CHAPTER - V

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As discussed in first chapter, leadership is a complex process. It has many dimensions and attributes. Leadership is defined as the process of influencing people for achievement of common goals in a given situation.

The leadership process is a function of the leader (l), the follower (f) and other variables (s):

\[ L = f(l, f, s) \]

Leadership affects us every day in our lives. A successful organization is characterized by a dynamic and effective leader.

In this context, analysis of leadership attributed to the top-executives of organizations in Manipur has been selected.

In the second chapter, the literatures of leadership and its multiple dimensions are discussed. The study on the theories of leadership has materialized a broad framework of leadership. It has been categorized into four: the traditional theories, the behavioral theories, contingency/situational theories and modern approaches.

Trait theory points to the important role of personality traits of leaders that differentiate them from non-leaders. The validity of these theories is challenged by Stogdill (1948). He suggests that no consistent set of traits
differentiate leaders from non-leaders across situations. The cumulative findings of traits studies concluded that some traits increase the likelihood of success as leader, but none of the traits guarantee success (Yukl and Van Fleet, 1992). This finding highlights the main drawback of trait theory.

In spite of its limitations, trait theory of leadership has its relevance and importance in understanding the leadership process and direction for further studies.

The group and exchange theories suggest positive exchange between the leaders and the followers for accomplishing group goals. The inability of the trait theory to explain leadership led to the development of behavioral theories.

The behavioral theories attempt to explain leadership in terms of the behavior exhibited by the leader, not on the personality traits as in trait theories. These theories have modest success in building consistent relationship between patterns of leadership behavior and group performance.

The most comprehensive and replicated of the behavioral theories resulted from the research that began at Ohio State University in the late 1940s (Stogdill and Coons, 1951). Ohio State Studies has its limitations. It has failed to show a significant relationship between leadership behaviors and group performances. The effects of the situation on effective leadership style/behavior were not considered.

Survey Research Centre of University of Michigan has identified two types of leadership behaviors, called employee oriented and production oriented (Kahn and Katz, 1960). The Michigan studies favored employee oriented.
Scandinavian studies show that leaders of 1990s support development oriented behavior. Leaders who demonstrate development oriented behavior have more satisfied subordinates and are seen as more competent by those subordinates (Robbins, 1996).

Industrial psychologists (Blake and Mouton, 1964) has developed managerial grid which has been renamed as Leadership grid. There is little substantive evidence to support the conclusion that a Team Management Style is most effective in all situations (Larson, Hunt, and Osborn, 1976; Nystrom, 1978).

Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed a leader participation model, which is related to leadership behavior and participation to decision making. The leader-participation model assumes that the leader can adjust his or her style to different situations. Research testing of the original leader-participation model was very encouraging (Field, 1982; Leana, 1987; Ettling and Jago, 1988; and Field and House 1990). As the model is revised, and is new, its validity needs assessment.

In contingency theory of leadership, the success of the leader is a function of various contingencies in the form of subordinate, task, and/or group variables. The effectiveness of a given pattern of leader behavior is contingent upon the demands imposed by the situation. No single contingency theory has been postulated.

Fiedler (1996) developed the first comprehensive model of leadership. Fiedler's approach departs from trait and behavioral models by asserting that group performance is contingent on the leader's psychological orientation and on
three contextual variables: group atmosphere, task structure, and leader’s power position.

Hersey and Blanchard (1974, 1988) developed situational leadership theory. This theory is an extension of Blake and Mouton’s Managerial Grid Model and Reddin’s 3-D management style theory. With this model came the expansion of the notion of relationship and task dimensions to leadership and adds a readiness dimension.

Another theory, Attribution Theory of Leadership, is based on cause and effect relationship. The theory deals with people, and it is based on cause and effect relationships. There is an extension of attribution theory. It is known as Charismatic leadership theory.

Followers make attribution of heroic or extraordinary leadership abilities when they observe certain behaviour (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). Charisma is a special personality characteristics that gives a person exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, and results in the person being treated as a leader.

There is interest in identifying two types of leadership viz., transactional and transformational leaders. Transactional leadership involves an exchanges relationship between leaders and followers whereas transformational leadership is based on leaders’ shifting the values, beliefs and needs of the followers. (Tichy and Devanna, 1986).

The different qualities posses by leaders and their unique characteristic differentiating them from non-leaders are studied in chapter three. Two immediate subordinates for each sampled leader were also cross-examined to describe the
characteristics of their leaders. This helped to crosscheck the responses of the sampled leaders. The crosschecking has highlighted the leadership process from the leaders' as well as subordinates' perspectives.

There are two sections in chapter three. The first section served to understand the leadership frame of reference which is about the broad characteristics of leadership. The next sections have highlighted specific leadership characteristics.

