

## Emergent Leadership Inevitability, Ethics and Managerial Styles

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*The fruits of labour are due to those who work just as the price of courage is due to those who take calculated risks. The ability to gain courage and take risks from being ethical and having a style that gives one the ability to get men to do what they don't want to do and like it, in the words of Harry Truman. The discourse in this chapter is based on (a) the inevitable emergence of leaders from the existing flux and (b) the conviction that the corporate leader in the future would have to be the ethical leader. Its argument is divided into five parts. The first defines the subject matter of the discourse and deals with issues like values, beliefs and ethics. This part lays down the theoretical underpinning for the ensuing argument. The second takes up the issue of Managerial Styles examining a landmark study, conducted in UK, Nigeria, Malaysia, Hong Kong and India. The underlying assumption is that the answers we get to social issues depend on the questions we ask. The questions we ask depend on the values we have. Moreover, these values give rise to our beliefs and our ethical conduct. Hence, the Managerial Style is a good proxy for Managerial Work Beliefs. The third part looks at the replication of the study conducted in the three States in Southern India. The fourth part deals with the responses of SMEs in Greater Mumbai to the inquiry which was a replication of the earlier study by this author in Southern Indian states. The fifth part deals with what lies ahead and to that extent posits a considered opinion on the issue of Managerial Styles. All along the question of the Values of the Chief Executive came into play. The underlying assumption is that in a positivist framework, power flows downward and the tone as well as the tenor of managerial behaviour is set by the behaviour of the Chief Executive. This becomes all the more important when the organization is forced to thrive on the cutting edge of competition.*

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*The right of commanding is no longer an advantage transmitted by nature; like an inheritance, it is the fruits of labours, the price of courage.*

— Voltaire

## WHAT IS EMERGENT LEADERSHIP?

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At the cost of repetition let us assume that there is a lot of fuzziness in the environment due to (a) non-linear and non-Newtonian change and (b) concurrent collapse of structures and functions. In this chaos arises the need for leadership that so far we have argued, should be ethical. But how does such leadership *emerge*? Let us reflect for a moment on the term “leadership.” Usual impressions will include some of the following notions a position of power and authority; directing people to get jobs done; having the final say about what, who, how, where, when; “being in charge;” the capacity for imposing your mandate; and so on. Many times, of course, these notions of leadership work just fine. Yet, how appropriate are they when it comes to the enormous magnitude of those innovations that will be necessary for a health care organization to survive amidst unprecedented changes in healthcare financing, governmental regulations, technological advances, and consumer desires. “Being in charge” and “imposing your mandate” just don’t seem to hit the mark in the face of the unpredictable, sudden emergence of mergers, acquisitions, and variously fashioned joint ventures.

Yet, it is precisely the unpredictable and the emergent that are so central in the new complexity of management sciences. Indeed, emergence in self-organizing, complex systems since Etzioni’s thesis, three decades ago, is one of the most fascinating areas of current research into complex systems. Specifically, emergence refers to the unanticipated arising of new higher-level systemic patterns or structures functioning according to new laws and consisting of new properties. If we can consider our institutions and businesses complex, nonlinear systems, then it should, we opine, come as no surprise that our organizations are *replete with emergent phenomena*. However, our understanding of what organizations are supposed to be, for example, bureaucratic hierarchical structures, has pretty much blinded us to seeing the full extent of the emergence taking place right in front of our eyes. Moreover, if we do recognize emergent phenomena for the spontaneous and “out of control” types of system occurrences they indeed represent, our training takes over automatically and we commence suppressing them as quickly as possible. Fortunately, it seems impossible to stifle all spontaneity and creativity, so emergent phenomena in our organizations and environments are here to stay. But rather than to dismay this fact, leaders can learn to take advantage of what could prove to be an extremely powerful and constructive organizational force.

### Planned versus Emergent Leadership

It is not that emergence has traditionally had no role at all in leadership. We find emergence, for example, in what has been termed informal as opposed to formal leadership. Whereas formal leadership refers to an officially-sanctioned, imposed role in a bureaucratic hierarchy, informal leadership occurs or emerges spontaneously outside of the sanctioned chain of command. Thus, in a project team, one or more persons may informally take-on leadership

roles, others in the group then choosing or not to follow these informal leaders although to do so is not officially mandated. Whereas formal leadership is the result of planning, the emergence of informal leaders is a spontaneous event and thereby represents an unanticipated innovation in an organization. And, to the extent informal leadership is emergent and innovative, it parallels self-organizing processes in complex systems.

Yet, we find that emergent, informal leadership has been given short shrift not only in management literature and research, but in the real world of businesses and institutions. It is relegated to the ranks of either “grass roots” activities (for example, the “charismatic” type of leadership frequently seen in social reform or religious movements) or to crisis situations. Pillai (1996), for example, found that the ratings by co-workers of leaders spontaneously emerging during crisis situations were higher in leadership ability than leaders arising in noncrisis situations. But this just proves the point that emergent leadership is generally excluded from the mainstream aspects of leadership thought to be necessary for the ongoing running of an extent organization.

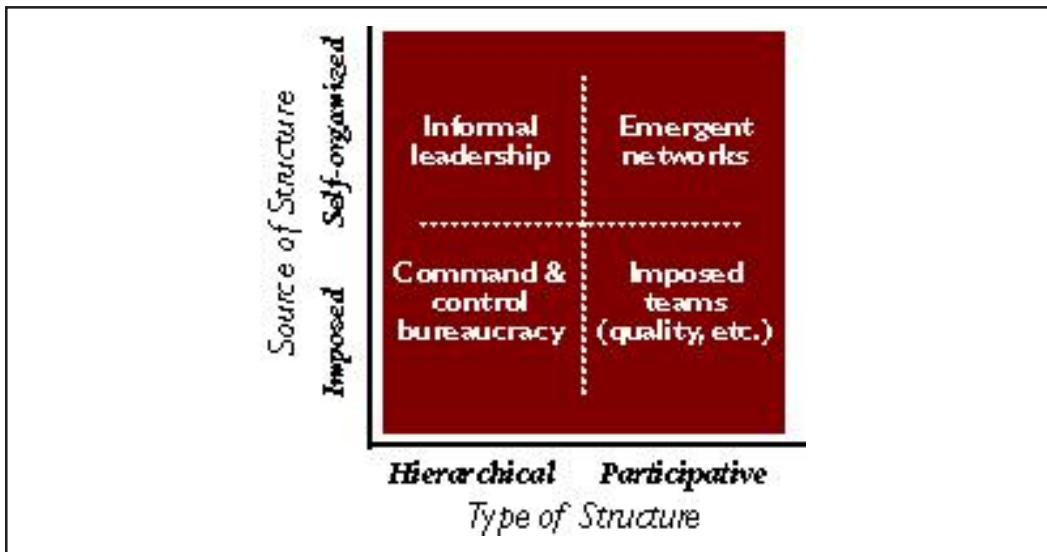


FIGURE 1: TYPE OF LEADERSHIP

## EMERGENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Organizations, of course, consist of both leaders and those who are led, and there are two general types of structures for connecting the leaders and led hierarchical as in the above mentioned formal leadership bureaucracy; and participative as in distributed power and authority, for example, self-managed work groups. By establishing an Organizational Structure Grid links the above mentioned formal and informal leadership (the sources of leadership) with these two types of organizational structure.

The lower left quadrant “Command and Control Bureaucracy,” is the typical, traditional way that organizational members and leaders are connected. In spite of all the pleas to contrary on the part of management gurus and innovative leaders, it can still be said that

most organizations function according to this mode of structure. The top left quadrant, “Informal Leadership,” is, as stated above, a spontaneous, self-organizing process, yet, as can be seen in the grid, it retains a hierarchical structure in the sense that, for example, during a crisis, the informal leader now “commands the troops.” The past two and a half decades have witnessed the advent of the lower right quadrant, “Imposed Teams.”

First, there were Quality Circles, then Quality Teams in TQM, Project Teams in Re-engineering, and so forth. What these latter organizing methods have in common is that they are *imposed structures with distributed authority*. It is important to note that lower right quadrant structures are *not* emergent but are, instead, imposed by the hierarchy. This “imposed” character needs to be underscored because it is sometimes thought they represent some kind of radical departure from the old “Command and Control” Hierarchy. Instead, they represent a somewhat contradictory message from top management which encourages managers *to take it easy*.

Several organisational heads, (especially in postgraduate institutions of management), have experienced the futility of trying to impose participative decision-making teams. Even after several years of mandating that knowledge workers make decisions without directions from the Dean, the results are not forthcoming. Was Aristotle right in saying that some people are born for serfdom? Put in such a predicament the authors have finally realized they were imposing these teams just as they imposed all his other past management directions and that such imposition was not the way to proceed to generate a more effective organization. That is perhaps why research on imposed teams is so mixed up. The team structure by itself is simply not the key to success; it is rather how much real creative authority is actually allowed. In other words, neither motivation nor innovation can be created by fiat! This is a key Strategic HR learning.

