the task has to be performed. In research, the concept of intelligence was first initiated by Spearman (1904), who created the theory of general intelligence (g). After that, Stern (1914) came up with a measure to find individual intelligence in the form of IQ (intelligence quotient). Gardner (1983), in his famous work, identified multiple intelligences and gave recognition to eight intelligences. And then, the possibility of ninth intelligence, i.e., existential intelligence, was postulated (Gardner, 1999). The word Buddha has emerged from the root word *buddhi* in *Sanskrit*. The meaning of Buddha² (Oxford dictionary) is “A person who has attained full enlightenment”, the one with the true knowledge. In the English-translated *Gosho*, the word ‘intelligence’ appears only a few times, mainly as corresponding to the mental ability of a person.

² <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/buddha>, June 2019.

For example, “Even animals of little intelligence cannot endure parting from their young” (WND-1, p. 662). A word related to intelligence, wisdom³ is used many times in *Gosho* lines. For example in lines: “Reality means the true nature of all phenomena, and wisdom means the illuminating and manifesting of this true nature. Thus when the riverbed of reality is infinitely broad and deep, the water of wisdom will flow ceaselessly. When this reality and wisdom are fused, one attains Buddhahood in one’s present form” (WND-1, p. 746). “The term ‘wisdom collection’ refers to a wise understanding regarding the principles of suffering, non-substantiality, impermanence, and non-self” (WND-2, p. 44). Here wisdom is used to understand Buddha’s teachings and apply them in ‘reality’ (or the real world).

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

As we combine the meanings of spirituality and intelligence from dictionary, the literal definition of SI emerges. Spirituality is defined in the dictionary⁴ as “The quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things” and intelligence⁵ is defined as “The ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills”. Combining these, SI is defined as: “The ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul”. The difference between SI and spirituality is based in the “ability to acquire and apply that knowledge”. In continuation of the foregoing discussion we can say that, where spirituality is concerned only with ‘being aware of human spirit and soul’, SI is concerned about the ‘application of that spiritual knowledge in life’. This description also finds support in Sharma and Sharma (2019), where they relate SI with the practical use of spirituality in our daily lives.

There is no direct mention of the term SI in *Gosho*, but the word ‘wisdom’ is used many times. The use of the word *wisdom* here comes very close to the concept of SI, as discussed so far. It is also supported by

³ The ability to use your knowledge and experience to make good decisions and judgments, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/wisdom>, October 2021.

⁴ <https://www.lexico.com/definition/spirituality>, October 2020.

⁵ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/intelligence>, April 2019.

the three kinds of wisdom mentioned in NB. They are as follows⁶: “(1) The wisdom to understand the universal aspect of phenomena. (2) The wisdom to understand the various paths to enlightenment. Bodhisattvas possess this wisdom, which enables them to understand the individual aspects of existence, or the truth of temporary existence, as well as the various paths to enlightenment, so that they may save others accordingly. (3) The wisdom to understand both the universal aspect and individual aspects of phenomena. This is the Buddha wisdom, which perceives both the universal aspect and individual aspects of all phenomena, or the Middle Way, as well as the various paths to enlightenment.” These three wisdoms represent the use of the spiritual knowledge of the Lotus Sutra in leading a wise life. In academic research related to Buddhism, the dimensions of spiritual intelligence have not yet been fully explored, especially since very little work has been done to find the aspects of SI in NB. Thus, this chapter attempts to fill that gap in the literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various scholars like Zohar and Marshall (2000), Emmons (2000), Vaughan (2002) and Wigglesworth and Change (2004) have defined SI in many ways. Amram and Dryer (2008), using ecumenical grounded theory, reported five dimensions of SI: Consciousness, Transcendence, Grace, Meaning, Service and Truth. DeCicco (2009) identified four capacities of critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious state expansion. Kumar and Mehta (2011) developed a scale using six dimensions to measure SI in adolescents: (a) purpose in life, (b) human values, (c) compassion, (d) commitment to humanity, (e) understanding of self and (f) conscience.

Buddhism has been a source of enlightenment and hope for countless peoples and cultures. A famous school of *Mahayana* Buddhism based on the Lotus Sutra is NB, started by a Buddhist monk Nichiren Dais-honin (ND), who lived in thirteenth-century Japan. SGI (Soka Gakkai International), with over 12 million members in 192 countries, propagates this philosophy.⁷ The primary practice of NB is to chant the mantra

⁶ <https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/T/143>, June 2019.

⁷ <https://www.sokaglobal.org/about-the-soka-gakkai/at-a-glance/a-global-organization.html>, April 2021.

‘Nam-myo-ho-renge-kyo’. It means devotion to the mystic law of the Lotus Sutra.⁸ ND considered it as “the ultimate Law or truth of the universe”, which brings out inherent Buddhahood in all living beings.⁹ Teachings of ND are very popular among scholars worldwide (Choudhury, 2014; Chryssides, 2010; Fernández, n.d.; Holt, 2014). Although research scholars discussed spiritual aspects of Buddhism concerning environmental issues (Thathong, 2012), the spiritual dimensions of NB have not been discussed explicitly in the literature.

Further, there is almost no literature available for connecting NB to SI. Laohasurayodhin (2010) presented emotional intelligence with the perspective of Buddhism in combination with psychology, clearly highlighting the importance of intelligence in it. Holt (2014) compared the teachings of NB and Christianity on salvation. NB claims to give many benefits and practical victories in life to its practitioners. Scholars have written about such experiences in many books (Atkins, 2002; Chryssides, 2010). Garrison (2019) contrasted the educational philosophy of east and west by comparing NB and Deweyan Pragmatism. In India, NB is now also being explored by researchers. Choudhury (2014) explored NB with respect to social marketing. Dhawan and Mathur (2020) studied mindfulness, mental fatigue and thought suppression among the practitioners of NB and found it to help express one’s thoughts. The teachings of ND in English language are also available in the form of various books (WND-1, 2; Jaffe, 1985). To sum up, seeing its increasing followership worldwide and in India, and it being a new and untouched philosophy for SI, we decided to take it in this study. The research objective of the study is to explore the dimensions of SI in NB. This chapter also examines SI’s implications for conscious leadership and management in organizations.

METHODOLOGY

For research there are three broad strategies of inquiry: a quantitative, qualitative and mixed method (Creswell & Cresswell, 2017). As this study is exploratory in nature to address the gap of in-depth conceptual understanding of SI from NB, the qualitative approach is best suited. The

⁸ <https://www.sokaglobal.org/practicing-buddhism/nam-myo-ho-renge-kyo.html>, October 2021.

⁹ <https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/N/11>, October 2021.

data source used is the *Gosho*, a narrative by ND. The primary work of ND (*Gosho*) has been collected in two books by SGI in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin-1 and 2* (1999). *Gosho* originally was written in classical Chinese and Japanese. In this study, the English translation of *Gosho* is used. The translation committee has taken much care in translating the essence of original writings in the *Gosho*. We adopted the research methodology inspired by Bhawuk (2019) for defining SI.

In qualitative data analysis, the interpretation of the data or content is based on the context, and that gives rich and deep understanding to both the researcher and the audience (Gupta & Awasthy, 2015). It differs from quantitative data analysis, where mathematical formulas and equations are used to model and understand the data (Sukamolson, 2007). Quantitative data analysis is used for testing the theories and hypothesis for generalization purposes, whereas qualitative data analysis gives an in-depth understanding of an emerging phenomenon. In this study, according to the qualitative approach, for analyzing data, we have used an inductive content analysis of the narrative as there is no existing theory on the topic (Azungah, 2018). It was an interpretative process by which data is broken down analytically, and it was helpful in gaining insight into the phenomena reflected in the data.

This study followed Corbin and Strauss's (1990) open coding steps for content analysis. First, the codes were generated through line-by-line analysis of data. Next, conceptually similar elements were grouped to form categories. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), categories have analytic power because they have the potential to explain and predict. Then the categories related to each other came together as themes to form a framework, shown in Fig. 13.1.

This study used constant comparative analysis. Therefore, categories, code properties and any assumptions, appearing during the data analysis were compared as an iterative process, resulting in the formation of theoretically relevant categories (da Silva Barreto et al., 2018). Different researchers use different naming conventions during the stage of coding (Chun Tie et al., 2019). We have used three stages: (i) initial coding to

Fig. 13.1 Data analysis steps followed ref

Codes→Categories→Themes

Table 13.1 Codes from *Gosho*

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Codes</i>
1 Ultimate goal—Nirvana/liberation	21 Mystic nature
2 Belief in karmas	22 The ‘spiritual eye’
3 Belief in rebirth	23 Importance of action (duty)
4 Conduct—how to live	24 World as illusion
5 Importance of Faith	25 Sacrifice for the belief
6 Stoic nature	26 Bravery
7 Meditation	27 Development of self
8 Food and health	28 Spiritual master (teacher)
9 Obstacles in way of getting Liberated	29 Working for others (being altruistic)
10 Refuting other gods/sutras	30 God’s home
11 Soul/entity of life	31 Servant leadership
12 Slander	32 Importance of Prayers
13 Six senses	33 Earthly desires
14 On women	34 Environment
15 Scripture’s importance	35 Gratitude
16 Mind	36 Recuperate
17 Prophecy	37 Morals
18 Propagation/devotional services	38 Praying and chanting
19 Self-control	39 Eternal (absolute) happiness
20 Equality of all humans	

generate basic codes from the data, (ii) intermediate coding to form categories from the codes and (iii) advanced coding to culminate final themes from the core categories.