The sampled leaders have opinioned the leader/leaders they admired. They admired prominent persons such as state heroes, national and international renowned leaders and famous entrepreneurs of the past and present. Respondents have admired Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru for their sincerity, selflessness, humanity, and commitment to serve people. A P J Abdul Kalam has been admired for his nature and attitude, and Sonia Gandhi for excellent adaptation to the Indian culture/nationality. Entrepreneurs like Dhirubhai Ambani, Lakshmi Narayan Mittal, Warren Buffet, Azim Premji and Steve Jobs were also chosen. The reasons for choosing entrepreneurs were given as global influence, opportunity creation, giving importance to human values, vision, commitment, stamina, flexibility, adaptability, and decision making. Dhirubhai Ambani has been admired for creating opportunities and Steve Jobs for innovation whereas Napolean for his information acumen.

Sacrifice has been highlighted as a very important quality that a leader should possess. Boldness and courageousness should be reflected in the actions
and decisions. According to the sampled leaders, dedication and sacrifice are important characteristics of leaders.

Regarding the qualities of a leader that the Manipur state needs today, it has been highlighted as ‘integrity’. The other important criterion is vision. The leader needs to know where he or she is leading the state to. Vision describes aspirations for the future.

From the analysis of Trait Approach of Leadership, it has been found that the sampled leaders have high degree of trait characteristics in their leadership approach. The sampled followers have also observed that their leaders are trait oriented in their leadership characteristics.

In other words, the sampled leaders have highly related their personal factors to leadership effectiveness. They believed that leadership is a composition of qualities like vision, capability, intelligence, courage, confidence, communication, iron-willed, inborn and decisiveness.

The finding from the analysis of behavioral approach of leadership has exhibited that the sampled leaders of organizations in Manipur have very strongly felt that leadership flows from an individual qualities and actions. They have the opinion that a leadership characteristic is an outcome of leader’s actions and behaviors exhibited by the leader at different situations. The sampled followers have highly agreed to the opinions of their leaders view points. In other words, the sampled followers have strongly perceived that their leaders characteristics are behavioral orientated.
The sampled top executives have also agreed that leadership characteristics need changes from situation to situation. This statement is verified from the analytical result of contingent approach of leadership.

They have looked to the processes by which leaders emerge in different circumstances -- at moments of great crisis or where there is a vacuum. They have also accepted that leaders should be flexible and capable of taking many roles as the situation demands. The responses of the leaders have been highly endorsed by their sampled followers.

A comparison has been made among the three approaches. It has been found that behavioral approach is most accepted by the sampled top executives of organizations in Manipur (949 points) followed by trait approach (926 points). The contingency approach (891 points) occupied the third most accepted approach (Table 3.2.1.10, Table 3.2.2.10 and Table 3.2.3.10).

This result suggests that the highest number of sampled top executives of organizations in Manipur have an inclination towards behavioral approach of leadership.

Similar analysis of the sample follower has been conducted (Table 3.2.1.10, Table 3.2.2.10 and Table 3.2.3.10). According to the followers, the sample leaders were more inclined to the trait approach. There exist a gap between what leader perceives about their leadership characteristics and what follower observed about their leadership characteristics. So the sample leader needs introspection and feedbacks about their characteristics.
An attempt has been made to study the different styles of the sampled top executives of organizations in Manipur in the fourth chapter.

The chapter has two sections. The first section is about the leadership practices of the sampled leaders. The second section emphasizes the specific styles adopted by the sampled leaders in their leadership practices.

Regarding the situations that need leadership, the respondents have pointed out the following categories – events, crisis management, routine matters, delegation, and system. They are of the view that the situation which calls for leadership the most is ‘crisis situations’. Leadership is required to solve a deadlock situation. When there is difference in the outlook, leadership is needed to bring about an amicable solution. Law and order situation has been cited as obstacles.

Leadership is also required when there is misunderstanding between groups and negotiation is essential. Leadership facilitates in solving such problems.

The sample leaders were of the view that to handle such situations sincerity in approach and convictions are essential. Listening is also important. It is important to understand the problem in the first place. Many problems can be prevented and solved through detailed planning and coordination, viewed the sampled leaders.

The sampled leaders observed that negotiation is an important instrument for bringing about a win-win situation. The approach of solving problems should be honest and the person should have loyalty towards the organization.
Experience and coordination skills help in solving difficult problems. Other situation where leadership is needed is when there is difficulty in making decision. Here patience and control helps in solving the problem. There are also the challenges of growth. Here vision helps.

Sampled leaders also faced other challenges like non-cooperative staff -- when staff is not willing to cooperate. Such problems need initiative and providing clear concepts. The situations highlighted by the sampled leaders can be broadly classified as situational factor in the environment, crisis situation in the organization, and people related problem in the organization.

