

Emerging socio-cultural perspectives of implicit leadership theories related to Indo-Pak enterprises

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Key words

Implicit leadership theories (ILTs), neo-Liberalism, Fabian socialism, schema and stereotype

Abstract

India and Pakistan, which historically shared a common territory under British India and rulers before this, more or less have a similar social structure stemming from cultural myths, the ruling of various empires, princely states and war lords. Yet all these narratives are nuanced to shape these countries unique body politic and have created their own social construct of perceptions of 'qualities' attributed to leaders. The research aims at arriving at those implicit leadership theories (ILTs) that resonate these perceptions, thus aiming to clarify the host of misconceptions associated with various forms of leadership such as charismatic, transformational, transactional, etc. The discourse focusses on examining the content of multiple ILTs in varied social context related to Indo-Pak business enterprises, thus recording the systematic variation of ILTs across leader's engendered 'stimuli' to be perceived in a particular way and a perceiver identified 'characteristics' of the same leader.

Introduction

The Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT), currently gaining ground in many discourses related to leadership, is a cognitive theory of leadership developed underpinning the idea that people create cognitive representations of their world, and then subsequently employ these preconceived notions to interpret their surroundings and apply them to control their own behaviours, thus, creating their unique ILT-driven behavioural patterns. ILT affirms the individuals' underlying assumptions, stereotypes, beliefs and schemas bear upon their views of a person as an effective leader. Since culture varies across geographies the different implicit beliefs, schemas and stereotypes imply at a perceptual difference of a 'good leader' (House et al., 2004; Brodbeck et al., 2000).

Although there is a proliferation of research on how ILTs affect the leader ratings, Ooffermann et al (1994) suggest at insufficient attention to the content of ILTs and whether there is systematic variation of the latter across leader stimuli and perceiver characteristics. Their findings arrive at the conclusion that implicit theories of leadership may vary in systematic ways and underscore the necessity of transcending the mere recognition of the existence of such theories toward an understanding of variations in both the content and the structure of the implicit ways that individuals' view leaders (Offermann et al 1994)

ILTs create leader prototypes guided by people's perceptions and responses to leaders in a social space. The term 'implicit' becomes an integral part of these purported theories because it suggests at a generalization of past experiences appropriating them to new experiences or context.

Methodology

The current paper makes several references to Muniapan and Dass (2009) study of Indian leadership relying on Poet Kannadasan's leadership perspectives based on hermeneutics (a qualitative research methodology) which includes content (song) analysis, besides leadership

interpretations from the Hindu epics such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, the philosophical treatise 'The Bhagavad-Gita'.

The paper suggests at involving empirical studies on the GLOBE model purported by Hartog (1999) relying on a data collection method from its cultural investigations across different provinces concerning the design and execution thus providing interpretations of research findings in their respective cultures of corporate leadership.

The investigation relies on a sampling method used by Epitropaki and Robin (2004) as the latter in their empirical investigation account for a six-factor structure (Sensitivity, Intelligence, Dedication, Dynamism, Tyranny, and Masculinity) that earlier found to have precisely represent Explicit theories of leadership (ELTs) in organizational settings.

The research aims to build on Ooffermann et al's purported implicit leadership theories (ILTs), which employ three stimuli (leaders, effective leaders and supervisors), in order to assess the content and factor structure variation of ILTs for male and female perceivers (separately and combined) in different Indo-Pak social strata across the above chosen stimuli.

Modelled on Kennney et al's suggested framework an assessment of leader prototypes of various social groups can be undertaken to arrive at appointed leader behaviours and elected leader behaviours. Here the natural successors of organisation can be termed as appointed leader. The study looks to see how this well-directed research can provide evidence for the existence of these two leader categories. Kenney et al (1996) conclusion can be re-examined with respect to participants, for whom a leader-worthy-of-influence category is suggested, that appear to contingent on associated prototypes during a leader behaviour recognition task. The choice of the model will be to selectively recognize category-consistent information as opposed to a control group. The findings can be subsequently correlated to the synthesis of the universal and situation-contingent behaviour and trait approaches for predicting leadership effectiveness, leader selection and training, and cross-situational comparisons of leader categorizations in Indo-Pak social context.