DATA

The first level of initial line-by-line analysis yielded a total of 39 codes. These are presented in Table 13.1. Appendix A contains the codes with the supporting lines from *Gosho*, using the English translation of *Gosho*, WND-1 and 2 (Writings of Nichiren Daishonin).

RESULTS

The next step was intermediate coding, to combine the codes into categories based on similar features or patterns. Based on the similar characteristics, we made clusters of the codes, shown in Table 13.2.

Table 13.2 Categories

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Category name</i>	<i>Codes</i>
1	Meaning/purpose of life	Ultimate goal—Nirvana (liberation), God's abode, rebirth, eternal happiness
2	<i>Karma</i> (action)	Belief in <i>karmas</i> , importance of action
3	Self	Self-control, development of self
4	Mind	Mind, six senses, earthly desires
5	Health	Food and health
6	Environment	Environment
7	Faith	Importance of faith, slander, refuting other gods/sutras, scripture's importance, prophecy
8	Worship/spiritual resources	Meditation, propagation, prayers and chanting, spiritual master
9	Servant leadership	Servant leadership
10	Behavior	Conduct (virtues), bravery, stoic nature
11	Transcendental	Soul, mystic nature, spiritual eye, world as illusion
12	Society/Interpersonal relations	Working for others/being altruistic, equality of all humans, on women
13	Obstacles/difficulties	Obstacles in way of getting Liberated, sacrifice for the belief
14	Spiritual coping	Recuperate
15	Gratitude	Gratitude
16	Morals	Morals

This produced 16 categories in total. These were further refined into the final themes in the next step of advanced coding. Categories given in Table 13.2 are then combined to make a framework with final themes in step 3 in the coding process. Table 13.3 presents an example explaining the derivation of codes, then categories and finally themes. Codes represent a single entity in data (shown in Table 13.1). Categories include all the codes pertaining to similar entities combined. For example, equality of all humans, sense of community and altruism can be combined in a broader category called 'society and interpersonal relations'. The theme of interpersonal relations contains two categories, 'society and interpersonal relations' and 'servant leadership', as they are talking about relationships external to the self, that is, our social circle (family, society

and community). Therefore, they can be part of a more comprehensive theme, ‘interpersonal relations’. Another example, the theme ‘self’ includes behavior, morals, self-development and control, health (mental and physical), *karma*/action, spiritual coping and mind. Individuals can decide to respond and take appropriate actions for these aspects of life; therefore, they are included under one theme, ‘self’. Seven final themes emerged from the data, given in Table 13.4.

DISCUSSION

The seven final themes that emerged are: Purpose of human life, Self, Environment, Faith, Worship, Transcendence and Interpersonal relations. Many of these themes have been discussed in the literature based on SI studies, from spiritual philosophies such as Hinduism, Christianity and Islam (Beardsley, 2004; Dhir, 2018; Hanefar et al., 2016; Rahman & Shah, 2015; Roberts & Hess-Hernandez, 2018; Satpathy, 2010). However, they have not been examined together in any of those. Additionally, the dimensions found in the study are holistic, for example, the concept of ‘self’. It is discussed in Islam as control of emotions, self-determination, personal growth and self-awareness (Hanefaret al., 2016; Rahman & Shah, 2015), in Hinduism in the form of self-contentedness, self-confidence and concept of self (Bhawuk, 2008; Jeste & Vahia, 2008; Satpathy, 2010); representing the cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of self.

Few papers have considered some essential aspect of ‘self’, such as health and food. *Gosho* mentions that one of the significant causes of illness is “improper eating or drinking” (WND-1, p. 631); hence people need to pay proper attention to that. It is a neglected area in academic SI literature, but it is highlighted in this study. Thus, the theme ‘self’ is holistic in this sense. The development of ‘self’ according to the scriptures, and many virtues like courage, honesty, truthfulness, wisdom, etc., are mentioned in many spiritual philosophies, including NB.

The wisdom to face life is appropriately mentioned in these NB lines: “Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life” (WND-1, p. 681). The next theme is ‘purpose of life’, according to the scriptures. Many papers have highlighted this theme (Hanefar et al., 2016; Zohar & Marshall, 2000) but not in the same light as in NB. According to *Gosho*, getting liberated is the supreme goal of human life: “If you wish to free yourself from

Table 13.3 Codes to themes (example)

<i>Data</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Theme</i>
<p>1. Bodhisattva Never Disparaging was for many years cursed and humiliated, beaten with sticks and staves, and pelted with tiles and stones by countless monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen because he venerated them by uttering the twenty-four characters that read: "I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance".</p> <p>2. With Buddhism one can accumulate three types of treasures- treasure of body, storehouse and heart. But best among them is the treasure of the heart. Here he is preaching the need of compassion, altruism and kindness as a proof of practicing Buddhism.</p> <p>3. A good teacher is a priest who is free from any fault in secular affairs, who never fawns upon others even in the slightest, who desires and is satisfied with little, and who is compassionate; and also encourages and leads others to embrace it.</p>	<p>1. Equality of all humans, tolerance</p> <p>2. Working for others/community/being altruistic</p> <p>3. Servant leadership</p>	<p>1. Society/community</p> <p>2. Servant leadership</p>	Interpersonal relationships

Table 13.4 Final themes

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Theme name</i>	<i>Categories included</i>
1	Purpose of human life	Meaning/purpose of life (Ultimate goal—Nirvana, God’s abode, rebirth/life after death)
2	Self	Self, Behavior, morals (self-development, self-control), health (mental and physical), <i>karma</i> (action), mind
3	Environment	Environment
4	Faith	Importance of faith, obstacles/difficulties (slander, refuting other gods/sutras, scripture’s importance, prophecy)
5	Worship	Worship (meditation, propagation, prayers, spiritual master, reflection), gratitude
6	Transcendence	Transcendental (soul, mystic nature, spiritual eye, world as illusion)
7	Interpersonal relations	Servant leadership, society (working for others/being altruistic, equality of all humans)

the sufferings of birth and death you have endured since time without beginning and to attain without fail unsurpassed enlightenment in this lifetime” (WND-1, p. 3). A critical way of achieving the purpose of life can be through the work or duties we perform, which can also contribute to our well-being if done for the greater good (Yukhymenko-Lescroart & Sharma, 2019).

The following themes are common in the SI research based on various scriptures: faith (mostly on God), worship (spiritual resources), virtues, interpersonal relationship and society/community (Bhawuk, 2008; Jeste & Vahia, 2008; Satpathy, 2010). The most emphasized theme in papers based on various spiritual philosophies is the development of emotional intelligence (EI), which deals with interpersonal relations for understanding and controlling emotions, self and others. In NB, there is an excellent example of EI in the form of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging (WND 1, p. 852). He treated everyone with respect even if he was not treated well as he believed in the Buddhahood of every living being, he said, “I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance. Why? Because you will all practice the bodhisattva way and will then be able to attain Buddhahood”. The next prominent theme is ‘Faith’ and living a life according to scripture’s instructions. This is stated in the lines, “To begin with, the Lotus Sutra

was taught to lead all living beings to the Buddha way. Only those who have faith in it, however, attain Buddhahood” (WND-1, p 625). If one fails to do so or slanders its teachings, then severe punishment will be incurred. Next is propagation or devotional service; and by doing this one will accumulate good fortune. *Gosho*, points it in lines, “This means that anyone who teaches others even a single phrase of the Lotus Sutra is the envoy of the Thus Come One, whether that person be priest or layman, nun or laywoman” (WND-1, p. 33).

Some of the papers in the literature have discussed the transcendental part of SI. *Gosho* also did that at a great length. Transcendental is an unseen, non-physical part related to God or the power of the universe. The entity of life (consciousness), heaven, spiritual eye and mysticism are its few dimensions (Bagheri et al., 2013). For ‘spiritual eye’ in *Gosho* (see Appendix A), ND wrote: “The blind cannot see the characters of this sutra. To the eyes of ordinary people, they look like characters. Bodhisattvas look on them as innumerable doctrines. Buddhas recognize each character as a golden Shakyamuni” (WND-1, p. 486). Another vital factor neglected by most academic literature is the environment’s connection with humans, macro–micro relationship. This is also mentioned in *Gosho* (code-environment in Appendix A), in lines, “This reflects the truth that, while life and its environment may seem to be two independent phenomena, fundamentally they are one and inseparable”. ND said that Lotus Sutra emphasized the “principle of the oneness of life and its environment” (WND-1, p. 647), which clearly states our innate connection and dependence on natural environment. This concept should be examined in more detail, as it is necessary in the current times. The unique code, according to us, is “Earthly Desires”. This concept states that we can achieve ‘Buddhahood’ even with earthly desires. These desires can lead us on the path of nirvana. In this principle, ND is giving assurance to ordinary people, based on the teachings of Lotus Sutra, that they can also get liberated through the sufferings of life and death, even with worldly desires (WND-1, p. 317). This claim is different from most other spiritual philosophies, which emphasize the renunciation of earthly desires.