This brings us to the last quadrant, the upper right one, “Emergent Networks,” which are neither imposed nor hierarchical. The source of “Emergent Networks” is self-organizing processes, and their power and authority is distributed. Certainly, “Emergent Networks” have been around probably as long as there have been organizations, but they are the least studied and generate the most apprehension on the part of the traditional “Command and Control” hierarchy. In a sense this apprehension is warranted because such “Emergent Networks” represent a threat to the traditional way leaders (Deans) have thought businesses and institutions should be run - indeed they feel that they are “out of control”.

With the arrival, however of complex systems research and the concomitant interest in self-organization and emergence, “Emergent Networks” can now be better understood and can be seen to offer new possibilities for more adaptive organizational structures. Indeed, with the rapid rise of mergers and joint ventures, the real world has exceeded theory in regard to emergence. But, now the theory and research concerning emergence and innovation are there just waiting to be appropriated for our businesses and institutions. It is precisely spontaneously emerging Informal Leadership and Emergent Networks that contain the capacity for introducing those innovative structures and processes into system that are more adaptive to changing environments. So let’s explore further what exactly is involved with emergence in complex systems, and, then, how leaders can, instead of suppressing

them, learn to “ride these waves of emergence” toward more innovative and adaptive organizational structures.

## EMERGENCE IN COMPLEX SYSTEMS

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In contemporary complex systems research, emergence refers to the arising of global, higher level patterns (structures, order, and qualities) out of local interactions of lower-level system components. Emergence is what takes place during the process of self-organization. An example from an actual physical system is the emergent structure of hexagonally shaped convection cells arising in the Benard liquid when it reaches a critical temperature, a process of self-organization studied extensively by some scientists. One can well imagine looking down from above on the container holding the liquid when it is in this emergent state in any large chemical factory. These emergent hexagonal cells are after all a startling and unexpected occurrence if they are compared with the homogeneity observed in the system before the critical temperature threshold has been reached. They express an across-the-system coherence, a collective order decidedly not present among the lower level components before their emergence.

### Emergent Structures as Radical Innovations

We argue that, rather than the unpredictability associated with sensitive dependence on initial conditions found in chaotic systems, (like modern organisations) it is their emergence *per se* which presents the real challenges concerning unpredictability in complex systems. For whereas chaos can be captured in constrained regions of phase space by means of phase portraits of chaotic attractors (see Goldstein, “Map-makers, Explorers, and Tricksters...” in this volume), emergence represents a vastly greater set of possibilities of system behavior (albeit one that can still be understood in part using the construct of attractors). Thus, it seems to me that while chaos does bring with it certain conundrums to the idea of causality (for example Kellert, 1993), emergence presents a far greater test to causal inference because the emergent patterns have such a drastically different internal dynamic than can be ascertained from the components themselves. That is, emergence threatens our causal intuitions since it is so radically innovative.

### The Black Box of Emergence

The idea of emergence is not all that new and it pays to take a brief excursion to how it has been used in the past in order to better appreciate what new insights are being brought forth from current research. The term “emergence” seems to have been first coined in its more technical sense in the second half of the the Nineteenth Century by the philosopher Lewes (1875) to describe the arising of unexpected new qualities in a process. For example, the gaseous nature of oxygen and hydrogen leads one to expect that their combination in a chemical reaction would eventuate in another gas, so the liquid quality of water (H<sub>2</sub>O comes as a surprise - Lewes called this new liquid property an emergent property). This concept of emergence became one of the foundations of Emergent Evolutionism, a scientific and philosophical movement in the 1920’s and 1930’s which believed the idea of emergence could explain not only the discontinuities found between species that the theory of evolution

could supposedly not account for as well as for the radical distinction between such dichotomies as inorganic/organic, insentient/sentient, and so forth Emergent Evolutionism investigated emergent phenomena in terms of novelty, unpredictability, non-deducibility from lower level components in the system, as well its seemingly non-causal connection with pre-existing and lower level conditions.

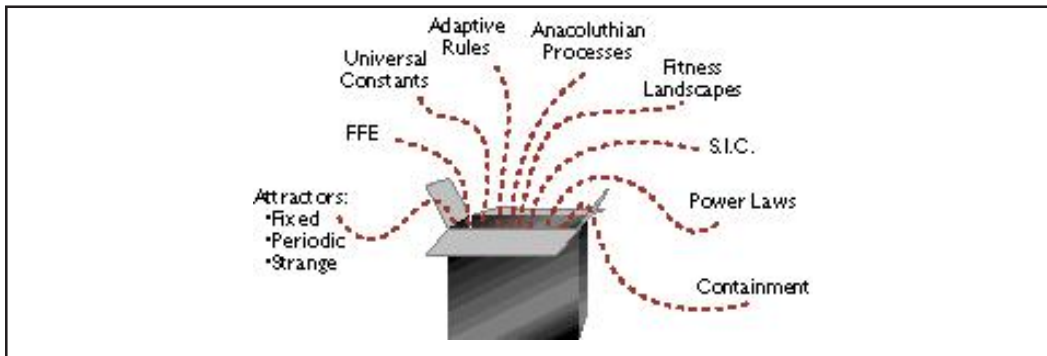
After the demise of Emergent Evolutionism in the nineteen thirties, the idea of emergence was perpetuated particularly among philosophers of biology (Polanyi, 1966) who employed the concept to buttress biological sciences against the attempt, on the part of extreme reductionists, to show that biological structures and processes could ultimately be reduced to the laws of physics alone. Similarly, the concept of emergence was utilized by the split-brain researcher Roger Sperry to speculate how mental states could be understood as having a “causal” or “determinative” influence on the physical substrate of the brain.

But although the idea of emergence was used in these previous contexts, what was perhaps lacking was an ability to look deeply into which systemic processes could bring about the radical novelty and unpredictability of emergent phenomena. In effect, in earlier theorizing the processes leading to emergence were hidden inside a “black box” which took inputs (lower level system components) and produced outputs (emergent phenomena) but what exactly went on inside the “black box” was opaque.

The early Emergent Evolutionists as well as the later anti-reductionistic biologists simply did not have access to what went on inside the black box. They could only surmise what kind of things must take place inside by observing in what ways the input could be so radically altered to partake of the properties characterizing the output. Of course, Roger Sperry and others did start peering into the black box of the emergence of mental states through their split-brain and other research, but that research was very specialized in the neurosciences and it, thereby, hardly suggests the kind of generalizations that would be needed for organizational practitioners to gain insight into the black box of organizational emergence.

### **Opening the Black Box of Emergence**

Of course, if the process of emergence remained a black box, emergent phenomena would not present the opportunity they are presenting leaders. Fortunately, contemporary research into emergence in self-organizing, complex systems is opening-up the black box and leaders can learn to utilize what is being found inside. The box is being opened by intensive study of emergence in cellular automata and Boolean networks by way of computer simulations, as well as by investigations into the mathematical dynamics of nonlinear systems helped by graphic displays of attractors by observing on a computer screen what changes in rules on lower levels leads to emergent patterns on higher levels. Like modern alchemists, Kauffman and other researchers in the area of complex, nonlinear systems could study the conditions and processes of transformation whereby emergence takes place. Indeed, a great deal is being revealed inside the black box of emergence.



**FIGURE 2: DIAGRAMMATIC DISPLAY**

Bringing the above debate and analogy to the complex organisational system with its matrix structure and perpetual change, we find that Strategic HR can as well operationalise the concept of emergence through counselling, mentoring and small group activity.

### **Anacoluthian Processes Consistent Inconsistency**

The term *Anacoluthian* comes from the term *Anacoluthon* (Greek for inconsistency in logic) that is used in grammar to refer to a sentence that starts out in one grammatical form and then ends in another, that is- inconsistent. An example of an anacoluthon is the sentence, “The sun looks so strong today are you going out swimming later?” The first phrase, “The sun looks so strong “today” is a declarative assertion, whereas the second phrase “are you going out swimming later?” is a question. Hence, the sentence is anacoluthian by both following one course of logic (of grammatical construction) but then switching to another one. “Anacoluthian,” then, is a term we are using to refer to any process which is consistently inconsistent (inconsistently consistent). Modern management systems and processes are engulfed with uncertainty and unless strategy is formulated and implemented properly, decisions under conditions of fuzziness will go haywire.

