

## **A Study on Leadership Excellence Attainment Determinants: Structural Similarities**

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### ***Abstract***

*Today global Consideration and cross cultural concerns have become one of the most important areas in Human Resource development. Factors such as globalization, liberalization, Proliferation of off shoring models, emergence of business process outsourcing, increasing international mobility of HRD Professionals and adoption of new work methods such as telecommuting have perhaps triggered this recent urge of interest in global GRD among professionals. They have been many studies exploring the global issues in HRD; most of these studies have been aimed at discovering the differences across cultures rather than exploring the underlying structural similarities. The purpose of this paper is to identify the underlying structural similarities across different types of organization and cultures that seem to be determining the success of one of the major strategically significant roles of HRD namely leadership development.*

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Leadership Development Research in the Global Context**

Leadership excellence is a central concern of today's CEOs and leaders as well as HR researchers. There have been many studies exploring the leadership and related variables across the nations and cultures. However in spite of the rich literature on the concept of leadership, it is not easy to explain, control or predict the success and effectiveness leadership development across the different types of organization and different cultures. One of the reasons for the failure of research to adequately guide the leadership development practice rather than studying the leadership development process adopted by different organization and cultures literature on leadership is plenty but literature on leadership development and determinants of its success is rare. Thus this paper explores into concepts and applications in Corporate life based on professional experience across different types of organization and culture.

### **1.2 Approaches to Leadership Excellence**

There have been three types of traditional approaches to leadership excellence namely:

- Trait theories.
- Style and behavioral theories.
- Situational and contingency theory.

Later other approaches such as transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, and the global leadership came up.

These approaches explained leadership based on competencies, styles and values. The recent series of corporate scandals force the authors pay attention to concept such as toxic leadership, positive leadership and ethical leadership. Authors have observed that lack of attention to the positive values by the leaders was one of the central reasons behind the fall of many big companies. In future leaders will be increasingly evaluate not only what they aspire to achieve but also on how they achieved or how they plan to achieve their aspirations.

### **1.3 Structural Components of Leadership Excellence**

Structural components have 3 important dimensions namely:

- Leadership competencies.
- Leadership values
- Leadership styles.

**Leadership Competencies:** Refers to the skill, knowledge and attitude that helps a person to become more effective in leadership roles like attitude towards people and work, skill, strategic thinking, Knowledge of the business etc. Many organizations are able to identify the competencies matching with their business.

**Leadership Values:** In the organizational context values represent enduring beliefs that we hold. Excellent leaders have always paid attention to their personal values and core values of their organizations. They represent the collective sense of what is good for the company, its employees, shareholders and society of influences or actions, attitudes, choices and decisions.

**Leadership Styles:** It is the most controversial component of leadership excellence. The best style perhaps can only be best resolved based on the choices dictated by the situation and values of the organizations. Many companies today make it clear the acceptable styles of leadership and behavior at work.

## **2. Four Keys to Support Structure (DEAL Model)**

- **Dedicated top management:** It is critical that the top management is dedicated to the leadership development programme. This requires persistent and high quality demonstration of values through small ‘wins’
- **Experience HR team:** It is essential to ensure that the HR team and managers driving the leadership development initiatives are experienced in the activity, otherwise the credibility of the programme suffers continuous erosion due to mistakes and unintended consequences.
- **Active involvement of line managers:** It is important that the line management is bought in to the process through an active change management programme. Many organizations make the mistake of trying to force the leadership development initiatives through memos or orders initiated from the top CEO’s.
- **Layered and Integrated Approach:** Approach should not only integrated the various tools used in the process but also ensure that the programmes are scaled to match the requirements of different levels of leadership in a company namely;
  - Executive Level
  - Middle level
  - Junior level

## **3. Elements of Support Structure (7 C’s Model)**

The Components of the processes and tools structure are based on 7 C’s Model.

- **Core Values and Leadership Culture Building:** Core values are fundamental to the success of any leadership development programme. It should be wired in all approaches, assessments, rewards, leadership competency framework, leadership training etc.
- **Competency Frame work aligned with business:** This should be aligned with vision, mission and values of the organization. It should be logically coherent and integrated with all assessment, feedback, development plans and training.
- **Credible Assessment of feedback:** It is important to make sure that the assessment is reliable, valid and credible.

- **Careful Personal development Planning:** Personal development Plans are much deeper than filling up a personal development form. It requires careful handling and indepth thinking.
- **Creation of diverse Learning Opportunities:** Creation of learning opportunities such as in house workshops, external workshops, off the job opportunities, on the job opportunities, conferences, books, libraries etc. helps to develop the skills faster in more meaningful manner.
- **Continuous Performance Coaching:** Formal coaching and monitoring programmes often held to develop the culture of learning and respecting learning as an important activity even at senior level. External Executives coaches who are experienced in the job will be able to play a vital role in Process.
- **Career and Succession Planning:** Leadership jobs need broad person role matching. While doing this one cannot depend on assessment score and number only. Caveats Justification and confidential information available to top management also matters. It is also important to know that one cannot ignore managerial and shareholders preferences.

#### **4. Importance of Structural Similarities**

While it is important to magnify the cross cultural differences, it also equally important to look for underlying structural similarities and determinants of successful implementation of HRD programmes across the manmade and natural borders. Our remarks to support our arguments are:

- Captivated by the limiting thoughts around the cultural, we often forget the role of the HRD professionals as a change agent. When 360 degree feedback was introduced in India ago by professional there were many among the participants who raised their brows and stated that the method is not suitable for typically hierarchical Indian culture. Similar is the experience of HR Professionals around the globe like introducing new tools and methods.
- Globalization, Media, International Mobility, Interest etc are reducing the gap between cultures to a great extent. These developments might not be making everybody more tolerant to other worlds, but definitely they are making it easy for the open minded learner to understand and observe different worlds.
- Global HRD Professional also tends to forget the fact that often they are paid for their diversity value rather than similarity value. Every time when we decide not to implement an HR tool due to the fear of cultural incompatibility, we may be losing an opportunity to cross pollinate and contribute to the cultural change.
- Finally while the expressions of culture, values, religion, ethics and ceremonies many differ widely across the borders fundamentally and structurally human beings are similar across the world. This is important learning which discovers perhaps only after getting considerable exposure to diversity across the world, groups, sets, communities and so forth.

## **5. Conclusion**

It should be noted that while we try to highlight the major ingredients of an effective leadership development programme, one should not underestimate the other factors which might undermine the success. One of the most important among such factors is communication and internal marketing of the leadership development programme. Experience shows that even communicating simple things are not easy in a large company For Eg: Even after communicating the employee benefits through policies, Procedure, Manual, Booklets etc., many employees may not be still fully aware about their rights and benefits. Communicating on a fuzzy issue such as values, culture, leadership etc is going to be a major challenge.

This paper concentrated on identifying Leadership Excellence Attainment Determinants based on the experience of dealing with many different types of organization and cultures. The attempts was to separate the underlying structural determinants of the success of leadership development while ignoring the complex cultural issues and visible differences across the culture.

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