The methodology embarks on the idea of cross-sectional survey as a similar model undertaken by and Epitropaki on a range of open-ended questionnaires that measured their organizational identification, ILTs, recognition of ILTs in their leaders, leadership behaviours (transactional and transformational), and psychological reactions (job satisfaction, well-being, and turnover intentions). The more troubling aspect of leadership questionnaire is its accuracy but current research method particularly makes an effort to adopt measures from Phillips and Lord (1986) to eliminate biases on the model that identifies the systematically biased indices of leader behaviour. Though the adoption of this in current research methodology do not claim to resolve the inappropriate use of questionnaires at least the endeavour is to address to the concerns attain a more accurate measurement of leadership traits and behavioural patterns and subsequently, summarize the findings from the leadership questionnaires towards assessing the consequences of this study offer suitable recommendations as much possible within the scope of current study. The elimination of bias will be particularly productive in terms of putting together the relevant literature for this research pertaining to the leadership and also gain ground on reviewing the social construct of various cognitive processes, thus arriving at the propositions and their implications.

Main body

Discourse based on some relevant theoretical perspectives

When Vineet Nayar, CEO of India's big-ticket IT services company HCL, said that he would like his legacy to be known as 'someone who has destroyed the office of the CEO' (Cappelli et al 2010) it was similar to Hindu primal God Shiva's act of continuously

transforming the universe through a creative process of 'destruction'. Through this audacious act Vineet Nayar destroyed the organisation hierarchy associated with creating multiple 'information silo' condemning each unit head honcho to sit on his territory like a war lord presiding over his fiefdom.

He called for his large population of employees to evaluate their line managers and their bosses' bosses; then he spiritedly posted his own review on the organisation's intranet for all to view, and petitioned others to follow his posting. It was an emerging form of leadership dealing with 'transparency' and 'empowerment' "as Nayar asserts, 'decisions would be made at the points where the decisions should be made – that is, by employees, where the company meets the client.' He further proceeds to say, "The organization would be inverted, where the top is accountable to the bottom, and therefore, the CEO's office will become irrelevant"(Ibid) Does he mean the job of the CEO cease to exist? Certain no! But, it must evolve to always be willing to push the envelope, create new areas of engagement through transparency and accountability rather than continuing as a status quoist monarch.

The question is how to characterise Nayar's leadership quality as it transcends the typology of conventional leadership. Hence, any attempts should not be made to confirm to Nayar's leadership to any of the template models of transformational leadership theories such as Bass' transactional to transformational leadership (Bass, B. M. (1990) , or Burns(1978) appeal to higher ideals and value systems, or Kouzes and Posner's(2002) leadership participation inventory. The typology of conventional leadership currently relates to ILT in its own specific ways as the latter asserts that the individuals create their cognitive representations of the world. Hence, their typology of leadership is nothing but their ability to use their above preconceived notions to interpret their surroundings and control their behaviours in order to create a pattern (Schyns, B., & Meindl, J. R., 2005). . An individual's projections of his/her implicit expectations and assumptions about the personal characteristics, traits, and qualities when projected into 'another self' (a leader) these attributes perceived to be embodied by the leader.

Based on these assumptions of leader prototypes are formed, which come to bear upon the individuals' perceptions and responses to leaders. The study of these leadership prototypes can never go too far until efforts are made to study how leadership evolves in certain social conditionings and social structures. In the argument of Conley a particular leadership culture can be said to be projection of social structures and relationships into the public domain, a screen onto which the film of the underlying reality or social structure of society is shown (Conley, D (2013). A particular template leadership creates its clones as it suggests at a process of repetitive method of socialization and a manner in which society or micro-society (organisation) moulds its current or new members into the culture.

Among the South Asian countries, the largest and most populous state, India traces its root to early Mesolithic and Neolithic settlements that evolve into walled cities of Indus Valley Civilization. Earlier the country was ruled by several dynasties and princely states before developing into world's largest parliamentary republic with a multi-party system with well over 800 million people eligible to vote. The leadership in a mixed economy like India, either in public sector or citizen sector, have multiple influences from mythical gods and sages from the Vedic period, oligarchs and monarchs presiding over mahajanapadas (republics in ancient India), emperors of dynasties such as the Mauryas, Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, Palas, Marathas, Rajputs, Sikhs, Moghuls, or the British ruling class in India. After living under a protectionist policies that were influenced by socialist economics of Nehruvian policy India embarked on a path of liberalization in early 1990s where leadership was conditioned by privatisation of government institutions and assets, labour market flexibility, lower tax rates for businesses, less

restriction on both domestic and foreign capital, open markets, etc. India fought off its own paranoia of risk of financial sector instability resulting from global contagion, environmental degradation, debt spiral due to decreased tax revenue among other economic problems, or increased inequality across race, ethnicity, or gender lines (if Lulu Abu-Lughod were to be believed potential risks of trade liberalization may witness increased gender inequality in new markets as women lose labour opportunities that existed prior to market liberalization). India, currently the seventh-largest in the world by nominal GDP and the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP), with an average 7 percent annual growth supported by its young population and corresponding low dependency ratio, is currently relies on its service sectors particularly IT services to sustain its economic growth despite agricultural sector continues to be the largest employer.