The question is then posed: with creativity and innovation being given so much importance, what does this have to do with emergence? First in the less important sense, as stated above, the novelty of emergent phenomena is both consistent and inconsistent in relation to the previous patterns in the system. In management we have cells that are multi-functional and interrelated and so similarities can be drawn with ease. Thus, the Bernard hexagonal convection cells are consistent with the previous and lower level components of the system since they are indeed currents of liquids, but they are inconsistent in bypassing in a sudden manner from the linear spread of heat found in gradual conduction of heat to the nonlinear dispersion of heat found in the convection currents of the hexagonal cells. Their consistent inconsistency results from the shift to a new attractor, occurs at the critical temperature (technically, a “bifurcation”). Indeed, we can say that the new attractor(s) is consistently inconsistent with the previous attractor(s) governing the system. The anacoluthian nature of this percolation is that the redundant patterns start operating according to dynamics that are not deducible from the lower level rules connecting the nodes. Thus, emergent phenomena are anacoluthian in being.

The anacoluthian nature of sexual reproduction leading to the possibility of emergent innovations in offspring is also aided by the presence of random mutations of genetic materials. Randomness is another source of novelty since two of the features of a truly innovative modification are both its unpredictable and unplanned characteristics. “Unpredictable” and “unplanned,” though, are equivalent to “random.” Anacoluthian processes therefore, include both the consistent inconsistency we have been discussing plus the impact of random effects on a system. To summarize, anacoluthian processes facilitate emergence by continuing, transgressing, and allowing for the influence of random events. Thereby, anacoluthian operations lead to the possibility for innovative and adaptive emergent patterns.

Another way of saying this is to realize that a creative, innovative, and unpredictable outcome requires processes that must be characterized as including elements of creativity, innovation and unpredictability. That is, a leader cannot come up with innovative organizational structures by processes that themselves neither partake of creative departures from the norm, nor merely continue past structures, nor must be planned and anticipated at each stage. If a leader wants to facilitate emergent adaptations, they must be willing to facilitate organizational processes that are anacoluthian and include elements of the random (see the use of organization “noise” in Goldstein, “Map-makers, Explorers, and Tricksters...” in the Resource Guide). As the saying goes, only the insane think they can produce a new outcome through doing the same old thing over and over again. Indeed when one takes a close look at what seems to work in supporting and engendering successful organizational change anacoluthian- like processes seem to be at work (Goldstein, 1994) mixing levels in the hierarchy; challenging currently held assumptions; looking at both content and process; amplifying differences, contrasts and incompatibilities; establishing new connections; taking the inside outside and bringing the outside inside (example Harley Davidson); following the plan and simultaneously being open to serendipitous random events.

### **Within Contained Fields Boundaries**

Understanding the human mind is akin to a black box situation. So a crucial factor being discovered inside the black box of emergence is that of contained fields or boundaries. In the human case these are set through perceptions, illusions and other subjective elements. Self-organizing processes take place within contained fields that keep the system intact and channel powerful nonlinear forces. In a sense, these fields act as boundaries providing a sense of closure to the emergent structures permitting these global patterns to go across the system. Moreover, the closure of boundaries is another way of talking about the coherence of the emergent structures. For example, in the Benard system in which the hexagonal convection cells are the emergent structures, the self-organizing processes occur within the boundaries of the container holding the liquid. In the case of organisations the logic remains the same.

But, it is not just self-organization and emergence in physical systems that demand boundaries; they are also a crucial, but neglected factor in emergent processes in electronic arrays. Hence when we transpose this logic into management of organisations - the importance of *bounded rationality*, explained at length in Sadri *et al* 2002 and Jayashree *et al*



2008. In terms of organizational emergence, boundaries as containment fields are also required. Such boundaries can be found in actual departmental and divisional demarcations and physical plant locations. But these boundaries can also be considered in terms of the written and unwritten guiding rules and principles and guidelines followed by the components of the system (people and technology).

An anacoluthian perspective also offers insight into how successful working groups and leaders can fight the very strong pressures toward group conformity which scores of experiments in social psychology have confirmed over and over again. Anacoluthian processes might include the strengthening of “minority” positions in an organization - for example, creative thinking and originality increases when a minority influence is allowed in a work group. Contrary to expectations, conflict in these groups did not increase although there was an increase in personal stress on the part of the minorities. Furthermore, Jackson, *et. al.* (1995) found that group heterogeneity in terms of a mix of personalities, gender, attitudes, and background of experience was positively related to the creativity and the decision-making effectiveness of teams. And, Bantel and Jackson (1989) found that innovation in the banking industry was positively associated with diversity in the experience of top management teams. Anacoluthian processes interrupt tendencies toward group conformity that is, changing the rules of interaction and then observing what emergent patterns emerge. Furthermore, leadership in emergent systems will need to be careful to distinguish “enslaved” conformist behavior and the coherence found in emergent behavior - indeed they may superficially appear the same. This is an area for much greater research and practice.

Furthermore, the anacoluthian processes needed the firm “boundaries” constituted by the leader’s and members emergent roles, the group’s sense of identity (what its specific distinctiveness is compared to other string quartets), the standards of excellence maintained by the members, and the unwritten rules guiding the emergent process of resolving conflict and going forward with the group’s effective playing. The leader, of course, has a crucial role to play in the maintenance of these firm boundaries, but such a role suggests a very different interpretation of leadership effectiveness than the past decade’s obsession with leadership “vision.” Indeed, one of the emergent hypotheses of this argument is that it is precisely attention to the process of working together, on the part of both the leader and the group members, that is a key component of the effectiveness of the emergent structure rather than a leader’s focus on the organization’s “vision.” Indeed, Peterson (1997) found that, instead of an emphasis on goals or “vision,” a leader’s attention to task group process was a more potent predictor of the quality of both group process and outcome (whereas outcome directiveness was associated with a much smaller and less coherent array of group outcomes). After all, the outcome of a “vision” is known only at the end of the group’s effort. The success of emergent leadership then is neither forcefulness of a “vision”, the eloquence of its articulation, or the charismatic way in which it is imparted. Rather, it rests in a leader working with a group and working with what emerges, although acting as a guide and channel.

### **Emergence and Adaptability**

Research into complex systems is demonstrating that emergent structures convey powerful advantages for a complex system, notably their potential adaptability to a drastically changing

environment. Moreover, it is the novelty of the emergent structures that provide the means for this improved adaptability. As the black box of emergence opens more and more yielding greater insight into how emergent structures come forth in self-organizing systems, leaders of our complex organizations will be able to gain greater confidence as to how to proceed in riding the waves of emergence pervading their workplaces. Of course, much of the black box remains opaque. In the meantime leaders have plenty to work with already as they enter a new territory of emergent organizational structures.

No argument, no matter how profound, is tenable without a theoretical basis, an empirical validation and a cogent structure. Indeed *theoretical underpinning* and *empirical validation* are the two pillars on which every scientific inquiry must rest. So important is former that Aldous Huxley, the famous British essayist once stated *without theory facts shall continue to fall on the plains of human ignorance*. In keeping with the highest traditions of academia, this discourse too predicates its prognosis on certain theoretical propositions, which have been empirically validated by research. This is necessary especially because every conceivable species of man has had something to say both on the topic of work as well as that on ethics. What he has to say forms the basis of his behaviour? Like all social processes when corporate behaviour is repeated it becomes a style and is consequently legitimized. (C.f. Habermas). Managerial Style also fits into a theoretical framework and this needs to be tested out. Without empirical validation any construct would remain in the realm of hypothesis and cannot form the basis of a theory. This is even so in the case of social science where most theories are empirically validated tendencies rather than watertight principles as in the case of the physical sciences. The mutable nature of reality, with which social science is concerned, dictates this difference (c.f. Durkheim).

## THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

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As is the tradition of social science, let us at the outset define our position unequivocally. Value is a *thought-based concept* whereas ethics is an *activity-based concept*. Whereas values are *intrinsic* to man ethics are the *manifested* behaviour. Whereas profit making is a necessary condition of being in business, when profit making becomes the sole aim of business, we find that the transition from the *feudal-mercantile trader* mode to the *innovative-creative-entrepreneurial* mode has not taken place. Ethics is conveniently placed on the back burner and reserved for after dinner speeches. Trumpet tooting and loud boasts at cocktails (probably when the speaker is sufficiently inebriated), are the occasions when ethics is debated. That is indeed sad.

Let it be made abundantly clear that the ethicality of corporate behaviour is the primary concern of *Business Ethics*. Management is concerned with the science of decision-making and the art of decision executing. In their daily business life, managers face ethical dilemmas. A dilemma exists when the manager is faced with conflicting or alternative choices of action. Reality is hardly ever clearly perceived in black and white. What exists is a vast gray area with several shades within it. The response of an executive to a managerial dilemma having an ethical connotation becomes the central concern of *Managerial Ethics*. The manager on the other hand has his own brand of ethics which he has picked up along the way and which sound conveniently close to what the manager actually thinks he does. This student

enters the real world of business with half-baked ideas of ethics and meets the manager with his half-baked ideas of values. What ensues would make Lewis Carroll's *mad tea party* look like a very orderly piece of business. This is because like the schoolteacher, the CEO too promotes a culture where *ends* matter and the *means* taking a back seat.

