Chapter I

Introduction

Leadership, and the study of it, has roots in the beginning of civilization and yet there is no common understanding of leadership everyone agrees on. Perhaps this is because leadership definition is continuously changing and evolving. It is a complex entity, with many applications, and the results that it creates depend highly on the situation in which it is being observed.

From the year 1900 onwards till 1994, there have been more than seven thousand books and articles published on the subject of leadership (Hogan et al, 1994). From 1994 till 2004, fifteen thousand journal articles have been written on leadership (Bono and Judge, 2004) indicating increasing focus on leadership. Bass (Bass & Stogdill’s Handbook, 1990) points to research studies where leadership is often regarded as the single most crucial factor in the success or failure of businesses, schools, religious groups, non-profits and the military. Around 1930s the real scientific study of leadership began in the US. The contributions since have been cumulative and a lot is already known about leadership (House & Aditya, 1997). According to Northouse, (2001) leadership is defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”.
Kotter (1995), and Hammer & Champy (1993) indicated that to compete in a rapidly changing environment, the ability to lead and manage change is a critical success factor for managers. Top level leadership was considered to be the single most important factor separating the top 100 mid-size American corporations from their competition (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Many leadership authors have found that ineffective leadership in organizations seems to be the major cause of diminishing productivity and downward positioning of many North American corporations on the international scale (Yukl, 1994).

Gentry and Chappelow (2009) noted that failure to adapt is the most prominent reason for leadership failure. They attributed this failure to increased rate of change and complexity. The new business challenges like merger and acquisition activity, sophisticated technology, capital markets, and faster rates of growth for managers, have put ‘versatility’ on the top of the ‘must have’ skill set. Gentry and Chappelow (2009) found that the ‘strengths’ in earlier roles that get managers promoted can become ‘liabilities’ in senior jobs, weaknesses that were tolerated early in a career eventually become critical at senior levels. Their research is pointing to ‘continuous improvement’ as a requirement in leadership abilities and skill set.

Whetstone (2005) said that corporate ‘failings’ emphasize the fact that organizational cultures can be shaped by how the leader influences followers through the ethics, values, and beliefs they display. George
Sims et al. (2007) claimed that one way to demonstrate this realization is by increasing the level of leader self awareness necessary to produce an organization that prioritizes ethics.

To handle the above discussed business realities, some authors provide directions on ‘Leadership Style’ requirements for the leaders to adapt. Transactional / transformational model promoted by Bass and Avolio (1994) was seen as relevant to the challenges of organizations in a highly volatile and rapidly changing business. Sashkin (1988) stated that transformational leaders provide the basis for creating organizations that are effective in terms of any criterion of performance or profit.

Transformational leaders show organizations new paths for improvement and progress by providing new ideas and perspectives. They improve the organization performance by motivating managers, employees and members of the organizations to adapt to radical changes. They transform organizational pillars to achieve necessary readiness and capabilities to move in this new direction as well as achieve higher levels of organizational performance (Sanjaghi, 2000).

Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass (1998) indicated that transactional leadership occurs when the leader practices contingent reward, specific goals vs. rewards, or corrects colleagues depending on the adequacy of their performance. Transactional leadership depends on behaviors / performance being linked with recognition or rewards, with active or
passive corrective discipline where performance falls below some acceptable standard.

Transformational leaders are sensitive and pay attention to the needs of their followers as well as their own needs. Transformational leaders influence the group to accept the collective group mission through intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. They work towards uniting subordinates as they work toward a common goal. Transformational leaders improve their followers' creativity, motivation while transactional leaders address to extrinsic interests of their followers. Transformational leaders empower their followers to develop and create new directions and develop positive attitudes so that their aspirations are achieved. This will help the followers to grow, develop and change to become transformational leaders (Barker, 1992). Transformational leaders possess vision, values, ethics and focus on their followers' performance and development in order that they serve the organization (Northhouse, 2001).

Conference Board survey of CEOs in 2003 has identified leadership development as major a concern (Rudis, 2003). Sala (2003) explained that effective leaders display a more comprehensive range of their leadership styles. Leaders must be able to connect with broad groups of people because many leaders are called on to act as a liaison (Mintzberg, 1975). In this liaison role, leaders build cooperation among groups that can be a key contribution to the success of the individuals involved as
well as the organization. Freshman and Rubino (2004) added that leaders would need to earn the trust necessary in order for peers, superiors, and team to generate honest feedback that can enhance the development of the leader’s self awareness.

Andre Martin (2005) based on a survey done on top industry executives across the world, made the following observations:

“Challenges are becoming more complex, at the same time there is greater reliance on interdependent work, and the reward systems are shifting. Leadership has evolved as a collective process and Global organizations are at the cutting edge of collective leadership. Hence There is a need to rise a new leadership skill set.”