Finally, the concept of eternal happiness is talked about in NB. Daisaku Ikeda¹⁰ said on attaining eternal happiness, which is absolute and does not change with external circumstances: “Such things as money, fame

¹⁰ <https://www.sgi.org/about-us/president-ikedas-writings/on-practice.html>, June 2019.

and material possessions offer a fleeting, transitory kind of satisfaction, something which can be called ‘relative happiness.’ However, when we transform our lives internally, when we develop within ourselves a brilliant inner palace, then we can be said to have established ‘absolute happiness’.” Also, in the Gosho, happiness (eternal) is one of the four virtues¹¹ of Buddha, “(1) Four noble qualities of a Buddha’s life—eternity, happiness, true self, and purity. These describe the true nature of a Buddha’s life, which is pure and eternal, and which manifests the true self and enjoys absolute happiness.” Therefore, based on the study and themes that emerged, SI from the perspective of NB can be defined as: “The capacity to use our spiritual values, beliefs and resources to develop self, society and environment to achieve eternal happiness”.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Conscious leadership is defined as “the practice of maintaining a state of heightened awareness of thought, emotion, and experience on a moment-to-moment basis; to be a conscious leader, the individual must choose to lead from a place of mindfulness or expanded consciousness” (Ward & Haase, 2016). Jones and Brazdau (2015, p. 2) stated that “Conscious leaders are aware, cooperative and collaborative” and they understand and practice leadership such that it “allows everyone within an organization to actively participate in a shared approach for leading”, resulting in a more cooperative and collaborative environment. The seven emergent themes of the study can be summed up in a multilayered model (Fig. 13.2) contributing to an individual’s development of an evolved self in form of SI, in connection with universal consciousness for a flourishing society.

The three layers and corresponding themes are shown in Table 13.5. Out of seven three themes: purpose of life, self and worship contribute to the innermost layer ‘individual’. The social layer of the model corresponds to themes: interpersonal relations and environment. These two themes represent a person’s surroundings, both people and nature. The last layer is of consciousness, representing the transcendental universal force underlying all the living and non-living beings in the universe, consisting of

¹¹ <https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/F/228#para-0>, June 2019.

Fig. 13.2 Multilayered SI model

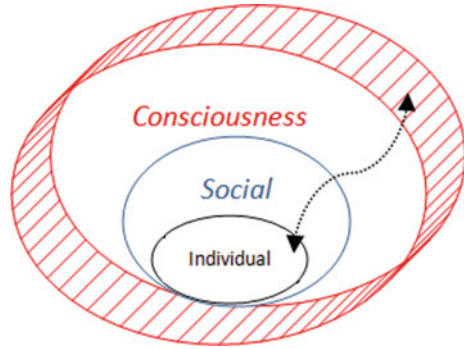


Table 13.5 Layers of SI model

<i>Layer</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Individual	Purpose of life, self and worship
Social	Interpersonal relations and environment
Consciousness	Transcendence and faith

themes: transcendence and faith. The individual consciousness develops itself in connection to the universal consciousness, and an individual's consciousness contributes to the universal consciousness, hence they are in a constant flow (interdependence).

Individual

In this layer, virtues like self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-righteousness, self-respect, self-control, courage, bravery, mental strength, self-beliefs, honesty, sincerity, integrity, flexibility, fairness, values, meaning and purpose of life, efforts toward building a spiritual life, along with mental and physical health come. In *Gosho*, ND wrote to his disciples about how to behave respectfully and empathetically in the world, "Misfortune comes from one's mouth and ruins one, but fortune comes from one's heart and makes one worthy of respect" (WND-1, p. 1137). These qualities are now also getting attention from organizations around the world. Effective leadership is needed for an organization and society to strive. ND was himself a leader of tremendous courage, who fought the ills of religion in his times and created a new revolution in Buddhism

in Japan.¹² From the past few decades, the emphasis has been on the inner dimensions of leadership at the level of consciousness (Donnelly, 2014). Many authors postulated that SI could be an instrument for developing one's consciousness (Atroszko et al., 2021; DeCicco, 2009). A good leader depicts the qualities of integrity, empathy, courage, honesty, sincerity, fairness and most importantly, a sense of purpose (Muteswa, 2016). Daisaku Ikeda, emphasizing the values of NB, advised leaders to be humble and willing to learn from each other, "This humble willingness to learn is profoundly meaningful, invariably fostering deep, empathetic connections. Not only does this resonance enable us to understand others on a deeper level, it acts as a mighty impetus for our true self — our greater self — to flower within us".¹³ SI is positively related to developing empathy in people and aids in finding a purpose of life with clarity in decision-making (Vasconcelos, 2020; Wigglesworth, 2006). Mahmood et al. (2018) reported that leaders with high SI establish "a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love skills" that motivate people to develop more organizational commitment and efficacy. Based on the concept of oneness of all beings, the development of the individual consciousness is crucial, as it leads to the upliftment of overall consciousness. Sisk (2016) proposed that SI "seeks to unify our individual unconscious with our conscious mind and feelings and to unite our individual life" with the universal consciousness. Another prominent feature of efficient leaders is their health. A healthy leader creates a healthy organization (Quick et al., 2007). This study also highlights the point of physical health as a significant part of developing SI.

Social

HH Dalai Lama the 14th said,¹⁴ "Our own human existence is so dependent on the help of others that our need for love lies at the very foundation of our existence". The principle of cause and effect gives a reason for individuals to cultivate SI which in turn develops the spirit of compassion in people, making them more altruistic and sensitive to other people's

¹² <https://www.sokaglobal.org/about-the-soka-gakkai/buddhist-lineage/nichiren.html>, October 2021.

¹³ <https://www.ikedacenter.org/about/core-convictions/one>, October 2021.

¹⁴ <https://www.dalailama.com/messages/compassion-and-human-values/compassion>, October 2021.

perspectives, resulting in better performance and team coherence (Chin et al., 2011). SI also enhances empathy in leaders, helping them understand subordinates and retain good employees (George, 2006). Further in the era of globalization, with an ever-increasing diverse workforce, collaborative behavior, better conflict management, and compassion are needed, aided by the development of SI (Fry & Wigglesworth, 2013). ND said, “the voice does the Buddha’s work” (WND-1, p. 188). While communicating with other people, leaders should do a heart-to-heart dialogue, using their voice to encourage people, following the principles of respect and dignity for all. It is shown in the literature that one of the main factors in leader–follower relationship is trust (Martin, 1999). Servant leadership, an aspect of SI, promotes trust among employees toward their managers, leading to OCB (organizational citizenship behavior) and better performance (Yue et al., 2019). ND in *Gosho* (WND-1, p. 880) advised on servant leadership, “who never fawns upon others even in the slightest, who desires and is satisfied with little, and who is compassionate; and also encourages and leads others to embrace it”. Here ND is guiding on how to deal with disagreements. Conscious leaders do not frown; instead they are compassionate toward others’ perspectives leading to a peaceful conflict resolution. Additionally, human society cannot flourish alone; we need oneness with nature to thrive. SI can help inculcate pro-ecological behavior for a better planetary future (Echarri-Iribarren & Echarri-Iribarren, 2021). Hence, SI helps develop an empathetic attitude in leaders, managers and people to develop behavioral aspects beneficial for society and nature (Mahmood et al., 2018).

Consciousness

Science defines consciousness as everything we experience (Koch, 2018). The collective consciousness of a society or organization is expressed in members’ “shared beliefs, formal or informal cultural norms and shared values”, which “eventually become the basis of [their] ideological grounds” (Pandey & Gupta, 2008). Buddhism emphasized the point of the oneness of all the sentient beings and universal consciousness.¹⁵ In *Gosho*, ND mentioned, “Life at each moment encompasses the body and mind and the self and environment of all sentient beings” in the

¹⁵ <https://www.lionsroar.com/christof-koch-unites-buddhist-neuroscience-universal-nature-mind/>, October 2021.

universe, also including insentient beings along with “plants, sky, earth, and even the minutest particles of dust” (WND-1, p. 3). Further, he advises everyone to recognize this “mutually inclusive relationship of life at each moment and all phenomena”. Hence, a conscious leader awakened to this principle will act in accordance with a transcendental awareness considering all the sentient and non-sentient beings in the universe. People can awaken transcendental consciousness (TC) by using techniques like transcendental meditation, “where consciousness is open to itself” and connects with the universe (Schmidt-Wilk & Schmidt-Wilk, 2000). TC also unravels managers’ “inner latent capacities” enabling them to be better communicators and team builders (*ibid.*). NB accentuates that we can also access the unlimited inherent potentialities in our lives and achieve TC by chanting Nam-myō-ho-renge-kyō (Choudhury, 2014). Leaders are an indispensable part of an organization and their combined vision creates a reality of that organization. Conscious-based leaders can develop a spiritually conscious organization (Pandey & Gupta, 2008). Such organizations run on values, vision and virtues with an eye on the thriving of the stakeholders and environment (Pruzan, 2001).