As India's future growth is likely to come from automobile, retail, banking and insurance together with IT services owing to the growth of citizen sector the corporate leadership in India has transitioned through a Nehruvian policy (social democratic-inspired) of a combination of protectionism, import-substitution and Fabian socialism to subsequent policies characterised by public ownership of large monopolies before the dawning of neo-liberalism ideas. The neo-liberalism ideas, which aim to create a market state, thus proceeding the state to reshape social institutions on the model of the market institutions that are entangled in an apparatus of government targets and incentives. Though Indian enterprises have not been completely persuaded by neo-liberal ideas so far that the state must limit itself to the provision of law and order and national defence the leadership of enterprises always seem to have selectively chosen from either neo-liberal ideas or Fabian socialism that professed tenets of social justice coincided with the zeitgeist of Liberal reforms.

Individualisation of corporate leadership in the form of CEO relates the current research to Mines and Gourishankar's (1990) study to conceptualize the person in Indian culture, few have explored Indian perceptions of leadership, achievement, and agency as valued features of individuality. To derive a sense of these roles as construed in Indian context Mines and Gourishankar (1990) proceeds to examine the south Indian concept of the 'big-man', a notion of individuality and instrumentality that is central to the politics of south India and crucial to an understanding of the dynamic relationship that exists between action and organization in Indian society.

It is difficult to ignore the 'soul searching' phenomenon of Indian leadership which focuses on exploring the inner world of the 'self'. Tamil litterateur Kannadasan recommends such a leadership approach (Muniapan and Dass 2009) as apparently this approach is consistent with the ancient Indian and other ancient East Asian philosophies such as Confucianism and Taoism. The various ILT theories must consider analysing Kannadasan's literary works together with other relevant ancient Indian literatures in the areas of management and people development such as communication, work motivation, conflict handling, values and attitude improvements.

Spencer et al's (2008) study on Indian CEOs' competencies for success leading to selection, succession planning and leadership development for successful CEO's position appears to have an underpinning of ILTs. India's neighbour country Pakistan known for its multi-ethnic and multi-lingual social structure inherited from feudalism and a fledgling democracy, currently trying to dissociate itself from a theocratic state, the leadership in Pakistan's corporate world has many influences including a host of early empires such as Persian Achaemenid, Demetrius of Bactria, the Mauryas, Menander presiding over Greco-Buddhist culture, and lately Muhammad bin Qasim from Arab and the British.

At the heartland of South Asia the country's social and cultural influences, which have shaped up its distinct and varied corporate identities, can be traced to the its philanthropists, religious leaders, social entrepreneurs, military establishment, body politic, war heroes and cultural myths including the provincial folklores immortalized by the oral tradition of singers, reciters and raconteurs of the regions such as Sindh, Pakhtun, Kashmiri, Punjabi and Saraiki. In the Pukhtun areas of the northwest, the North-West Frontier Province is the home of energetic warlike dancers, the most prominent being the Khattak dance, which bears the name of the tribe that dances it, draws a lot of cultural recognition. The war tales of the Baloch are equally stirring may shape up a certain expectation in their war heroes, the images which further projected into corporate boardroom. Also, equally intriguing are the traditional Watayo Faqir tales, the legend of Moriro, epic tale of Dodo Chanesar, to the heroic character of Marui which distinguishes it among the contemporary folklores of the region. Other examples of the folklore of Sindh include the stories of Umar Marui and Suhuni Mehar.