There is, in India, over the last twenty five years, a great deal of talk about ethics in various occupations but seldom do we come across speakers who define *what ethics is*. The basic position adopted in this discourse is akin to that taken in numerous co-authored works of Sadri and Jayashree. What this discourse attempts is to address the issue of work ethics as we witness the beginning of the new millennium. Literature is replete with examples where scholars have used the word *morality* and *ethics* interchangeably. The lecture theatres are full of academicians who come to speak of ethics from either a moralistic perspective or based on their personal normative beliefs. In addition, most often they disagree on the fundamentals since each of them is ruled by his heart rather than by his mind. The principle problem with persons speaking of ethics in India is threefold.

- (a) Some authors are so seeped in the past that they can only talk about either the Vedanta or the Christian Catechism or the Islamic doctrine or the Zoroastrian antiquity. They seek to draw parallels with the present day practices and are rather rigid in their beliefs leaving no room for dissent. They sermonize on the basis of historical constructs of a bygone culture. Those among this lot, who have intellectually degenerated further and/or have a historical agenda, become fundamentalists.
- (b) Others politicize the whole issue of ethics and end up pontificating and their message invariably is camouflaged as *my values for the rest of you*. Such is the bitter anachronism of fate that even bent politicians dare to speak of ethics. Indeed, there is talk of ethics even in the Bombay Stock Exchange. This is not an oxymoron, as S Jayashree (2005) argued, but a new albeit belated awakening. When fundamentalist beliefs take over and morality is preached from the pulpit as well as the presbytery (irrespective of the religion), the issue becomes a dangerous one. The priest, the pundit, the rabbi, the mullah and the dastoor, have a personal stake in preserving *status quo* since their livelihood depends on it. Hence, their version of morality is politically motivated, logically skewed and its acceptance must be tempered with restraint.
- (c) Yet, others reduce ethics to a list of dos and don'ts. They derive a code of conduct and having done so, act like petty bookkeepers that are more concerned with the letter of the rule rather than the spirit or the substance of it. Hence, to them ethical conduct is yet another company rule. Moreover, like all rules, as long as people think you follow them, it seems to be enough. Corporate governance is reduced to rule compliance. Perhaps this is what lies beneath the surface of the unending differences between the academia and the administration in Universities and Management Schools.

The distinction between morality and ethics, at one level, does not exist and another division is important though fine. The import of this statement must be gleaned. Academics like Dhun Dastoor see ethics as moral philosophy (c.f. *Fellowship Thesis*, 1995). Other scholars like this author go further and see ethics as being person specific, culture specific and context specific. Hence, whereas Dastoor restricts herself to examining the difference between

good and bad, right and wrong, while this author goes further and maintains that *the subjectivity is absolute only if it exists within bounded rationality*. Here this author's position is similar to that both Sadri and Chakraborty who maintain that *objective reality is just our subjective perception of it*.

The *soul-based philosopher* relies on a particular scripture or interpretations and variations thereof. The *mind-based philosopher* relies on the logic of choice in the face of a dilemma. The former is normative whereas the latter is positivist in approach. Morality lies within the domain of the former while ethics forms the concern of the latter. The distinction is very fine indeed. Soul based philosophers will take the cue from the scripture they follow and these differ. Does that mean that they are unclear about their terminology? This author does not think so. The lack of clarity comes only when ethics is replaced by morality and morality is restricted to either good or bad, right and wrong or conformity and non-conformity to some standard of behaviour.

Chakraborty, while being a logical analyst, successfully holds the flag of soul-based philosophy aloft and almost single-handedly so. He depends on the goodness of man and the Vedantic roots of Hindu culture for his prognosis. Others like Bonnerjee, are much thought provoking but appear somewhat caught up by their own dogma. Yet others like Ananta Giri have actually collated opinions and called it ethics for reasons that appear neither logical nor are they easy to comprehend. The other Indian authors on ethics who can be taken seriously belong to what we call the *soul based thought* and they are Theo Mathias and R C Sekhar. They deal with the trilogy of the *heart-soul-mind*, and predicate their prognosis on spiritualism. R C Sekhar (1997) for instance, posits an extremely erudite exposition of soul-based philosophy. This work falls in the same intellectual category as the work of Mathias or Bonnerjee who take a strong position. Subhash Sharma who brilliantly traverses the middle road can also be conveniently (though not accurately) bracketed with this train of thought since he cannot extricate himself from the moralistic framework. But his uniqueness makes him a class apart from Mathias and the rest, and at par with Chakraborty and Sadri while retaining his scientific temper.

In contradistinction, this author has always taken up the position from *mind-based thought*. She is concerned with the duality of the heart and the mind. Economics teaches us that in making a choice, an individual has to satisfy the *willingness* condition, which is the subjective condition, and satisfy the *ability* condition or the *objective* condition. When man makes a choice, he is consistent in that choice and makes it in such a way that his *utility function* is maximized, he is said to be acting rationally.

The manner of this reaction to an ethical dilemma, in turn, conditions the work ethic in the organization. Three positions in which a manager reacts can be summarized as being *Teleological, Deontological and Praxis*. These have been amply treated in available literature and we shall not go through with it here. Suffice it is to say that teleologist operates in a consequential mode, the deontologist operates in a non-consequential mode and the praxis manager operates in the acceptance mode. What this discourse posits is that managerial beliefs, values and ethics for the basis of managerial behaviour and any behaviour repeated over a period become a style.

## THE MANAGERIAL STYLE

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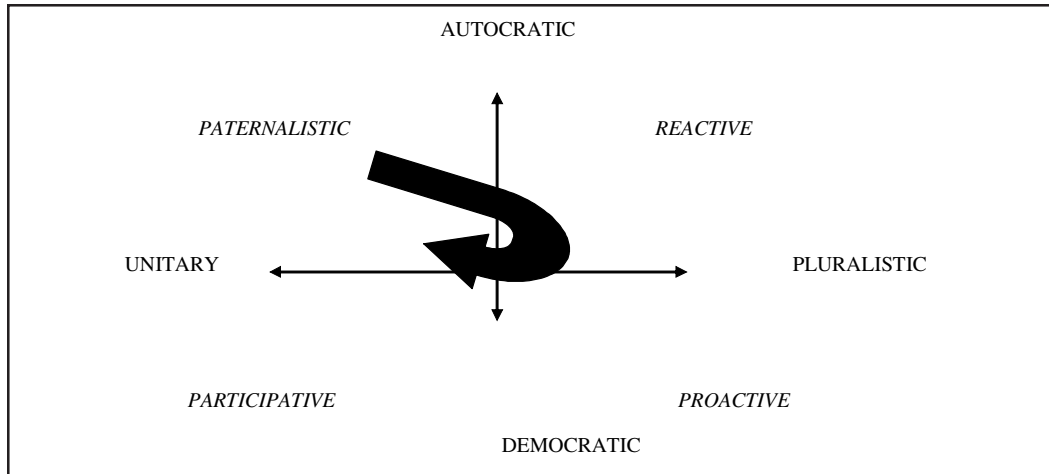
The managerial style is a product of managerial belief systems and its ethics. The social as well as work ethic is determined by how management behaves. And any behaviour when repeated becomes a style. How Managements behave and why they do so has been at the heart of all inquiries. This has been so ever since Adam Smith wrote his *magnum opus* in 1757 and Frederick Taylor posited his version of Scientific Management at the turn of the present century. At the London School of Economics and Political Science, Sorab Sadri (1977) posited a model for measuring the health of an Industrial Relations System. In 1988 Sadri and Williamson tested this model (with the help of postgraduate students) over five countries and examined large corporations having a workforce of at least 1000 men on rolls on an average day during a particular year. In 1990 Sadri and Lukose tested this model for a single country, and found that the model was equally valid for large corporations as it was for macroeconomics traits of a country. In 1991 Carlos Rodrigues Linara examined the Education Sector of Hong Kong and found that the original Sadri model held true. Critics in the academia contended in 1991 that the model might not be valid for small-scale industry of India. They were probably correct.

Small-scale industry was certainly not within the ambit of reference in the original prognosis. Consequently, this author from NITIE between 1992 and 1994 studied the issues and they were empirically validated in Southern India through a monitored and extended research. It undertook an examination of Sadri's 1977 methodology of auditing industrial relations in the context of small-scale industry of three states in Southern India - Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Sadri's original prognosis was concerned with only large-scale industry, which had a discernible corporate culture. Jayashree assumed that the *Industrial Relations Styles* of the original model could be converted into *Managerial Styles* without much trouble and without vitiating the *raison d'être* of the original prognosis.