Summing up, we can say that SI promotes conscious leadership, which helps to bring out the best in people and organizations. Understanding self through reflective practices, active and deep listening, and appreciating the dynamic nature of connection between self and universe help conscious leaders to transform organizations. SI promises to uphold humanistic touch while aspiring for organizational goals along with addressing socio-environmental challenges. During uncertainties, such as in COVID times, organizations need to develop spiritual consciousness by developing faith, optimism, hope, compassion and devotion to work in people, that can assist them to achieve flourishing and growth for all the stakeholders and nature. ND propounded that by purifying our individual consciousness, we can create a pure society and universal consciousness (WND-1, p. 4):

If the minds of living beings are impure, their land is also impure, but if their minds are pure, so is their land. There are not two lands, pure or impure in themselves. The difference lies solely in the good or evil of our minds.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Humanism is not a special way of living; it's the simple act of empathizing with others' feelings – reaching out and encouraging those who are striving hard or suffering, and sharing the joys of those who are happy.

Daisaku Ikeda¹⁶

Humanism is the religion of humanity. This is needed to achieve harmony in today's chaotic society. We can achieve that harmony with SI. The external path toward happiness and success starts from within. This journey starts with faith and ends with the development of the 'self'. There is much emphasis on mental and physical well-being in the philosophy of NB. In lines from WND-2 (p. 497): "Now that you have offered your prayer, be resolved that in the end, things will turn out exactly that way", ND is assuring disciples to be worry-free, without any anxiety or fear and to believe in the Lotus sutra. A well-known fact is "Health is wealth". In NB, concepts like 'winter always turns into spring',¹⁷ 'changing poison into medicine', 'many in body one in mind', 'stand alone spirit' and 'happiness for oneself and others' are gems of wisdom which help people to achieve unsurpassed happiness and good health, both mentally and physically. We have highlighted this point in code 'self'. This holistic aspect of the theme 'self' is mostly unexplored in the literature, so it needs to be properly studied. Similar is the treatment of the much-needed point of 'environment', discussed in *Gosho* and in the study, but not highlighted enough in the SI literature. *Gosho* "The Four Debts of Gratitude" (see code-Gratitude in Appendix A) mentioned that our first debt is toward other living beings on this planet; thus, we need to pay gratitude toward nature and respect them. Further, we need to live in sync with the people around us using our SI. Additionally, spiritual resources such as books, prayers, chanting and teachers will help us develop our SI to connect to the universe and feel transcendental consciousness.

In this study we have proposed a model of SI with the three layers: individual, social and consciousness, and discussed its implications for

¹⁶ SGI President, Ikeda, D. (2014). *The New Human Revolution* (Vol. 26). Middleway Press, 39.

¹⁷ Appendix A, code-8, Food and Health, for mental health.

conscious-based leadership and management in organizations. The development of SI also helps organizations. The leaders with high SI can exhibit conscious leadership skills. They can manage and inspire people around them to develop their potential to create a flourishing universe. We conjecture that people with higher SI can see a bigger picture beyond the context of their immediate life situations. They can very well go beyond their own “world view”. Conscious-based leaders like Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, Abraham Lincoln, Mother Teresa and HH Dalai Lama are few examples of role models who have manifested SI in their conduct.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AVENUES

One spiritual philosophy has been a basis for defining SI in the study; this can be extended to other major spiritual philosophies. Only English literature is considered in the study. Empirical treatment of this subject under study is desirable. Based on the preceding discussion, further research can explore the: (i) aspects of good health in the teachings of NB related to SI, (ii) understanding the micro–macro relationship with aspects of SI in NB on environment, (iii) an empirical research can be conducted on various samples such as of working professionals, students and different age groups, to support the study’s findings and (iv) a comparison of the findings of NB with other spiritual philosophies can be made to broaden the understanding of SI.

APPENDIX A

Codes with supporting verbatim from *Gosho* (WND-1 and 2, Writings of Nichiren Daishonin volume 1 or 2) with page numbers as ‘p’ (Table 13.6).

Table 13.6 Codes and related verbatim from *Gosho*

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
1	Ultimate goal—Nirvana/Liberation	On Attaining Buddhahood in This Lifetime, WND-1, p. 3—If you wish to free yourself from the sufferings of birth and death you have endured since time without beginning and to attain without fail unsurpassed enlightenment in this lifetime, you must perceive the mystic truth that is originally inherent in all living beings. This truth is Myoho-rence-kyo. Maintain your faith and attain Buddhahood in this lifetime
2	Belief in Karmas	Lessening one's Karmic Retribution, WND-1, p. 199—The Nirvana Sutra teaches the principle of lessening one's karmic retribution. If one's heavy karma from the past is not expiated within this lifetime, one must undergo the sufferings of hell in the future, but if one experiences extreme hardship in this life [because of the Lotus Sutra], the sufferings of hell will vanish instantly
3	Belief in rebirth	On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land, WND-1, p. 15—Such was the manner in which these men honored and respected the Buddha Amida, and uncountable numbers of people as a result were able to gain rebirth in the Pure Land
4	Conduct—how to live	The Opening of the Eyes, WND-1, p. 220—THERE are three categories of people that all human beings should respect. They are the sovereign, the teacher, and the parent. There are three types of doctrines that are to be studied. They are Confucianism, Brahmanism, and Buddhism The Teaching, Practice, and Proof, p. 483—When in public debate, although the teachings that you advocate are perfectly consistent with the truth, you should never on that account be impolite or abusive, or display a conceited attitude. Such conduct would be disgraceful. Order your thoughts, words, and actions carefully, and be prudent when you meet with others in debate

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
5	Importance of Faith	The Meaning of Faith, WND-1, p. 1036—WHAT is called faith is nothing unusual. Faith means putting one's trust in the Lotus Sutra, Shakyamuni, Many Treasures, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, and the heavenly gods and benevolent deities, and chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo
6	Stoic nature	Happiness in This World, WND-1, p. 681—Suffer what there is to suffer, enjoy what there is to enjoy. Regard both suffering and joy as facts of life, and continue chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, no matter what happens
7	Meditation	On the Treasure Tower, WND-1, p. 299—It is the treasure tower adorned with the seven kinds of treasures—hearing the correct teaching, believing it, keeping the precepts, engaging in meditation, practicing assiduously, renouncing one's attachments, and reflecting on oneself
8	Food and health	On three virtues of food, WND-2, p. 1060—Food has three virtues. First, it sustains life. Second, it enlivens the complexion. Third, it nourishes strength On Curing Karmic Disease, WND-1, p. 631—"There are six causes of illness: (1) disharmony of the four elements; (2) improper eating or drinking; (3) inappropriate practice of seated meditation; (4) attack by demons; (5) the work of devils; and (6) the effects of karma. Winter always turns to spring, WND-1, 536—Those who believe in the Lotus Sutra are as if in winter, but winter always turns to spring. Never, from ancient times on, has anyone seen or heard of winter turning back to autumn. (mental assurance and hope for stress-free living)

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
9	Obstacles in way of getting Liberated	Three obstacles and four devils, WND-1, p. 636—The three obstacles in this passage are the obstacle of earthly desires, the obstacle of karma, and the obstacle of retribution. The obstacle of earthly desires is the impediments to one’s practice that arise from greed, anger, foolishness, and the like; the obstacle of karma is the hindrances presented by one’s wife or children; and the obstacle of retribution is the hindrances caused by one’s sovereign or parents. Of the four devils, the workings of the devil king of the sixth heaven are of this last kind
10	Refuting other gods/sutras	On Attaining Buddhahood in This Lifetime, WND-1, p. 3—The Lotus Sutra is the king of sutras, true and correct in both ‘word’ and in principle. “Inferior teaching” means those other than this [Lotus] sutra, which is all expedient and provisional. No expedient or provisional teaching leads directly to enlightenment, and without the direct path to enlightenment you cannot attain Buddhahood
11	Entity of life	Earthly Desires Are Enlightenment, WND-1, p. 318—“The sufferings of birth and death are nirvana” exists only in realizing that the entity of life throughout its cycle of birth and death is neither born nor destroyed
12	Slander	On Rebuking Slander of the Law and Eradicating Sins, WND, p. 435—As for the person who slanders the Lotus Sutra, though he may not be serious at heart, if he so much as manifests the outward appearance of animosity, disparages the sutra even in jest, or makes light, not of the sutra itself, but of those who act in its name, then, the sutra says, he will fall into the hell of incessant suffering for countless kalpas of the kind described above