Yet Pakistan, currently 26th largest in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) and 41st largest in terms of nominal Gross Domestic Product, certainly claims its economic priorities above anything else. The consolidation of these priorities, which have largely contributed towards achieving a foreign currency reserves well over £11 billion leading to a stable economic outlook on the long-term as vetted by Standard & Poor's, will largely contingent on the corporate leadership in control of private sector. As Pakistan's social structure is increasingly complex, hence it demands a nuanced understanding of its culture that implies leadership which has its allegiance to multiple social power structures. House et al's model on national cultures that account for nine dimensions -- performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, power distance, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and gender egalitarianism -- can serve as a necessary tool for the current research (House, R. et al,(2002)

The corporate Pakistan certainly draws its heart from a young nation with a population of over 186 million and being figured in the Next Eleven, the eleven countries that, along with the BRICs, have a potential to become one of the world's big-ticket economies in the 21st century. The growth of private sector economy in Pakistan, which can take its heart from World Bank and International Finance Corporation's flagship report Ease of Doing Business Index that ranked Pakistan 85 among 181 countries around the globe, not an extremely self-fulfilling dream but nevertheless Pakistan came ahead of other countries in South Asia and ranked higher than China and Russia. As private companies historically always have looked up to primary export commodities including textiles, leather goods, sports goods, chemicals and carpets/rugs to place themselves in the expanding economy the country's service sector which accounts for well above 53 percent of GDP certainly has accommodated an increasing number of private participants.

If once the growth poles of Pakistan's economy were situated along the Indus River the diversified economies of the country, which now expanded into communication, housing, energy and finance, now is in the process of adding new cities with model airports, tax free industrial zone for non-toxic industries based on turn-key projects and qualitative construction. As Pakistan no more lives in an insular possession it certainly seeks an endorsement from its current and future economic partners vis-a-vis to understanding leadership as an exclusive cultural phenomenon wedded to its social structure. The culturally endorsed implicit theories of leadership (CLTs) as Hhartog et al (1999) explores through empirical studies conducted on varied cultural groups certainly can aid the current research in terms of understanding the

misconceptions associated with charismatic/transformational leadership will be universally endorsed as contributing to outstanding leadership in Pakistan context.

The study of implicit leadership theories (ILTs) can be further augmented with Epitropaki and Robin (2004)'s empirical investigation that primarily intend to achieve three objectives: (a) to cross-validate scale of Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs) in multiple organizational settings in order to create a shorter scale of ILTs in enterprises; (b) to critically examine and assess the generalizability of ILTs across varied groups of employees, and (c) to critically evaluate ILTs' change over a time scale.

The focus on transformational leadership links the current field of inquiry to know how the construct of various cognitive processes provide for a framework for analysis of transformational leadership and transactional leadership behaviours. A huge corpus of documented materials such as recording of working memories, the various perceived attribution and expectation and other mediators (schema, script, and strategy processes) in the relationship between feedback and environmental inputs and leadership behaviours can be examined.

It would be extremely revealing to follow up on the study by Wofford and Goodwin (1994) to know how these above processes form the basis for both transformational and transactional leadership behaviours in Indo-Pak social context, and how the construct of cognitive content varies between different social groups. It would be interesting to know how corporate gladiators in India and Pakistan lead by developing a vision and more intriguingly how they manage to enlist subordinates' ego involvement in this pursuit by setting out an agenda consisting of goals and tasks. Further, how the structuring of such tasks contingent on the content of relevant schemata and scripts. However, ordering such a task would pose immense challenge to know how content is developed as a definite knowledge creation at an organisational level and experiences are categorised in similar organisational situations.

The currently study emphasizes on the needs to demonstrate the effects of individuals' naive conceptions, or "implicit theories," of leadership (ILTs) on leader ratings, hence, the study points out to the need of deserving attention to the content of multiple ILTs theories occurring at systematic variation of ILTs across leader stimuli and perceiver characteristics. The range of qualities and patterns of behaviours that people associate with 'leader' in India and Pakistan's social context needs to be nuanced from individual differences on their perceptions of ILTs as a function of personality traits and perceived parental traits as hypothesized by Keller (1999). The range of personality traits based on Briggs Myers' (1995) personality types and Keller -- agreeableness, conscientiousness, extroversion, openness, neuroticism, and self-monitoring - can enable the current study to characterize individual leaders. In the process the study will provide an opportunity to re-examine the parallel results found by Keller for parental traits and ILTs whereby idealized leadership images mirror descriptions of parental traits.