An important clarification is in order. Not for a moment is it implied that all family owned businesses are autocratic and all publicly owned businesses are democratic. Nor does the author imply that power in the private sector is unitary and power in the public sector is pluralistic in character. In fact, it has been observed that many of the family owned businesses were more progressive than the so-called publicly owned businesses in the State Sector. Many students who ape their ill-informed mentors often and erroneously make such a generalized assumption. In fact, it has been found that family owned businesses like Godrej and Tata are highly democratic whereas even some publicly owned Management Institutes like NITIE have highly autocratic types of leadership. Power location similarly is found to be unitarist in many high tech software firms while it is found to be pluralistic in BHEL as well as in several units of SAIL. Management as the representatives of the owners of capital *ipso facto* have a vested class interest in perpetuating the inequality alluded to earlier in this chapter. Hence, it has an ideological motive as well as an economic motive to act in the manner that it does. This ideological motive forces managerial action to retain *status quo* even when *stability* degenerates into *inertia*.

The original work of Sadri had emphasized that no management is wholly unitarist or pluralistic, nor is it possible to have a wholly autocratic or democratic management. Hence,

these terms merely signify a tendency towards the direction described by the definition, arrived at by observing past management behaviour and present (stated and unstated) objectives. This combination of managerial assumption and controls, they posit, give rise to the matrix, given below, which depicts four possible styles of Industrial Relations Management.



**FIGURE 3: LEADERSHIP STYLES**

The original model borrowed the continuum along the vertical axis from Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. The continuum along the horizontal axis was adopted from Alan Fox's seminal work. A combination of the polarities produced a style. It is the contention of the author that these Industrial Relations Styles could also be used to describe Human Resource Management Styles.

The style mentioned in each quartile also reflects the level of managerial maturity within an organization. In other words as a management matures it moves from the first quartile on to the second and thence to the third *en route* to the fourth. Contrary evidence also exists to support the view that many organizations unable to withstand the pressures of change regressed from quartile three to quartile two and ensconced themselves in the familiarity of quartile one. Such was the dynamism in the small-scale industries sector.

## **EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM SOUTHERN INDIA**

A scientific prognosis is unless it can be empirically validated and this was taken up by the Jayashree study whose findings (with permission) are reproduced here. Any business concern that employed more than 5 and less than 100 employees was taken as a small-scale industry. Names of concerns were taken from the local offices of the Registrar of Companies in Bangalore, Hyderabad and Tiruvananthapuram. No names will be disclosed as the interviews were conducted on the tacit understanding that anonymity will be ensured. A sample of ninety small-scale industries chosen at random from the three Southern States formed the basis of the empirical examination. The purpose was to show that the Sadri Model (1977) developed originally for a core capitalist economy was equally valid in a peripheral capitalist

economy of a retarded variety as well. In addition, on the strength of the empirical evidence the author advises HRM experts to consider adopting this methodology in their organizations as well. It is simple but not simplistic. It is indicative but can be used for forecasting reactions as well.

In the small-scale sector a manager is known to perform many varied functions and Industrial Relations is just one of them. This author admits that it would be dangerous to generalize, there from, without committing the *fallacy of composition* (when what is true for a part is taken to be true for the whole). Hence, she retains the specificity of our findings. In the small-scale sector it must be noted that Human Resources Management is restricted to two activities: General Administration including Pay Roll, and Industrial Relations including Statutory Compliance. Her study examined the latter directly and the former indirectly.

The aforementioned studies assumed that the function of industrial relations is to anticipate and regulate conflicts and aid the parties in achieving their set objectives. Industrial Relations Audit becomes an ongoing exercise in a free market economy. This does not *ipso facto* assume that all conflict is endemic and must be contained. (c.f. Hyman). It only assumes that all conflict, which hinders the achievement of corporate objectives, must be anticipated and regulated by industrial relations. Some theorists justifiably go to the extent of stating that conflict arises out of change, is a proof of dynamism and hence must be welcomed. This is indeed an extreme view but has great merit: it prevents stability from becoming inertia as has been witnessed in the Public Sector of Indian industry, either in the primary, secondary or the tertiary sectors. The result of this is that there is little or no real value addition arising out of managerial action. What in fact happens is that management perceives that their action will lead to the realization of their objectives and thereby add value *ipso facto*. Since the objectives are those of a mercantilist-trader-businessman, the perception of value addition is flawed and real progress is vitiated. The inevitable result is that we have organizational paralysis with all the symptoms of *development-less-growth*, which is a typical feature of the third world. A brief examination of each style would be in order since that would indicate what kind of work ethic would devolve from it.

1. **Paternalistic Style:** This might be described as benevolent despotism and is normally associated with an absence of union recognition, (although not necessarily in absence of union members). Management (or owners of capital) takes the initiative and the terms and conditions of employment reflect the general concern for the well being of the employees with the added advantage that the company normally creates a favourable position for blood-relatives or cast-brethren of those who hold power. Discrimination abounds and people are promoted or given benefits on the basis of who they are, they know rather than what they can do or how they know whom they know. This author's investigation revealed that village affinity, caste bias and political positioning of management accentuated the Paternalistic style. In the plantations of Kerala for instance this was very much in evidence.
2. **Reactive Style:** In this kind of scenario, unions or the workers generally take the initiative and management mounts a series of rear guard actions designed to preserve what is magically "the right to manage". (c.f. Hyman). The approach to negotiations is on a "win/loose" basis and this philosophy might be described as "fire fighting". The concept

of an industrial relations audit would be somewhat alien to this culture despite the situation in fact demanding it. Management and unions operate on a win-loose basis and terms such as “us” and “them” are common parlance for both the owners of capital and the owners of labour power. This author’s investigation reveals that the reactive style was adopted not so much in respect of the actions of workers themselves. However, the environment in which the company functioned for example the PWG in the locality, the interest of the MP or the MLA, determined the style. So too the state government policy regarding particular industry for example small machine shops in Karnataka and Bidi plantations in Andhra Pradesh.

3. *Proactive Style:* This might also be called the predictive style where management accepts conflict but regards this as having virtues providing it is channelled in constructive directions. This type of organization is generally sophisticated in its approach believing in a forward-looking philosophy, which is generally associated with a clearly defined corporate policy. Negotiations are on a basis where the aim is for all parties to optimize their varying interests. This sort of philosophy might be called “fire prevention” that is where the Management and Unions arrive at an equilibrium saddle-point. In the case of small scale industry, management which takes the workers into confidence before affecting a policy would fall into this category. This author’s investigation revealed that the Proactive style was more prevalent in cases where the workers were skilled craftsmen as in small machine shops of Karnataka or where the manager was an educationally qualified person as in Kerala.
4. *Participative Style:* In this approach there is a commonality of purpose based on open and joint management. This should not be confused with participative mechanisms such as Works Councils or Elected Employee Directors, which may simply reflect political expediency rather than a true participative philosophy. In reality very few organizations will be found in this sector due to the difficulty of achieving a common purpose within the organization. In the small-scale sector this would be closer to co-operative societies irrespective of whether they belonged to producers or consumers. This author’s investigation revealed that co-operative societies especially in Kerala fit the description best. In The Case Of Andhra Pradesh, especially where it shares its borders with Tamil Nadu the level of consciousness was found rather low.

To a positivist political economist like Sorab Sadri, Industrial Relations are nothing but the behavioural aspect of the Micro Economic Production Function. Will it then not be fair to suggest that these styles depict managerial behaviour towards capital and labour? Moreover, is that not what HRM is all about anyway? Personnel Management as a concept has been criticized at length and the Sadri - Dastoor (1992) discourse had read the funeral rites for the orthodox view of Personnel Management. We could easily wish it away or see it in its new avatar as Human Resources Administration.

This author concedes that the sample was biased. It is also conceded that only the owners and few of the employees were interviewed. But the analysis can be well defended on the grounds that within the given limitations and the specificity, the contentions are valid.



In the small-scale industries studied it was found that family owned concerns of feudalistic structures where exploitation of human labour was the norm, the management operated along Paternalistic lines as in the case of the Palm-oil and Bidi Plantations. In exchange for freedom, labour was guaranteed employment and a minimal welfare for the families. With a disequibrated labour market and an uncertain employment position the exploited labour force welcomed this. Sadri had found that even in 1997-98 a stainless steel cold rolling mill in Navi Mumbai operated under a crass exploitative top management. In contradistinction thereof, this author had found that the managerial style was reactionary in concerns where the top management was involved in day to day production. This was in machine tool component manufacturing where the level of workers was that of a skilled craftsman with a minimal educational background. Here labour exploitation was overt. Workers knew their rights and also how to exercise them. However, lack of alternative employment prevented them from making too much “noise” when the management became over exploitative. In the case of business where there was some amount of bureaucracy and discourse work such as small computer companies, the management followed a proactive style of management. The level of deceit and exploitation was no longer overt but covert. In the case of co-operative societies either of the producers or the consumers the style of management was participative. Power was shared to an extent and decisions were jointly taken. This was because there was a sense of belonging among the participants in the decision making process.