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
13	Six senses	On Omens, WND-1, p. 644—One’s six sense organs represent the points of the compass. It has already been established that the sense of sight and that of smell represent east and west. It follows, then, that the sense of hearing and that of taste correspond to north and south. Center corresponds to the mind, and the four directions, to the body
14	On women	The Daimoku of the Lotus Sutra, WND-1, p. 144—Women, whether they live at the time of the Buddha or in the Former, Middle, or Latter Day of the Law, cannot attain Buddhahood through any teaching but the Lotus Sutra
15	Scripture’s importance	The Strategy of the Lotus Sutra, WND-1, p. 1000—Employ the strategy of the Lotus Sutra before any other. “All others who bear you enmity or malice will likewise be wiped out.”
16	Mind	Reply to lay priest of Ko, WND-1, p. 419—The human mind is inconstant; it is ever-changing and unfixed
17	Prophecy	Reply to HakiriSaburō, WND-1, p. 408—The Buddha, speaking of the future, said, “After I have passed into extinction, in the last five-hundred-year period you must spread it abroad widely throughout Jambudvīpa and never allow it to be cut off.” The Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai predicted, “In the last five-hundred-year period, the mystic way will spread and benefit humankind far into the future”
18	Propagation/devotional services	A Ship to Cross the Sea of Suffering, WND-1, p. 33—This means that anyone who teaches others even a single phrase of the Lotus Sutra is the envoy of the Thus Come One, whether that person be priest or layman, nun or laywoman
19	Self-control	Ten stages of the mind (https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/T/78)—This stage corresponds to Confucianism with its emphasis on moral order, which makes self-control possible but nevertheless is limited to this world

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
20	Equality of all humans	Bodhisattva Never Disparaging (https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/B/42)—Bodhisattva Never Disparaging was for many years cursed and humiliated, beaten with sticks and staves, and pelted with tiles and stones by countless monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen because he venerated them by uttering the twenty-four characters that read: “I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance. Why? Because you will all practice the bodhisattva way and will then be able to attain Buddhahood”
21	Mystic nature	On Attaining Buddhahood in This Lifetime, WND-1, p. 3—This reality is the Mystic Law (<i>myōhō</i>). It is called the Mystic Law because it reveals the principle of the mutually inclusive relationship of a single moment of life and all phenomena. That is why this sutra is the wisdom of all Buddhas
22	The ‘spiritual eye’	Reply to the Lay Priest Soya, WND-1, p. 486—The blind cannot see the characters of this sutra. To the eyes of ordinary people, they look like characters. Persons of the two vehicles perceive them as the void. Bodhisattvas look on them as innumerable doctrines. Buddhas recognize each character as a golden Shakyamuni
23	Importance of Action/duty	Letter to Priest Nichirōin Prison, WND-1, p. 204—Others read the Lotus Sutra with their mouths alone, in word alone, but they do not read it with their hearts. And even if they read it with their hearts, they do not read it with their actions. It is reading the sutra with both one’s body and mind that is truly praiseworthy! The Selection of the Time, WND-1, p. 584—Nirvana Sutra that speaks of carrying out one’s duty “even though it costs him his life”

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
24	World as illusion	Letter to the Brothers, WND-1, p. 502—Whatever trouble occurs, regard it as no more than a dream, and think only of the Lotus Sutra
25	Sacrifice for the belief	Reply to a Believer, WND-1, p. 905—I would far rather suffer persecution from this country's ruler for the sake of the Lotus Sutra and thereby free myself from the sufferings of birth and death
26	Bravery	The Actions of the Votary of the Lotus Sutra, WND-1, p. 764—None of you who declare yourselves to be my disciples should ever give way to cowardice Reply to the Lay Nun Nichigon, p. 1079—Faith that is weak is like muddy water, while faith that is brave is like clear water
27	Development of self	New Year's <i>Gosho</i> , WND-1, p. 1137—We ordinary people can see neither our own eyelashes, which are so close, nor the heavens in the distance. Likewise, we do not see that the Buddha exists in our own hearts. Misfortune comes from one's mouth and ruins one, but fortune comes from one's heart and makes one worthy of respect The Meaning of the Sacred Teachings of the Buddha's Lifetime, WND-2, p. 44—But when the Lotus Sutra expounded the doctrine of the mutual possession of the Ten Worlds, the voice-hearers realized that, while devoting themselves to self-regulation and self-salvation, they were also possessed of the bodhisattva world
28	Spiritual master/teacher	Flowering and Bearing Grain, WND-1, p. 909—Nichiren is like the plant, and my teacher, the earth. It is said that, if a teacher has a good disciple, both will gain the fruit of Buddhahood, but if a teacher fosters a bad disciple, both will fall into hell. If teacher and disciple are of different minds, they will never accomplish anything. I will elaborate on this point later

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
29	Working for others/being altruistic	The Three Kinds of Treasure, WND-1, p. 848—With Buddhism one can accumulate 3 types of treasures—treasure of body, store house and heart. But best among them is the treasure of the heart. Here he is in preaching the need of compassion, altruism and kindness as a proof of practicing of Buddhism
30	God's home	Conversation between a Sage and an Unenlightened Man, WND-1, p. 99—Nicherin Buddhism suggests that the place where Buddha lives is called eternally tranquil light and one who follows Lotus Sutra will attain Buddha and live there
31	Servant leadership	How Those Initially Aspiring to the Way Can Attain Buddhahood through the Lotus Sutra, WND-1, p. 880—A good teacher is a priest who is free from any fault in secular affairs, who never fawns upon others even in the slightest, who desires and is satisfied with little, and who is compassionate; and also encourages and leads others to embrace it
32	Importance of Prayers	A Disease Passed on to One's Children, WND-2, p. 497—Now that you have offered your prayer, be resolved that in the end, things will turn out exactly that way
33	Earthly Desires	On the Proper Way to Preach the Doctrine, WND-2, p. 338—when they offer prayers regarding some serious matter, such prayers will be effective Earthly Desires Are Enlightenment, WND-1, p. 317—“These are also the two elements of reality and wisdom. Many Treasures is reality; Shakyamuni is wisdom. It is the enlightenment that reality and wisdom are two, and yet they are not two. These are teachings of prime importance. These are also what is called “earthly desires are enlightenment,” and “the sufferings of birth and death are nirvana”

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Gosho Lines</i>
34	Environment	On Omens, WND-1, p. 644—The ten directions are the “environment,” and living beings are “life.” To illustrate, environment is like the shadow, and life, the body. Without the body, no shadow can exist, and without life, no environment. In the same way, life is shaped by its environment
35	Gratitude	The Four Debts of Gratitude, WND-1, p. 43—One who studies the teachings of Buddhism must not fail to repay the four debts of gratitude. According to the Contemplation on the Mind-Ground Sutra, the first of the four debts is that owed to all living beings. The second of the four debts is that owed to one’s father and mother. The third is the debt owed to one’s sovereign. The fourth is the debt owed to the three treasures
36	Recuperate	The Strategy of the Lotus Sutra, WND-1, p. 1000—So they have finally attacked you. It is a matter of rejoicing that your usual prudence and courage, as well as your firm faith in the Lotus Sutra, enabled you to survive unharmed. Employ the strategy of the Lotus Sutra before any other
37	Morals	The Letter of Petition from Yorimoto, WND-1, p. 803—To defer to one’s lord or parents, whether they are right or wrong, is exemplary conduct according with the will of Buddhas and gods and also with social propriety Repaying Debts of Gratitude Sutra, Glossary R, WND-1—A sutra that explains the repaying of moral obligations from a Mahayana Buddhist standpoint
38	Chanting	Reply to Kyō’ō, WND-1, p. 412—Kyō’ō’s misfortune will change into fortune. Muster your faith, and pray to this Gohonzon. Then what is there that cannot be achieved? On the Protection of the Nation, WND-2, p. 141—I will show that, by merely chanting the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra, one may escape being born in the three evil paths

(continued)

Table 13.6 (continued)

Codes	Gosho Lines
39 Eternal/absolute happiness	The Entity of the Mystic Law, WND-1, p. 419—While the three thousand realms remain latent [in ordinary beings], they are all designated by the term ‘ignorance.’ But when the three thousand realms all manifest themselves as the result [of Buddhahood], then they are all designated by the term ‘eternal happiness’ Buddha land, Glossary B, WND-1—Buddha land is often used simply to refer to the enlightened state or absolute happiness that Buddhas enjoy

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Truth-Based Leadership: Lessons from Thirukural

Subhashini Durai

INTRODUCTION TO CONSCIOUSNESS

For many decades, there has been research on the concept of consciousness. One of the problems faced by the researchers with the studies of consciousness is the lack of universal acceptance of its definition. It is considered that consciousness is ‘to experience the real truth’ or ‘the real knowledge’. That is the most important quality that a human being can attain. It is the feeling that a human being can experience, and it refers to an individual’s awareness of the unique thoughts, memories, and sensations about the environments around. In simple terms, it can be stated as a person having awareness of himself or herself and the world around him or her. It is a subjective experience that is unique to every individual. There are two prominent neuroscientific theories of consciousness: the

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‘Integrated information theory’ and ‘Global workspace theory’. The integrated information theory (Tononi et al., 2016) focuses on the physical processes on the conscious experiences, while the global workspace theory (Baars, 1993) suggests that there is a memory bank from which the brain of an individual draws all the necessary information to form the experience of awareness. There is also the pan-psychic theory of consciousness as primary and preceding before anything else (Maheshwari, 2021).