Church (1997) found that high performance managers were significantly more self aware compared with average performance managers. This relationship was consistent regardless of data source, organization, or method of assessing managerial performance. Failed managers are less self aware, readily lose their balance, cannot handle mistakes openly, are not able to learn from past, and have a limited number of job assignments (Eichinger & Lombardo, 2003; Lombardo & Eichinger, 2001; McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Shipper & Dillard, 2000). Tom Bourner, (1996) contended that an increasing rate of change within organizations increases the need for development of self awareness in managers.
Continuous changes in both the economy and technology suggest that managers who lead modern organizations constantly need to be engaged in a leadership learning process. Although much of executive development focuses on technical and financial issues, the big difference in careers results from a lack of knowledge of a different kind—gaps in self awareness (Robert Hogan and Rodney Warrenfeltz, 2003).

In summary, following questions come to mind, how does self awareness contribute to leadership, is there a relationship and can that be inferred empirically? This research is endeavored to answer this question.

1.1 Research Objectives

Following are the objectives set for this research

- Objective 1: To understand self awareness in published literature and come up with a questionnaire to measure it.

- Objective 2: To understand leadership styles in published literature and pick popular and/or nascent leadership styles for further study and measure them using a questionnaire.

- Objective 3: To study and infer empirical relationship between self awareness and select leadership styles.

- Objective 4: To study the extent of leadership in Information Technology industry.
1.2 Significance

This research has significance in more than one way. This study attempts to determine positive relationship between self awareness and leadership styles. Based on the relationship between self awareness and leadership styles, one can attempt to find ways of improving the leadership levels by improving self awareness.

As Azim Premji (2005) indicated, the need for transformational leaders in the Information Technology industry cannot be over emphasized. To this end, the present research attempts to understand the extent of leadership levels in the Information Technology industry. The implication of this research is that - it provides a model for the industry to improve leadership capabilities.

This study adds to the scholarly research done on transformational leadership by Metcalfe and Metcalfe (2005) and on servant leadership by Patterson (2003). Review of literature revealed that the study on transcendental leadership is at a nascent level. Some example of specific researches in transcendental leadership are, Sanders et al 2003, and David Jordan, 2005. The present study adds to these researches. This study provides a questionnaire for measuring transcendental leadership as well.

In summary, this study expands the existing research on transformational leadership, servant leadership and on transcendental leadership. For those organizations that decide to implement leadership
improvement programs, self awareness can provide one of the starting points.

1.3 Chapterization

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter discusses the leadership challenges faced by managers in current business scenarios where leadership is brought to focus and some consequences if the leader fails. This chapter brings in ‘leadership styles’ as area for study. This chapter introduces the concept of self awareness and its broad level relationship with leadership. Subsequently, the research objectives and significance of the research were discussed. Chapterization section gives an overview of how the research is presented in terms of its contents.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter discusses literature relevant to the present study. Understanding of self awareness and methods of measuring self awareness are discussed and a construct for measuring self awareness (as defined by Goleman, 1998) is considered for the purpose of this study. Role of self awareness in leadership development is reviewed in this chapter. This chapter discusses components of transactional leadership, transformational leadership, issues in measuring transformational leadership, a new perspective on transformational leadership and its components as identified by Metcalfe and Metcalfe
Servant leadership as constructed by Patterson (2003) is discussed and is used for the purpose of this study. The literature available on transcendental leadership is discussed and is used for developing a questionnaire for measuring transcendental leadership. Also, discussed is the relationship between self awareness and leadership styles. Gaps in literature have been identified for developing the hypotheses.

Chapter III: Methodology for Research

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted for testing the hypotheses. A total of four alternate hypotheses have been formed. It also describes the development of questionnaire and various validations done to ensure reliability of the questionnaire. This chapter discusses the sample for the purpose of the study and discusses the data collection procedure. The statistical tools used for determining the relationships were also discussed.

Chapter IV: Statistical Analysis of Data

This chapter presents the data collected from the respondents and presents it in a coherent manner. Correlations between self awareness and leadership styles were tested. Demographic variables and their relationship with leadership styles and self awareness were analyzed using ANOVA and Post Hoc techniques. Factor analysis is used to determine the dominant components of each leadership style.
Chapter V: Discussion of Results

This chapter discusses the results of the analyzed data. Two linear equations, one between self awareness & transformational leadership (equation 1) and the other between self awareness & servant leadership (equation 2) are important inferences of the research. Through these equations, the relationship between self awareness & leadership styles are discussed. Relationships between leadership styles and demographic variables were also discussed. In addition, a leadership development model is proposed, based on the outcome of the research is presented.

Chapter VI: Conclusion and Recommendation

The inference from this research is that “self awareness and transformational leadership” & “self awareness and servant leadership” have positive relationship between them and can be fitted in to a liner equation. Other inference is that managerial hierarchy has relationship with all of the four leadership styles. This chapter also discusses recommendations for future research.

References

This section lists references from which all of this research study is built on.

Appendix I

This section gives the questionnaire used for primary data collection.