It would indeed be interesting to see where companies in the Middle East or in Japan fit into the typology presented earlier and tested yet again herein. Whereas these were mere tendencies there is no doubt that an absolute categorization is foolhardy. This discourse opines that the original 1997 model within certain parameters is found to be valid in the Indian small-scale industry sector as well. Hence, it is a useful instrument to be used by the HRM expert in organizational diagnosis. Nothing more is claimed by this author. Cognitive learning is important for managerial scientists, not so much for managers, who need to understand more *theories in action*, to quote Pareek, Rao and Pestonjee (1996). In this discourse empirical evidence was used to validate a model of Managerial Styles. How Management behaves conditions the basis of the work ethic and here the role of the chief executive comes to the fore. The final part of the discourse will examine the futuristic role of the chief executive from a kind of objectivity alluded to by Chris Frost (1998). This is because an examination of values beliefs and ethics led to a study of styles and this in turn devolved into the kind of ethical practices that will be visible in the years to come.

## **EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM GREATER MUMBAI**

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Generalization in any research is foolhardy but based on trends we can postulate certain probable characteristics. The study in Southern India was replicated using postgraduate management students in Mumbai. The target regions of Greater Mumbai geophysically were SEEPZ and companies in and around Borivali- Santa Cruz area on the one hand and SMEs in the Thane Belapur belt on the other. In all 40 private sector companies were studied and the tabulated results are given below. The type of company indicates whether it is a manufacturing company, IT Company, banking company and such like. The type of

ownership indicates whether it is first generation entrepreneur or second generation inheritance or a third generation recipient of the company's command. Top management perception depended mainly on how HR Managers and senior managers viewed their style (without naming it as such). Employee perception depended on first line supervisors and those below in rank perceived the managerial style. It was this author's deification of the style based on the responses generated from the respondents by the student interviewees between 1998 and 2003. The research was supervised and monitored thoroughly by this author. Out of the 40 companies studied students managed to get at least 2 interviews from each company at the top and senior management levels and at least 6 interviews from each company at the level of the first line supervisor and those below in rank. In all there were 115 valid responses for the top management perception and 364 responses in the employee perception category. Based on these responses the tabulation has been done below.

The description of paternalistic, reactive, proactive and participative styles remained as before (as defined in the initial 1977 study in UK) and no redefinition of the paradigm was either found necessary or attempted. Numbers given in parenthesis show the number of organizations in each category that were surveyed by the team. The study was conducted in three stages keeping the 40 companies constant. Each stage of study was conducted by separate team of investigators and all of these teams worked independently. In the first stage managerial styles were studied. In the second stage perception of selected ethical norms were studied and in the third stage using the Sadri (1991) questionnaire, the mode of ethical conduct of management was ascertained.

**TABLE 1: PERCEPTION OF MANAGEMENT STYLE**

Type of Company	Type of Ownership	Top Mgmt. Perception	Employee's Perception
Manufacturing	First Generation (2)	Participative	Reactive
	Second generation (5)	Proactive	Paternalistic
	Third generation (5)	Proactive	Reactive
Processing	First generation (2)	Participative	Reactive
	Second generation (3)	Participative	Paternalistic
Software Techno	Second generation (7)	Proactive	Reactive
	5 Star Hotels	Third generation (2)	Proactive
Chemical Labs	First generation (1)	Participative	Reactive
	Second generation (1)	Participative	Paternalistic
Packaging	First generation (1)	Proactive	Reactive
	Second generation (2)	Proactive	Paternalistic
Electronics	First generation (1)	Proactive	Reactive
	Second generation (2)	Participative	Paternalistic
Pharmaceutical	Third generation (4)	Proactive	Paternalistic
	Third generation (2)	Proactive	Reactive

The main thing that was observed in the first stage of this study is that “the managerial style” was perceived differently by the top management and by the employees. To the investigator’s surprise there appeared a discernible trend of perception. In the first generation owned enterprises employees viewed all managements as being reactive. All second generation owned enterprises were paternalistic in the eyes of the employees. This shows that the mind set of the modern entrepreneur has changed for the better and that older company tended to be more paternalistic probably because the old guard still held sway. One feature that stood out was that transparency among first generation owned enterprises was higher than elsewhere. This supported the author’s above contention considerably. The above data clearly shows that OD intervention is called for so that employee perception and managerial behaviour changes. If not the future seems to be a little less positive than one could have hoped. They say old habits die hard and bad habits die harder so the task of OD intervention becomes all the more difficult. Then comes the second stage where perception regarding three ethical factors was elicited. On the employee perception of three factors transparency, fairness and honesty on the part of top management the scores given by the respondents were averaged out and are presented below. The well known five point Likert scale was used to record responses and 5 were considered high and 1 was considered low. So if top management in an SME scores 5 then it was perceived as being highly transparent, fair and honest.

**TABLE 2: IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO**

Type of Company	Type of Ownership	Transparency	Fairness	Honesty
Manufacturing	First Generation (2)	4	4	4
	Second generation (5)	2	3	3
	Third generation (5)	1	2	2
Processing	First generation (2)	3	3	3
	Second generation (3)	2	2	2
Software Tech	Second generation (7)	2	4	3
5 Star Hotels	Third generation (2)	2	3	3
Chemical Lab	First generation (1)	5	4	5
	Second generation (2)	2	3	3
Packaging	First generation (1)	5	4	3
	Second generation (3)	2	2	2
Electronics	First generation (1)	3	5	4
	Second generation (2)	2	3	4
	Third generation (4)	2	3	3

Thereafter the study looked at the perceived ethical mode in which top management behaved. The perception of employees was taken since it had been established in the first stage of the study itself that there was a variance in perception between management and employees in respect of objective social reality on the work place. The teleological mode stood for consequentialists who asked either (a) what is in it for me? or (b) will it be for the greater good? The deontological mode stood for non-consequentialists who held either (a)

that some things are right or wrong irrespective of the situation or the personae involved or (b) when a moral issue is at stake the minority of one is enough to make a difference. The praxis mode stood for those who operated in the acceptance frame. They held that if their decision was discussed publicly and openly (within limits) it was ethical. It was argued in earlier works of this author that the preponderance of managers opting for the praxis mode showed that people were scared to stand up and be counted, wanted to please those in power and thus it breeds mediocrity.

The table given below gives a very good idea of the ethical disposition of the senior management in the SMEs of Greater Mumbai that this inquiry was concerned with. For each mode of ethical conduct *the 5 point Likert scale was used to evaluate responses and these were averaged out and rounded off as was done with other data.*

**TABLE 3: PREDOMINANT ETHICAL MODE**

Type of Company	Type of Ownership	Teleological	Deontological	Praxis
Manufacturing	First Generation (2)	4	3	1
	Second generation (5)	2	3	4
	Third generation (5)	1	4	2
Processing	First generation (2)	4	3	2
	Second generation (3)	3	3	3
Software Tech	Second generation (7)	3	4	5
5 Star Hotels	Third generation (2)	3	4	5
Chemical Lab	First generation (1)	4	3	2
	Second generation (2)	3	3	4
Packaging	First generation (1)	4	3	2
	Second generation (3)	3	3	5
Electronics	First generation (1)	4	3	3
	Second generation (2)	2	2	3
	Third generation (4)	2	4	3

## MANAGERIAL ETHICS IN THE FUTURE

There is little doubt that the organisational leadership in the future must be well anchored in business ethics and corporate governance. Corporate Leadership arises out of and determines the nature of the managerial ethic. Hence, no examination of the ethic is complete without an examination of the corporate leadership. Hence this discourse examined managerial styles before examining managerial ethics.

The post 2005 new WTO regime has brought along with it new global alignments and trade rules, a new set of modalities for business has emerged. We can name a few: (i) Business have per force become transnational. The boundary less universe has emerged, and an era of concurrent collapse has been ushered in. (ii) the pace of change is non linear, non Newtonian and non incremental. New power brokers have emerged and teamwork has

gained ascendancy. (iii) The issue of moral hazard has raised its ugly head when state guarantees were no longer adequate safeguards of investment. (iv) The myth of the technological competitive edge has been exploded. Effects of all managerial decisions are seen in terms of long term growth and stability, and, the effect it has at the point of production or at the point of sale. (v) The product profile has changed whereby there is a marked preponderance of the knowledge component over the erstwhile raw material component. (vi) Dependent economies along the periphery of the capitalist world economy found that their growth was not the same as development and their infrastructures were fragile and dependent.