CONSCIOUSNESS AND BUSINESS

In today’s rapidly changing environment, consciousness is important for human beings and also to business leaders. It is important to a business environment because decision makers are the major resources that are involved in a business environment. If people are capable of making the right decisions then business will also be successful. Businesses need to move rapidly to enhance the consciousness to thrive in today’s ever-changing environment (Maheshwari, 2021). Every business has the necessity to adapt and transform to the current market conditions and expectations. Business should know what to offer to its customers; how they have to manufacture or produce such a product; how they have to operate in the current market situations; how they can sell the product that they have produced to the customers; how they have to cope up with their competitors and how well they engage their employees internally.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND LEADERSHIP

In today’s competitive world, the success of a business or an organization depends on its leadership. A company that has a great leader can rule the market by achieving high customer satisfaction through competitive advantage. It is the leadership that functions with more emotions to deal with people from the heart. They would lead the organization with complete transparency and dedication. Higher consciousness leaders expand self-awareness and also their ability to serve people around them. The practice of consciousness-based leadership in an organization may lead to sustainable success for generations together (Maheshwari, 2021). Higher consciousness as a leadership quality can bring about a complete balance between the strategy and the soul; with clarity about a concept and creativity done on the concept; and with decisions taken with head

and felt with heart. This leadership quality creates greater impact on the organizational culture and workplace environmental change that can be adapted in every organization.

SEVEN LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

There are many models and factors to help improve leadership qualities. We chose Barrett's (1998) seven-layer model of consciousness because of its simplicity to understand and utilize in organizational context. According to it, leaders grow and develop by learning to master the seven levels of personal and organizational consciousness. An authentic leader, demonstrating Consciousness must understand its concept and master their personal dynamics, as well as the dynamics of the organization or team that they lead.

Barrett (1998, 2015) developed seven levels of consciousness by bringing together the ideas of Vedic philosophy regarding the higher levels of consciousness and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. "The different graduations of higher levels of consciousness, as expressed in the Vedic tradition, corresponded to the varying degrees of self-actualization expressed by Maslow" (Barrett, 2015, p. 1). This model has been developed with two major aspects. First, there are the seven levels of consciousness that are mapped to seven stages in psychological and moral development. Second, in each level of consciousness, a business leader expresses different quality of leadership based on requirement in an organizational context. Barrett's model is one of the easiest and simple models with seven levels of leadership consciousness that can be understood by the readers anywhere. The model and its tools have been applied to measure the consciousness of more than 5000 organizations, 4000 leaders, and 24 nations (Barrett, 2015). Figure 14.1 shows the seven levels of consciousness and the stages of leadership development:

1. Survival: In this low level of consciousness, leaders concentrate more on satisfying the physical or survival needs such as improving health and safety; having financial stability and self-defense. Here they try to eradicate poverty to increase the financial stability; avoid violence to spread peace of mind in the workspace and try to put an end to corruption to increase the social health for better survival.
2. Relationship: In this level of consciousness, leaders behave like an efficient social creature because they focus on building a strong and

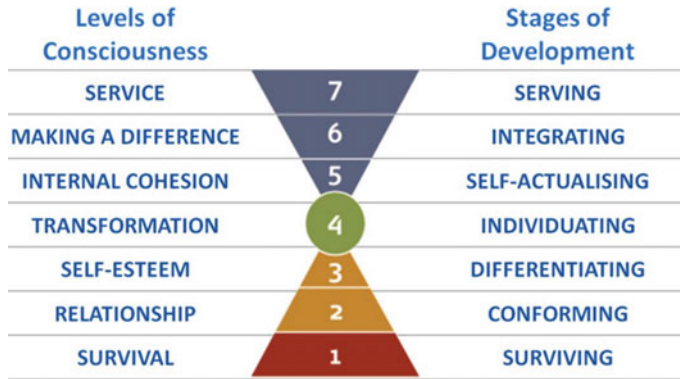


Fig. 14.1 Seven layers of consciousness and leadership development (from Barrett, 1998, 2015)

healthy relationship in a working environment. Leaders practice to be more friendly and reachable to their team members having a high feeling of wanting. They practice honesty and transparency in the work environment and try to communicate all the necessary information in an open and clear manner. In this stage, leaders avoid gossiping about others or making judgment on any relationships or conflicts in the working atmosphere.

3. Self-esteem: In this level of consciousness, leaders cultivate a habit of having good self-confidence and self-respect. Leaders are more cautious in being disciplined and portraying a positive self-image. In this stage the leader should be very cautious in characteristics like expressing arrogance or misusing the authority or power or being more rigid toward change in the work space.
4. Transformation: In this level, leaders make a critical shift in focus from self-interest to common interest. By learning how to take decisions by considering the common interest, the leader develops the art of looking at problems from others' points of view and taking actions that benefit others. They learn to control their subconscious fears or insecurities while dealing with business problems and are more concerned with exhibiting courage, managerial skills, and being comfortable in adapting to the changing environment.
5. Internal Cohesion: In this level, the leader focuses on values and norms. They try to convert the organizational culture to a

more positive, shared, creative one with a wider vision. Here the leader expresses their own personal characteristics like integrating with other employees; being creative in handling changes; being passionate in achieving the goals; practicing honesty and creating trust among the people in the working environment.

6. Making a difference: This level of consciousness makes the leader grow to a higher position of mentoring. The leader becomes like a *guru* or mentor to all the people who are related in an organizational context. Leaders necessarily concentrate on their own intuition and try to collaborate with other people having different skill sets. At this level, they focus more on the common interest and do not hesitate to get expertise from other skilled people in the organization.
7. Service: This is the ultimate level of consciousness where the leader is service minded and wants to serve the humanity and the planet as a whole. Here the leader has gained all the expertise and knowledge in the organization and leaves it behind to the next generations that can be utilized for the growth and development of the organization.

THIRUKURAL, A TAMIL LITERATURE AND ITS SECTION ON CONSCIOUSNESS

Thiruvalluvar was a celebrated Tamil poet and philosopher whose contribution to Tamil literature is the *Thirukural*, a work on ethics. (He lived between second century BC and eighth century AD). As per Vedic philosophy, human life is said to endeavor for the fulfillment of four goals of life—*Dharma* (Righteousness), *Artha* (Wealth or worldly comforts), *Kaama* (Desire-fulfillment), and *Moksha* (Liberation). Thiruvalluvar deals with the first three goals of human life and explains them in his great work *Thirukural*. He did not deal with the ‘liberation’ section because, in his opinion, if any man follows his instructions properly without a flaw, he will surely attain liberation without any special effort as such.

Thirukural is one of the most prominent literary works in Tamil, known for its excellent and timeless elucidation of ways and values of life. It is considered as one of the greatest works on ethics and morality and it is known for its universality and secular nature. ‘*Kural*’ means ‘two-line prosody’ and ‘*Thiru*’ means ‘most respectful’ and thus ‘Thirukural’

means ‘most valuable two-line prosody’. The text has been dated variously from 300 BCE to fifth century CE (Allen, 2002). The traditional accounts describe it as the last work of the third Sangam, but linguistic analysis suggests a later date of 450–500 CE and that it was composed after the Sangam period. Overall the literature of *Thirukural* consists of three major sections. These are further divided into 133 subsections consisting of 1330 verses of *Thirukural*. The three major sections are as follows. The first section is on *Dharma* (1 to 380 verses), the second section is on *Artha* (381 to 1080 verses), and the third section is on *Kaama* (1081 to 1330 verses).

In the first section the poet speaks about ‘*Dharma*’ which means righteous action in performing the duties in each and every circumstance of life. Here he writes about the greatness of rain, what are the duties of householders, why is it necessary to give importance to life partner’s wellbeing, the wealth of love, significance of serving the guest, positive effect of pleasant speech, having gratitude, impartiality, wealth of modesty, wealth of discipline, wealth of forbearance, non-envious nature, absence of desire, not backbiting, not talking uselessly, fear of doing evil deeds, understanding the way of acting as a helpful member of the world, charity, fame, having compassion, refraining from eating meat, penance, wrong conduct, not stealing, truth, not getting angry, not causing harms to others, not killing, instability, renunciation, experience of real truth, curbing desire and results of deeds committed in the past lives.

In this first section the poet has also created a separate sub-section 36 called ‘*Meyyunarthal*’ which means ‘Consciousness’ or ‘Experience of truth (self-state)’ that consists of 10 verses from 351 to 360, which speaks totally about the significance of consciousness to a human being. From verses 351 to 360, the poet Thiruvalluvar speaks about the beauty of the experience of truth in human life. This concept can be related to a leader and leadership quality in an organizational context. A leader is a most inspiring version of a human being who dedicates his time and energy toward the betterment of others around him.

MAPPING THIRUKURAL TO THE SEVEN LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Each and every verse written by Thiruvalluvar under subsection number 36 having the heading *Meyyunarthal*, which means Consciousness, has

been explained and linked with the appropriate levels of Consciousness. We chose the Seven-Layer Model because the latter is easily relatable to the concept of consciousness in the organizational context. Thus the following section explains the ten verses (351–360) from *Thirukural* written by Thiruvalluvar (Allen, 2002), from sub-section 36 on Consciousness, and maps them to the seven levels of consciousness for better understanding of the concepts.

*Verse 351: ‘porulalla varrai porulenru unarum
Marulaanaam maanaappirappu’*

“Wretched state of birth is the result of the misconception of believing the unreal as the real”.