Also, it would be appropriate to undertake a leader behaviour recognition task in Indo-Pak context modelling on Kenney's (1996) study of ILTs for appointed and elected leaders considered deservedly worthy of influence entailing expectations organized around category prototypes. Epitropaki and Martin (2005) in his study provides ample reasons for organizational identification without affecting the prototype of an ideal work-based leader. The above would help to know if the high organizational identification that is associated with more positive ratings on the actual leader as found by Martin and Epitropaki, or to what extent to which leaders display transactional and transformational behaviours that come to have a bearing on the psychology of the employees. It is an intriguing question that how employees high in organizational identification arrive at their perceived judgments of their leaders' transactional and transformational behaviours on the extent to which they acknowledge their leaders of

possessing certain leadership traits. Also, it would quite logical to follow up on the findings of Epitropaki and Martin (2005) that those employees low on organizational identification have allowed their prototype of their ideal leaders to bias their judgment of their actual leader's behaviour. The pondering question is does transformational leadership predict adduce to psychological outcomes above that is predicted by transactional leadership and how such a scale can be developed for both those high and low in organizational identification.

The research methodology is particularly persuaded by Kenney's (1994) model to arrive at an employee/individual's prototyping of a leader in an organisational situation based on co-occurrence matrix of leader behaviours, based on subjects' similarity classifications, to hierarchical cluster analysis. At Kenny's proposed basic level of hierarchy Rosch's inspired model (1978) premised Briggs Myers' 16 personality types the categories of expectations for leader behaviour, including disseminating ideas to the employee groups/other stakeholders, being responsible, and accepting others, which form four abstract superordinate categories: learning the group's goals, taking charge, being a nice person, and being nervous. However, the study conducted in Pakistan social context is likely to adduce new perspectives with regard to the synthesis of the universal-trait and situation-contingent-behaviour approaches for predicting leadership effectiveness, cross-situational and cross-cultural comparisons of leader categorizations, expectations for established leaders, and leader selection and training.

The current study is also inspired by Ooffermann et al (1994) 's emphasis on the content and factor structure variation of ILTs based on opposite gender's perception of the same. The study sets out its presuppositions from the findings of Ooffermann et al that identifies eight exemplary factors of ILTs (Sensitivity, Dedication, Tyranny, Charisma, Attractiveness, Masculinity, Intelligence and Strength) that remain unvaried across both perceiver sex and stimuli. A more nuanced and deeper understanding of corporate leaders can be based on the variations observed in both the content and the structure of the implicit theories of leadership, which as of now is beyond the grasp of any grounded theories.

The study makes an effort to unveil the conceptual frailty in transformational and charismatic leadership as identified in natural leadership or the issue of compatibility suggested by Yukl (1999) between transformational and charismatic leadership which very well can be found to have a similarity to current field of enquiry.

Apart from the various influences on leadership the inherent proposition is the 'self' itself which largely involves the various growth stage from childhood to adolescence. It may go beyond the scope to investigate this thoroughly but some apt reference to this such as how early childhood experiences may come to have a bearing on ILTs or how these experiences may shape expectations about the self in relation to leadership figures as well as willingness to learn and adapt one's behaviour consistent with different leadership models as purported by Tiffany (2003) do not seem to be a complete departure from the fundamentals of this study.

Conclusion

Since ILTs mean implicit theories that are continuously extended to new social experiences the individual is likely to be unaware of the biases he/she inherits, hence, he or she is unlikely to recognise how effective ILT as a tool. Hence, the challenge would be to devise an effective ILT that can eliminate the bias associated with stereotypes. If a social context with all its intricacies can be recorded the ILT can be a useful tool to evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of a leader, and also the process will eliminate the bias in choosing the leader. The social world would continue to be apprehended in terms of perceptions. However, individuals use these perceptions intuitively to effectively organize and guide social interactions always need to be concluded from the ways the individuals derive their observations of the actions of

other people, such as intuitive mechanism of taking a note of their leaders' characteristics, collate them to their own ILT's, and arrive at decisions regarding whether they fit to the bill of an appropriate leader. (Forsyth 2009).¹ In the situation where a leader requires to exert control over the working group the choice may emphasize on specific characteristics, notwithstanding the possibility of bias creeping into such selection.

Applying Hartog (1999)'s GLOBE model, as suggested in the paper, it now can found that the participants in an empirical study are likely to report the behaviours that the leader has or has not performed in the situations where they were to judge the behaviours that are both part of their own ILTs and performed by the leader, in comparison to behaviours that are part of their ILTs and are not performed by the leader. Foti and Lord (1987) study vindicates this in a situation of leader-group interaction. The above study attempts to add a few layers to Hartog, Foti and Lord's findings.

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