To begin with top management must be perceived as being more honest, fair and transparent than at present. This calls for holistic OD intervention to change employee mindset and employer behaviour to conform to it. The effect of these modalities on organizational behavior is twofold. Organizations are going through a kind of Corporate Olympiad, a massive change of corporate focus in line with the market scenario, where only the fittest can survive. There is a felt need for creative definition of functions and structures, wherein the approach to organization must be geared towards a culture and style transformation as well as be zero based. The *doing* executive of the 1950s and 1960s became the *learning* executive of the 1970s and 1980s. The 1990s beckoned the age of the *thinking* executive. It was no longer enough for the corporate leader to be *activity based* but to combine it with being *thought based*. The leader's paradigms had to be flexible, proactive, pioneering, holistic and global. Re engineering, which was a fad of the 1990s no longer, gave the desired results. Organizations were no longer satisfied with *product leadership*; they needed to have *competence* by competition for *opportunity share*. It was not enough *allocate and utilize* to resources optimally but to *accumulate* them for *strategic leverage*. The *knowledge worker* had come to stay and his loyalty was only to technology. Once he found that his technological base was not being expanded, he would quit. Hence, policies had to be designed to *stretch* along with changes in the environment rather than fit into a particular construct. In addition, all this was expected of the corporate leader who will take the organization into a better tomorrow with a new work ethic. *Optimality* was no longer the corporate mantra. It was replaced by *maximization* and big is beautiful has come to be accepted.

To begin with, let us see what the organization expects of the leader in the future. Some of the key characteristics that emerged when the question was posed to managers by another XLRI - NITIE research conducted in Western India were: (a) Leader is to help perpetuate history and yet bring about change. (b) Adapt the character of the corporate management to the needs placed upon the organization by the environment. (c) Keep faith and uphold key commitments so that at no point is his credibility questioned. (d) Maintain a healthy tension between tradition and change. (e) Make a lasting impact on the organization, and in turn the market. When one was to examine this list a mite more closely, one would find there is a kind of causal link from point (a) to point (e). In order to predicate the views of this discourse, certain key terms need to be properly defined. Hence, this discourse must take issue with the *nature of corporate leadership* itself.

Clearly, the first task of the leader must first of all work towards gaining acceptance. Once that has been achieved, the rest can follow. However, this may not be easy. Vested interests

will be keen to scuttle progress for the sake of individual security. The structure of the organization is most often the first thing a leader examines. By *structure* is meant the distribution along various lines, of people among social positions that influence role relations between the incumbents. One of the biggest hurdles to overcome is that while organizational structures are constructed along concentric lines (for greater effectiveness), the incumbents (managers and workers) still think and act as if the organizational structure is built along hierarchical/ pyramidal lines. To achieve long lasting results the leader must change this attitude, unambiguously define his position and consistently walk his talk.

Given the capitalist nature of most developing economies today could the above views not be universalized? If so, what sort of HRM intervention is needed to address this anomaly? Therein lies the key to improving the work ethic: *to convert competition into cooperation for sustained development*. What is called for is an ongoing ethics audit. An *Ethics Audit* is a practice of regular assessment of employee behavior so as to identify incidents of dubious (questionable) behavior. Here two systems can operate. Anyone can complain about anyone to an Ethics Manager. Where everyone is his brothers' keeper and is duty bound to complain, correct, and guide anyone who may be seen as falling out of line with corporate norms of conduct.

Research conducted between 1995 and 2005 by this author has revalidated our 1999 contention and it can be thus summarized. (a) Managers operating in the Consequential Mode are usually opportunists and carpetbaggers. Very often they do well in life. (b) Managers operating in the Acceptance Mode are usually insecure, seek peer approval and promote mediocrity. Very often they live behind a facade. (c) Managers operating in the Non Consequential Mode are the trailblazers, history makers and true leaders. Most often they are the ones who make the difference.

An atmosphere that promotes creativity and innovation clearly allows trail blazers to flourish. Moreover, it is here that the OD facilitator must take his cue in formulating the intervention needed so that a work culture emanates and enables the organization to thrive on the cutting edge of global competition. There is little doubt that next to God if man should fear anything then it is History. For, when history passes judgement it is most unforgiving. Every person like every country makes his own history but does so under definite conditions over which he has little control. What kind of history would you like to be a part of? Are we perpetuating a culture of mediocrity in the name of conformity? Each of us has to make his own decision, walk his talk and stand up to be counted. What will your decision be? If meritocracy is indeed to replace mediocrity then we really have no other choice but to make ethical management a passion. This has to be both willed and desired if the organisation has to thrive on the cutting edge of competition by enhancing its pursuit of excellence and sustainability.

## **ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE POST WTO ERA**

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Corporate Leadership arises out of and determines the nature of the work ethic. Hence, no examination of the work ethic is complete without an examination of the corporate leadership. Along with new global alignments and trade rules, a new set of modalities for business have emerged. To name a few:

- Business has per force become transnational. The boundary less universe has emerged, and an era of concurrent collapse has been ushered in.
- The pace of change is non linear, non Newtonian and non incremental. New power brokers have emerged and teamwork has gained ascendancy.
- The issue of moral hazard has raised its ugly head when state guarantees were no longer adequate safeguards of investment.
- The myth of the technological competitive edge has been exploded. Effects of all managerial decisions are seen
  - a) In terms of long term growth and stability, and,
  - b) The effect it has at the point of production or at the point of sale.
- The product profile has changed whereby there is a marked preponderance of the knowledge component over the erstwhile raw material component.
- Dependent economies along the periphery of the capitalist world economy found that their growth was immiserised and their infrastructures were fragile and dependent.

The effect of these modalities on organizational behaviour is two fold. Organizations are going through a kind of Corporate Olympiad, a massive change of corporate focus in line with the market scenario, where only the fittest can survive. There is a felt need for creative definition of functions and structures, wherein the approach to organization must be geared towards a culture and style transformation as well as be zero based. The *doing* executive of the 1950s and 1960s became the *learning* executive of the 1970s and 1980s. The 1990s beckoned the age of the *thinking* executive. It was no longer enough for the corporate leader to be *activity based* but to combine it with being *thought based*. The leader's paradigms had to be flexible, proactive, pioneering, holistic and global. Re engineering which was a fad of the 1990s no longer gave the desired results. Organizations were no longer satisfied with *product leadership*; they needed to have *competence* by competition for *opportunity share*. (Both Michael Porter's Diamond and the B.C.G. Matrix were more descriptive than predictive and consequently had become old hat.) It was not enough *allocate and utilize* to resources optimally but to *accumulate* them for *strategic leverage*. The *knowledge worker* had come to stay and his loyalty was only to technology. Once he found that his technological base was not being expanded, he would quit. Hence, policies had to be designed to *stretch* along with changes in the environment rather than fit into a particular construct. In addition, all this was expected of the corporate leader who will take the organization into a better tomorrow with a new work ethic.

To begin with, let us see what the organization expects of the leader in the future. Some of the key characteristics which emerged when the question was posed to managers by another XLRI - NITIE research conducted in Western India (1993 - 1995) were:

- i. The leader is to help perpetuate history and yet bring about change.
- ii. Adapt the character of the corporate management to the needs placed upon the organization by the environment.

- iii. Keep faith and uphold key commitments so that at no point is his credibility questioned.
- iv. Maintain a healthy tension between tradition and change.
- v. Make a lasting impact on the organization, and in turn the market.

When one were to examine this list a mite more closely, one would find there is a kind of causal link from point (i) to point (v).

In order to predicate the views of this argument, certain key terms need to be properly defined. Hence, we must take issue with the *nature of emergent corporate leadership* itself.

Clearly, the first task of the leader must be to work towards gaining acceptance. Once that has been achieved, the rest can follow. However, this may not be easy. Vested interests will be keen to scuttle progress for the sake of individual security. The structure of the organization is most often the first thing a leader examines. By *structure* is meant the distribution along various lines, of people among social positions which influence role relations between the incumbents. One of the biggest hurdles to overcome is that while organizational structures are constructed along concentric lines (for greater effectiveness), the incumbents (managers and workers) still think and act as if the organizational structure is built along hierarchical/pyramidal lines. To achieve long lasting results the leader must change this attitude.

To bring about a change in attitude, the organization's *mission* and *purpose* must be clearly defined. If one does not know where one is going, one cannot be lost. Unfortunately this fits the description of most traditional organizations in India beautifully, which can help an organization to link its activities to the needs of society and legitimize its existence. By *purpose* is meant statement of intent; of what an organization strives for and sets the objectives, goals, policies and plans accordingly.

An *objective* is a close-ended attribute, which is precise and can be expressed, in specific terms of quantity, quality cost and time. If not, progress would become hard to measure. The objective in turn springs from a *goal*, which is an open-ended attribute denoting a future state or outcome than organization strives for. To actualize an objective the leader needs to clearly *define* the policy, the procedure, the rules and the plans.