In Verse 351, the poet Thiruvalluvar speaks about the misconception of believing the unreal as the real. To display the wisdom in leadership, it is important to experience the truth and avoid misconception of believing the unreal as the real (Nagarajan, 2005). This state of mind is very important for a leader, because sometimes he may erroneously believe some facts to be the truth, and may make decisions based on those facts. But when a situation is observed deeply, it can be seen that the decisions based on unreal facts may not be ethical, and the leader may be responsible for facing the consequences. Thus, to avoid all the misconceptions of believing the unreal as the real, a leader must develop the habit of experiencing the truth in everything that he is practicing and should also stick on to it in all situations. This can be related with the seventh level of consciousness-based leadership dimension of service, where the leader focuses on ethics and displays wisdom. In an organizational context, a leader tries to serve people around him based on truth and tries to avoid any unreal facts that lead to wrong decisions. This quality of believing the truth is developed in a leader and it serves others on that basis.

*Verse 352: ‘irul neengi inbam payakkum marul neengi
Maasaru kaatsi yavarkku’*

“The darkness of ignorance will vanish and true happiness will result for those who have realized the taintless Truth, being freed of delusion”.

In verse 352, it is stated that for those who have realized the truth, their ignorance will vanish and result in true happiness. The poet states that ignorance is the darkness of mind. To know the truth is the real happiness, says the poet. This is related with the fifth level of consciousness-based leadership, which is ‘Internal cohesion’, and where the leader focuses on the values and displays passion. When a leader experiences the truth, they get out from the darkness of ignorance and enter into the real space of happiness where they can focus on the true values and also displays passion toward their followers. This results in inspirational leadership which develops a strong cohesive culture in an organization that builds a capacity for collective action. The verse states that the darkness of ignorance will vanish, and true happiness will result for those who have realized the taintless Truth and are freed of delusion. The same concept can be related to the leadership quality. If a leader is based on the quality of consciousness, then he will be a person who is very transparent. This impacts him in taking right decisions without any dilemma. The real happiness and success of a great leader is on understanding the truth that is to differentiate the favorable and unfavorable situations that exist in an organization. Only if there is higher consciousness in a leader, can they make the most suitable decision in any situation.

*Verse 353: ‘aiyatthin neengith thelinthaarkku vaiyatthin
Vaanam naniya thudaitthu’*

“For those who are free of all doubts and are in true understanding, the higher world is nearer than the mortal world”.

Verse 353 means that when leaders take steps to clear all doubts on everything happening around them and develop a true understanding on that, then they are capable of tackling the unfavorable circumstances by achieving a very good relationship with the people around them. This ultimately results in transparency and supports the leader to practice effective conflict management in an organization. This is related with the second level of consciousness-based leadership of ‘Relationship’ where the leader has to practice an open communication and treats the people around him

with dignity (Olanrewaju, 2019). To maintain a good relationship among people, a leader must have a good understanding on the truth.

*Verse 354: 'aiyunarvu eythiyak kannum payaminre
Meyyunarvu illaa thavrkkku'*

“Even the complete control of the five senses is of no use, for those who have not attained the knowledge of the Truth”.

In this verse 354, the poet says that for those people who have not attained the knowledge of truth, even the complete control of their five senses is of no use. When an individual does not realize their own self, there is no use in having a control over their five senses. It is like mastering all the texts on medicine; but never entering the hospital to cure any patient. This can be related with the first level of consciousness or Survival, where a leader has to practice developing a sharp control over his five senses and try to identify the true facts happening in an organization. This practice supports a leader to go one step ahead to observe the true nature of a situation to increase the authenticity from just having a good control over his five senses.

*Verse 355: 'epporul etthanmaiththaayinum apporul
Meypporul kaanpathu arivu'*

“Whatever be the nature of the object that gets perceived, understanding its true nature is ‘Knowledge’”.

This verse is very famous and most frequently quoted in Tamil literature. It means that whatever be the nature of the object and however it may be perceived, it is the duty of the person to understand the true nature of that object. And this is termed as true knowledge. These lines are more appropriate especially for a leader who has to deal with different types of people and situations. When it comes to organizational context, leadership based on the fifth level of consciousness on internal cohesion speaks about the focus of leaders on values and authenticity. To become a leader giving more importance for authenticity, one should first understand the true nature of the problematic situations. Only then can they take a valuable decision. And this is possible only when the leaders analyze the problem

by themselves and do not believe or consider the facts that are perceived by others. This is a very important quality of a leader because it differentiates them from common people. It increases the authenticity of the words of the leader in the minds of the people around them which is very essential for being an effective leader.

*Verse 356: 'karreendu meiypporul kandaar thalaippaduvavar
Marreendu vaaraa neri'*

“Those who have attained the true knowledge in this world by the studies of scriptures and the company of the realized, will be in the state where there is no return to this world”.

In this verse 356, the poet says that those who have attained the true knowledge in this world by the study of scriptures, and from the company of the people who realized the real truth, will be in the state of mind where there is no return to this world again. Those who are in this realized state are called as *Jeevan Muktas*, which means liberated even while living. In this state, their delusion is completely gone and there is no return to the same problem for them. This is related with the fourth level of consciousness where the leader exhibits courage, responsibility, initiative, and accountability that focuses on their personal growth, teamwork, and innovation (Olanrewaju, 2019). In this level a leader always focuses on the receipt of true and validate data. This behavior results in the empowerment, adaptability, and continuous learning of a leader.

*Verse 357: 'ortthullam ullathu unarin oruthalaiyaap
Pertthulla vendaa pirappu'*

“If a person has the ascertained knowledge of the truth through proper analysis, do not ever think of that person as taking birth once again”.

This verse 357 is an ultimate state for any individual, to live life with a consciousness of self. When a person understands the knowledge of the truth through proper analysis then one will never think of rebirth but instead will live as the self in this birth itself. This can be related with the first level of consciousness Survival where a leader displays calmness in the face of chaos, and decisiveness in the midst of danger. In this level leaders

should not have a tendency that they could correct any mistakes in future and proceed with the data currently available without even conforming the authenticity, reliability, and validity. They should do any activities which do not disturb the survival of themselves or others. Here a leader appears like any other ordinary person doing their work as usual. In this level they can live like a householder's life like Ramakrishna Paramahansa or renounce everything like Swami Vivekananda. They might sit silent like Ramana Maharishi or be teacher of the world like Shankaracharya or may sit and write poems like Mahakavi Subramaniya Bharathiyar. It may be in any form of an ordinary person who has a good knowledge of the truth on self.

*Verse 358: 'pirappennum pethamai neengkachhirappennum
Semporul kaanpathu arivu'*

“True Knowledge is the vision of the Supreme by which one attains the excellent state of liberation and is freed of the ignorance which causes recurrence of births”.

In verse 358 the poet says that any individual who experiences the true knowledge of the supreme will attain the excellent state of liberation and will be free from the ignorance which causes the recurrence of *karma* in the form of rebirth. This can be related with the characteristics of a leader who displays pride in performance. It is related with the third level of consciousness called Self-esteem. In this level, leaders focus more on strategy, performance, excellence, quality, productivity, and efficiency and show clarity on what is the ultimate requirement and continue to focus on it (Olanrewaju, 2019). This way the leaders will not experience all the pitfalls caused due to the ignorance of not knowing what is needed.

*Verse 359: 'saarpunarnthu saarpu keda ozhagin marrazhittuch
Saarthavaa saartharu noy'*

“If one realizes the Supreme which is the support of all, and stays unattached to everything (I and mine), the sufferings due to attachments will not come to him destroying his Self-state”.

In organizations, managers face difficulties due to attachments. Managers are the bridge between the top management and the workers. When it comes to practical situations, managers go with either the top management or with the workers based on the nature of the circumstances. There may situations arise where managers quit their job due to the difficulty in handling the situations as a consequence of attachments that they had to either the top management or with the workers when dealing a problematic situation.

In verse 359, the poet says that if one realizes the supreme which is the support of all and stays unattached to everything, then the sufferings due to attachments will not come to him destroying his self-state. This concept can be matched with the organizational context where the growth of the organization is supreme. If the manager understands and realizes this basic truth, then they will stay unattached to everything and do their duty effectively. There is no connection between the unattachment and the work effectiveness of a manager. Only if the manager is attached toward any one of the sides in an organization, it results in suffering. Thus, to avoid the suffering, a leader should practice unattachment in everything around them to safeguard their self-state and lessen the sufferings caused by attachment.

*Verse 360: 'kaamam veguli mayakkam ivaimoonran
Naamam kedakkedum noy'*

“If there is not even a trace of desire, anger and delusion, then there will never arise the pains caused by them”.

In an organization, it is seen among all the workers that they have a desire to achieve higher positions or monetary benefits. This desire naturally creates a competitive environment in the work space. Managers who deal with it, face lots of issues during performance assessment. During this situation a leader should completely drop their own desire, as when the desire is not fulfilled it leads to anger. For example, if the manager has some favorite employees and while doing performance evaluation, they may find that their favorite employees are not scoring high scores. When the desire is not fulfilled, a leader gets angry and behaves more arrogantly to them. Instead, the leader should suggest to the favorite employees to

improve their performance and achieve more in the upcoming evaluation. In many situations a leader tends to get anger out of the behavior of others or due to misunderstandings and loses one's sense of discrimination and acts without control over one's mind. In such a situation, the leader must have the capacity to deal with the situation with calm mind without expressing the anger on anybody else because most of time this anger leads to a state of confusion of mind.