The analyses of the obstacles faced by the sampled leaders in discharging their responsibilities have highlighted the following major obstacles -- interference, pressure, infrastructural bottleneck and outdated system. Many respondents have pointed out the law and order condition also. The other major barriers are the people’s attitude and mindset. Organizational learning and organizational culture are also major challenges.

There was a difference in the view points between the leaders and the followers in leadership practices.

The sampled followers have highlighted system related issues as major situation where leadership is sought whereas it was least highlighted by the leaders. It may be because the leaders generally see the larger picture.

Both the sampled leaders and followers have highlighted the significance of human values.
The last section was an analysis of specific styles adopted by the sampled leaders in their leadership practices. The study was based on three approaches of leadership styles -- autocratic style, participative style and laissez-faire style.

The analysis about the sampled leaders' styles with reference to autocratic style approach was conducted. It has been found that the median class falls at frequently true (Table 4.2.1.9). This is the second highest rating scale. It highlights that the sampled leaders are highly autocratic in their leadership practices. The sampled followers have given similar opinions with their leaders in almost every parameters of the study. That shows they have fully supported their leaders' in leadership practices.

One of the factors contributing to this style is that some of the sampled leaders are from private sectors who are sole proprietors of their organizations. These classes of sampled leaders led from the front and take all the critical decisions. They exercise complete control over their employees by centralizing the decisions making.

Bureaucratic officers of public sector organizations also contribute good points towards autocratic style of leadership. These top bureaucrats are energized by their own ego; acted very busy with organizational activities and do not expect their employees to disturb them. These executives manage "by the book". Everything is done according to procedure and policy. Whenever their subordinates have committed any mistake they make it a point to make it known and call for explanation.
Often consider as the classical approach, the autocratic style leader retains as much power and decision making authority as possible. He or she does not consult employees nor allowed them to give inputs. Followers are expected to obey his or her orders without receiving any explanation. The leader leads from the front and drag the rest. Often, the more self-importance the leader has, the little will be the confidence in his subordinates.

The style of the sampled leaders in terms of democratic approach was analyzed. It has been found that the median score for the sample leaders falls at the highest rating of response category -- Almost Always True (Table 4.2.2.9). This result indicates that the sampled top executives of organizations in Manipur are highly democratic in their leadership practices. The sampled followers have given consent in majority of the discussed parameters.

An important factor making democratic style very significant is because majority of the sampled leaders are from government and public sectors organizations. The bureaucratic officers who had been considered as sampled leaders in the study felt that the final decision makers are not them but higher Authorities. For example the Deputy Commissioners highlighted that they only give suggestions for making decisions but the final decision are made at cabinet levels. These sampled leaders could not differentiate bureaucratic styles from democratic.

The sampled leaders have also recognized that people are less competitive, more collaborative, when they worked on joint goals. They agreed
that collective decision is better than individual. These can be achieved when leaders are democratic in their styles.

The sample leaders from the government and public sectors felt that they involve their subordinates in the decision making process. These sampled leaders were of the opinion that they are public servants and work for the upliftment of the state, and the society at large.

Interestingly, the sample leaders showed instances of preferring the laissez-faire style in their leadership practices. This fact has been supported statistically with the Median score of the sampled leaders at the third highest rating of the response category – Occasionally True (Table 4.2.3.9).

One of the factors contributing to this style is that some of the sample leaders are from health care and higher educational sectors. These sampled leaders are highly professional and possess expertise in their areas. They delegate authorities and responsibilities to their employees who were either doctors or professors. They have confidence on the capability of their peers and subordinates.
**Conclusion and Suggestions**

There are multitude researches of leadership theories and styles about what makes effective leadership. Each has their proponents and critics. There is, however, no irrefutable evidence that answers this question adequately.

This study attempted to contribute to learning in the field of effective leadership context with reference to the top executives, and their immediate followers, of organizations in Manipur.

The research has been concluded with two facts. First, that leadership must integrate the personality and behavior of the leaders, the followers' attitudes, and the situations.

Second, the styles of leadership practices differ from one organization to another. This shows that leadership style is dependent on organizational structure and strategy.

Leadership is a two way process where the leader influences the followers and the followers influences the leader.

The sampled leaders have mainly confined to the managerial aspects and routine matters. Some of the important qualities where the leader needs to focus are not highlighted enough -- vision, opportunity creation and change management.

The followers have brought up an important point missed by leaders regarding leaders' function -- 'support from the followers'.
Leaders are confused between authority and power. Most of the departmental heads are aged and concentrate most of their time on routine matters.

Although leadership functions may vary by organizational level or discipline, the study presented here suggests that the leader-follower dyad is a point of influence in affecting attitudes toward adopting effective leadership practices. However, in order to change attitudes and practices, leaders must persevere in the change process, and face multiple hurdles, for a change.