The organization's *policy* is a guideline to action. *Procedures* are a series of tasks or steps expressed in a chronological order. Rules are prescribed courses of action which explicitly state what is to be done under a given set of circumstances. The rules could, of course, be either substantive or procedural. And these rules, procedures and policies are to be geared towards achieving the objective of the organization. It is the task of the leader to define the goal and role of each aspect/function within the organization so that there is clarity and non ambiguity. This would facilitate the appreciation and understanding that will help fulfil the mission born out of the vision of the organization. To summarize, the organization leader is one who articulates the vision and mission of the organization, brings about goal and role clarity and *facilitates* the achievement of the objectives through teamwork. The leader builds the team, nurtures it and proactively leads it in order to achieve the organization's objectives. However, leadership has to be focused, benchmarked and accountable above all else. The leader needs to carry his team along with him and for that,



he needs to build trust relations, make decision processes transparent and foster teamwork. He can do so only if he walks his talk. Three factors that will be crucial in the years to come are *core values, an entrepreneurial spirit* and *corporate governance*.

This point was not lost on Sir Adrian Cadbury who in an interview in late 1996 stated:

In India I think one has to focus on opening up the system. I would not try, for example, to control transactions a company is entering into. I would rather try and establish a scenario where more information on that transaction is available to shareholders and the press. The need is for all deals that companies make with others and within themselves to be transparent.

In the same interview, he went on to say that:

What is important is that there should be clarity of responsibility between the board and the management. Often there is confusion about precise responsibilities. There has to be a clear line between the tasks of the board and management as to who plans and manages and who executes the plans.

Obviously, Cadbury's concept of governance is different from the *Inspection House* of Bentham. For Cadbury, quality is built into the system and not inspected at the end of the process or product line. Hence, to him good governance is crucial to good management. Most corporate leaders today recognize this. Corporate governance without business ethics is reduced to compliance and business ethics without corporate governance is nothing but wishful thinking. C K Prahalad's concept of the *fortune at the bottom of the pyramid* notwithstanding, authority flows downwards and so the precise position adopted by top management will determine the kind of ideology and the concomitant work ethic. History demonstrates and research supports the fact that:

- Managers operating in the Consequential Mode are usually opportunists and carpetbaggers. Very often they do well in life.
- Managers operating in the Acceptance Mode are usually insecure, seek peer approval and promote mediocrity. Very often they live behind a facade.
- Managers operating in the Non Consequential Mode are the trailblazers, history makers and true leaders. Most often they are the ones who make the difference.

In which mode does top management operate? What is the kind of work environment created to facilitate top management efforts? An atmosphere that promotes creativity and innovation clearly allows trail blazers to flourish. Moreover, it is here that the HRM facilitator must take his cue in formulating the intervention needed so that a work culture emanates and enables the organization to thrive on the cutting edge of global competition. There is little doubt that next to God if man should fear anything then it is History. For, when history passes judgement it is most unforgiving. Every person like every country makes his own history but does so under definite conditions over which he has little control. What kind of history would you like to be a part of? Are we perpetuating a culture of mediocrity in the name of conformity? Each of us has to make his own decision, walk his talk and stand up to be counted. What will your decision be? What kind of a work ethic will your HRM intervention produce? That is the important question we must, as professionals, address to

ourselves if we are to help India move into the new millennium from a position of strength. If meritocracy is indeed to replace mediocrity then we really have no other choice but to make ethical management a passion to be relentlessly pursued by the emergent leadership.

Therefore, the emergent leader must be a visionary as well as a achiever. His policies and practices must be value based and value driven at the same time. This will result in business ethics working in consonance with and in support of corporate governance. This symbiotic relation will enable an organisation to approximate excellence which has to be transformed into business sustainability. The task for emergent leadership is thus cut out well in advance and strategic HR interventions must enable this to be actualised.

**Everest analysis:** A close analysis of the Everest fiasco gives a deep insight into the dynamics of serious organisational failures. It further accentuates the impact of a leader's beliefs and actions on others in the team. In addition it demonstrates how high-stake decisions impact the performance of the team and why leaders must take into account past experiences while making decisions. The Everest debacle also brings to fore the issue of managing competing pressures at workplace. In today's competitive corporate landscape the work demands are heavy and hence leaders often find them caught among conflicting perspectives and interests. The ability of a leader to dodge the dilemma and successfully come out of it determines a leader's success in the organisation.

**Gigantic issues:** Having understood the basic reasons for the Everest tragedy and how these reasons hold well even in an organisational setup, leaders need to acknowledge the key issues that halt the process of growth and push them in a downward spiral. According Michael Roberto, there are three basic issues that need to be addressed from an organisational point of view: (i) Competing work issues and striking the right balance between them (ii) Sculpting beliefs and perceptions of employees and (iii) Developing a learner's attitude to failure

*Competing work forces* ensure that Leaders need to understand that at any given point there are a number competing forces at work. Thus they need to master the art of balancing these forces. For instance, nurturing the right amount of confidence, encouraging dissent and expressing commitment are few issues that occasionally pose threats to workplace harmony. Thus, like in the case of the Everest tragedy, an imbalance between overconfidence and underconfidence of a few group members led to a few members losing their lives. Similarly in a corporate work scenario too, a gross mismatch between the confidence levels of team members can result in a functional fiasco.

Secondly, leaders also need to strike the right balance between encouraging dissent by way of constructive criticism and discouraging it when it acts like a dampener. In the case of the expedition, there was little encouragement for contradictory views and hence the trek was undertaken despite being a bad weather day. Finally, leaders must also guard against the practice of over-commitment from their subordinates. Over-commitment sabotages the overall interest of the organisation and adversely impacts employee morale. *Sculpting beliefs and perceptions* implies that Leader's behaviour shapes employee beliefs and perceptions by reinforcing them either way. Hence, it is important that the leaders demonstrate positive and inspiring behaviour to accomplish the desired outcome. In the Everest debacle, the

team leader was rather explicit in demonstrating his dislike for dissent of any kind and hence the team members quietly accepted his command despite knowing that they might have to pay heavily for their subservience. Thus, leadership behaviour has a mirroring impact on others and therefore leaders need to take this into account as they conduct themselves.

*Learning from failure* means that Champions relish failure as they feel that failure is a better teacher than success. It teaches one “what not to do” as against “what to do”. This however does not imply that one must fail. It only underscores the importance of failure in life and how one should accept it as an integral part of one’s growth cycle. In addition, people should refrain from blaming others for the failure and instead analyse with a broader perspective the various factors—psychological, sociological, geographical, financial and cognitive, and the interplay between them that could have possibly led to the crisis. Blaming individuals or isolated factors for failure limits the learning that one can otherwise extract from failure. Failure is indeed an enriching experience but the learnings from it can only result in value addition if leaders rise above the misery and pick the diamonds from the coalmine. That is what is expected of the emergent leadership.

## CONCLUSION

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There are three key messages we wish to impart from this extended research based discourse besides the fact that both the leader and the organisation ought to be value centered. (i) From the midst of uncertainty and environmental fuzziness an emergent leadership shall come forth. (ii) Such leaders need to wear their thinking cap all the time, even in times of crisis, and (iii) Understanding the reasons and issues surrounding corporate disaster can help leaders address the challenges better and emerge stronger. The continuum of managerial ethics – corporate governance – organizational excellence and business sustainability then get actualized.

Business leaders are in a way lucky; they have teachers in all forms. Be it nature, professional tragedies, winning moments or failures, every life experience has something to offer business leaders that they can translate into valuable learning for their organisation. One such form of learning came almost a decade ago when two teams of mountaineers lost five members each on their hike to Mount Everest. The teams consisted of highly experienced mountaineers, but something went out of control that fateful day. The tragedy, though mournful, has left some extremely valuable lessons for business leaders and their trust with crisis in the corporate world.

While it is difficult to pinpoint one single reason for the disaster, Harvard Business School Professor, Michael A. Roberto, has summarised the reasons into three main categories. These include:

- Cognitive bias (a preconceived mindset about what is right and what is wrong)
- Psychological safety (tendency to believe that nothing is going to happen when circumstances are jittery )
- System complexity (the work procedures are extremely complicated and result in failure due to lack of clarity)

Each of these reasons are deeply seated in our organisational system too and therefore hold great relevance for business leaders. Dissecting these reasons would help leaders get an insight into how disasters catch even the most sure-footed soldier off guard and what one should do to make the most of the situation.

We end this book with a quote from Bohr that in our opinion sums up the contradictions among the scholarship on Strategic HR.

*There are two kinds of truth. There are superficial truths, the opposite of which are obviously wrong. But there are also profound truths, whose opposites are equally right.*

There is no single best approach nor is the one we have adopted the only correct one. But, nevertheless it is our approach and that is that!

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