Apart from anger, in some situations a leader may be in the state of confusion of mind due to many factors in the working environments. When facing such a situation, the leader must take necessary actions to get rid of the confusions and get clarity of the fact. In such a state of mind one forges all that one has learned, and it results in dampening the intellect and finally ruins everything, including one's character, fame, etc.

In verse 360, the poet says that an individual who destroys desire, anger, and confusion of mind will never experience the pain caused by these characters. This concept can be matched with a leader who has to get rid of a confused state of mind which is caused by anger that is evoked due to uncontrolled desire. When the leader attempts to destroy one's desire on anything around oneself, then one can manage any circumstances with clear state of mind without any anger. Thus, this can be related with the seventh level of consciousness of the Barrett model which is 'Making a difference'. In this level a leader displays empathy (Olanrewaju, 2019), and utilizes his intuition for making a decision. The leader is very specific in choosing the choices on the individual who deserves based on their actual performance but not on the leader's own desire (Azizaha et al., 2020). In this level the leader uses a clear state of mind to analyze and evaluate others with no anger.

The ten *Thirukural* verses are mapped to their appropriate level of Consciousness in Table 14.1.

LESSONS FROM *THIRUKURAL* FOR BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Thirukural recommends that a leader should experience the truth and develop the following qualities.

Table 14.1 Thirukural verses linked with the seven levels of consciousness

<i>Thirukural verse number</i>	<i>Concept</i>	<i>Related to the seven levels of consciousness</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Expected outcome of practice</i>
351	Misconception of believing the unreal as the real	7. Service	Focus on ethics, social responsibility, sustainability, and future generations	Decisions based on unreal facts are not ethical and can be avoided
352	Ignorance is the darkness of mind and to know the truth is the real happiness	4. Transformation	Focus on personal growth, teamwork, and innovation	Creates inspirational leadership and develops a strong cohesive culture in an organization that builds a capacity for collective actions
353	Those who are free of all doubts and are in true understanding, the higher world is nearer than the mortal world	2. Relationship	Practice an open communication and treats the people around with dignity	Results in transparency and supports the leader to practice effective conflict management in an organization
354	Even those who have all the knowledge which can be attained by the five senses will derive no benefit from it, if they are without knowledge of the true nature of things	1. Survival	Displays calmness in the face of chaos, and decisiveness in the midst of danger	The true data has to be retrieved and to be used at most in all circumstances and it results in financial stability, organizational growth, and employee health and safety

<i>Thirukural verse number</i>	<i>Concept</i>	<i>Related to the seven levels of consciousness</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Expected outcome of practice</i>
355	Whatever be the nature of the object and however it may be perceived, it is the duty of the person to understand the true nature of that object	5. Internal cohesion	focus of leaders on values and authenticity	It increases the authenticity on the words of the leader in the minds of the people around them
356	They, who in this birth have learned to know the True Being, enter the road which returns not into this world	4. Transformation	Courage, responsibility, initiative, and accountability. Focus on personal growth, teamwork, and innovation	Leaders should always focus on the receipt of true and authentic data. It results in the empowerment, adaptability, and continuous learning
357	Let it not be thought that there is another birth for him whose mind having thoroughly considered (all it has been taught) has known the True Being	1. Survival	Displays calmness in the face of chaos, and decisiveness in the midst of danger	Leaders should not have a tendency that they could correct any mistakes in future and proceed with the data currently available without even conforming the authenticity, reliability, and validity

(continued)

Table 14.1 (continued)

<i>Thirukural verse number</i>	<i>Concept</i>	<i>Related to the seven levels of consciousness</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Expected outcome of practice</i>
358	True knowledge consists in the removal of ignorance; which is (the cause of) births, and the perception of the True Being who is (the bestowed of) heaven	3. Self-esteem	Displays pride in performance	Leader focuses more on strategy, performance, excellence, quality, productivity, and efficiency
359	One realizes the supreme which is the support of all and stays unattached to everything, then the sufferings due to attachments will not come to him destroying his self-state	6. Making a difference	Displays empathy, and utilizes intuition in decision making	Managers are the bridge between the top management and the workers. Managers can practice to stay unattached to everything and do their duty effectively
360	If the very names of these three things, desire, anger, and confusion of mind, be destroyed, then will also perish evils which flow from them	6. Making a difference	Displays empathy, and utilizes intuition in decision making	Managers are very specific in choosing the choices on the individual who deserves based on their actual performance. Focus on employee fulfillment, and mentoring and coaching

Avoid Misconception of Believing the Unreal as the Real

The quality of a leader of believing only the truth and not believing the unreal facts is very important when dealing with people and taking relevant decisions. This is because the decision which is taken based on the actual facts will be authentic and will contribute to the growth of the organization in a long run. A leader who always believes in authentic information will never make mistakes in making right decisions.

Differentiate Between Favorable and Unfavorable Situations

The quality of differentiating the favorable and unfavorable information is a very important ability of a good leader. In real situations everything will be mixed up and sometimes it may confuse us to choose the best one for the betterment of the organization. During such situations, a leader must have a capacity to pick only the constructive factors and take necessary decisions (Surji, 2017). Otherwise it may lead to taking wrong decisions that affect the development of the organization.

Clear All Doubts on Everything Happening Around

A leader should also have the habit of clearing all the doubts that happen around them in every situation. They should not believe the delusion that happens around them. They should always go in search of the truth that is hidden in every circumstance. This is an important characteristic of leader because, it helps to avoid misconception on people working around them and also supports them in accessing the real facts (Surji, 2017). When a leader is free of all doubts about the factors that are involved in problematic situations then the decision taken based on this level of consciousness will also be of high quality that will end up in greater impact toward the growth of the business as a whole.

Understand the True Nature of the Problematic Situations for Authenticity

Often in an organizational context, it is difficult to understand the true nature of the problematic situation (Shahbazi, 2016). This is due to the different perceptions of different people around the leader. During this

situation, a leader should search for the authenticity of the information which is closely related to the problem (Surji, 2017). And then they should access the problem to take relevant decision. If a leader does not check for the authenticity of information about the problem and takes hasty decision believing someone else's opinion as true, then they have to face all the consequences all alone. This may also reduce their self-esteem among the people working around them, when the truth is revealed one day.

To Practice Un-Attachment in Everything Around Them

The quality of un-attachment is the most important quality of a great leader. This quality is lacking in most of the organizational leaders in situations where they have to consider certain things which they like or want the most. This quality of un-attachment helps a leader to take any right decision having considerations on only the growth of the organization and not anything else. If a leader is attached toward any person or anything that is favorite to themselves, then when a conflicting situation arises where they have to ignore preferential treatment, it will be very difficult for them to handle it emotionally.

Safeguard the Self-State and Lessen the Sufferings Caused by Attachment

A leader should always have in mind that they should safeguard their self-state. This is possible only if the leader follows un-attachment in the organizational environment. By practicing un-attachment, the leader can definitely go in search of real truth and increases one's knowledge on the true facts to take authentic decisions. This practice will help in reducing the sufferings caused by attachment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The ancient Vedic sages called Truth the organizing intelligence at the basis of creation. They said that in the end in all situations, Truth Alone Triumphs, or *Satyam Eva Jayate* (Mundaka Upanishad, 3.1.6). This field of Truth structures the roots of the excellence with which all of creation

is designed, manifested, and administered. Human awareness is rooted in this field of perfection, so human awareness and organizing intelligence grow up as twins nurturing one another out of the purest love for each other.

From a Vedic philosophical perspective, the manifest is unreal and the unmanifest Consciousness is the source of manifesting reality (Maheshwari, 2021). Truth in Vedic terms is organizing intelligence that is beyond the reach of intellect, and so the unification of heart and mind increases as our consciousness approaches the highest levels. Of all human qualities, discernment is the most important, for all of life is lived through discernment of real and unreal. Throughout life one needs to develop the quality of discernment as our mechanisms of discernment determine our reality. Our unconscious and conscious choices draw us closer to or push us farther away from knowing the holistic reality. This is true in every aspect and application of analysis and decision. This means that every conscious or unconscious decision draws us nearer to or pushes us farther from knowing Totality or knowing ourselves more fully as being Totality.

In *Thirukural*, more than 2000 years ago, the poet Thiruvalluvar has given the ways to handle all the issues that a human may face. Matching it with the organizational context, a leader can practice all these concepts in their daily work environment. Understanding these thoughts and ideas may support them in handling all the dilemmas easily and take appropriate decisions effectively. Consciousness is an important quality of leadership because it is the basic knowledge about the truth which a leader must possess. Consciousness-based leadership is an ideal choice to put into practice in today's atmosphere because of the upcoming volatile and complex market conditions. To deal with all the problems related to leadership qualities, the concept of consciousness-based leadership can be learned and adapted in organizations. It will help develop leaders who can be successful in dealing with the challenging situations that emerge in the current market situations.

Yet we must remember that Love is guided by Truth and without the infusion of Truth into Love, love can even kill. Our prime responsibility as humans is to learn to love while immersed in Truth and thereby integrate heaven and earth.

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