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THE EMERGING NEW LEADERSHIP FOR THE VIRTUAL ORGANIZATION IS E- LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The use of information technology is fundamentally changing the way we work and produce value. Critical human relationships are now being mediated by technology. As a result, a new organisational structure and working environment have emerged, necessitating a leadership reevaluation. Virtual organisations are the new organisational shape, E-environments are the new working conditions, and E-leadership is the increasing leadership style. The new touch between the leader and his followers is a distinguishing feature of E-leadership. Face-to-face communication is being phased out in favour of technology-mediated interactions. Traditional leaders, like e-Leaders, must be able to lead at a global level. Because of their abilities, attitudes, expertise, and personal and professional experiences, E-Leaders stand out. "Technology experts" and "business geniuses" are not e-Leaders. They are tech-savvy and know how to use it effectively, and how the organisation runs.

Key words: E-leadership, E-environment, reevaluation

Introduction

The transition from an industrial to a post-industrial society is reflected in the evolution of leadership styles. The new society is defined by rapid and far-reaching improvements in information and communication technology digitalization, also known as the information society, dissemination of ideas, or digital society. In the industrial economy, power and information were filtered through hierarchies and legal power; in the networked economy, power and information are informal and cross-referenced.

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Conceptual Framework

The concept of E-leadership is the inescapable conclusion of the E-work environment created by improvements in information technology and its integration into organisational processes, according to a thorough literature review. Figure 1 shows this as a conceptual framework. The use of information technology, according to this paradigm, has revolutionised the way businesses operate over time. As a result, the virtual organization/networked organisation has arisen as a new organisational structure. As a result, there has been a shift in the relationship between superiors and subordinates. They currently use E-technologies to communicate with one another (telephone, overnight express mail, fax machines, and groupware tools such as e-mail, bulletin boards, chat and video-conferencing etc). The traditional leader and his followers did not have access to this E-environment. The proposed model is explored in greater detail in the following discussion.

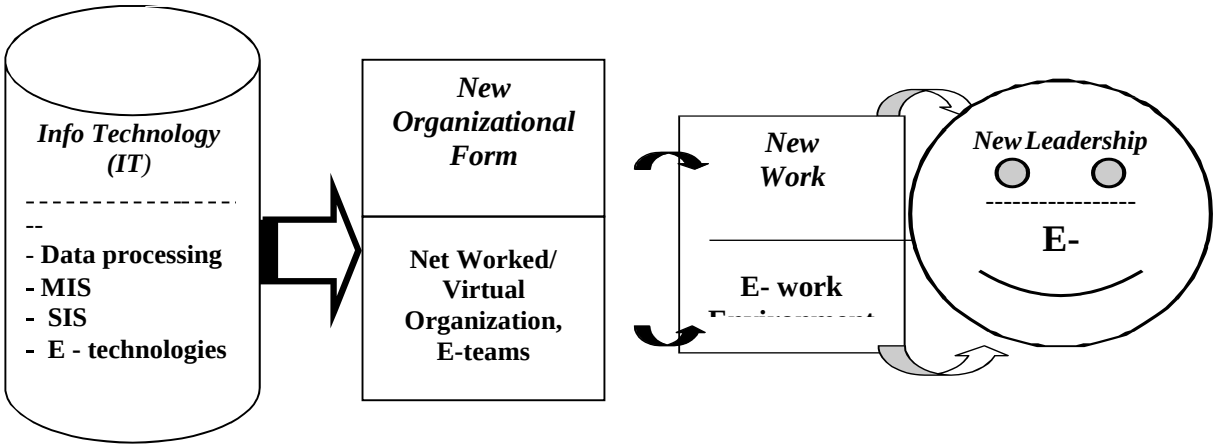

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Emerging E-leadership for E work Environment

Integration of Information Technology in Organization

According to one point of view, the transition to digital in businesses has occurred in four stages (Tassabehji, Wallace & Cornelius, 2007). On the following page, Fig. 2 depicts these steps. Ward and Peppard (2002) used Anthony (1965) and Nolan (1965) to define the first step as 'data acquisition' (1973). The Data Processing stage began with the arrival of computers. The purpose of computer induction, according to Tassabehji et al.(2007), was data automation and exception reporting. Machines

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made data gathering, storage, and retrieval possible at previously unheard-of speeds. The operation, on the other hand, was disjointed and constrained by the equipment. End users were no longer able to access the content or the system (Tassabehji et al., 2007).

In the following stage, the use of computers for management information systems was a significant development. It began as technology advanced from the server era to the microcontroller era. The organization's usage of information technology increased, and a network became conceivable. The operation of computers became increasingly spread, and their processing power increased substantially. The usage of information technology in this era aided decision making. This era began in the 1970s and lasted until the 1980s (Tassabehji et al., 2007).

Subsequent breakthroughs in intranets in the 1980s proved effective, and their incorporation into commercial organisations aided them in using cloud computing as a strategic tool for establishing and maintaining competitiveness (Venkatraman & Zaheer, 1990). They thought that information technology provided a competitive edge in four ways: by changing industry limits, business definition and redefinition, affecting the competitiveness mechanism, and encourage business.

"The combination of strategic planning and accompanying data, historical hardware and software, and more modern internet-based technologies is critical to the progress of E-technology." 2007 (Tassabehji and colleagues) As a result, in order to properly manage and exploit e-technology, businesses must be able to combine various hardware and software components (Lee, 2013). Internal e-technology integration, involving solely the corporation, or external e-technology integration, involving supply chain parties, outsourcers, and shared data (Themisto cleous, 2004). A distinguishing feature of the e-technology era is the emergence of the E-environment, which has been transforming traditional leadership into E-leadership.

The word "e-environment" relates to how e-technologies have evolved and how they are used in the workplace. As a result of the increasing sources of evidence obtained by alternative and different technologies, as well as the variety of knowledge these technologies may supply, new opportunities emerge (Tassabehji et al., 07). For example, e-technology integration leads to the creation of internal and external databases, some of which are terabytes in size and are stored in e-environment database systems. As a result, the e-environment delivers full transparency throughout the value chain, as well as greater internal visibility and control.

Bill Gates (1999) suggests that an organisation become a virtual control centre, with well-integrated information flow reaching the appropriate section of the organisation of the company at the right moment. He goes on to state that it is made up of digital procedures that allow a company to recognise an environmental hazard, assess a competitor's challenge and customer needs, and plan a timely response. As the e-

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environment develops and continues to grow, organisations will unavoidably become more sophisticated. As a result, organisations whose business processes are primarily driven by e-commercial activities and whose members are globally distributed will appear to others as a single, unified organisation with a geographical location, typically communicating via computer email and groupware while appearing to others in the form of blogs. A virtual organisation is the name given to this type of organisational structure.

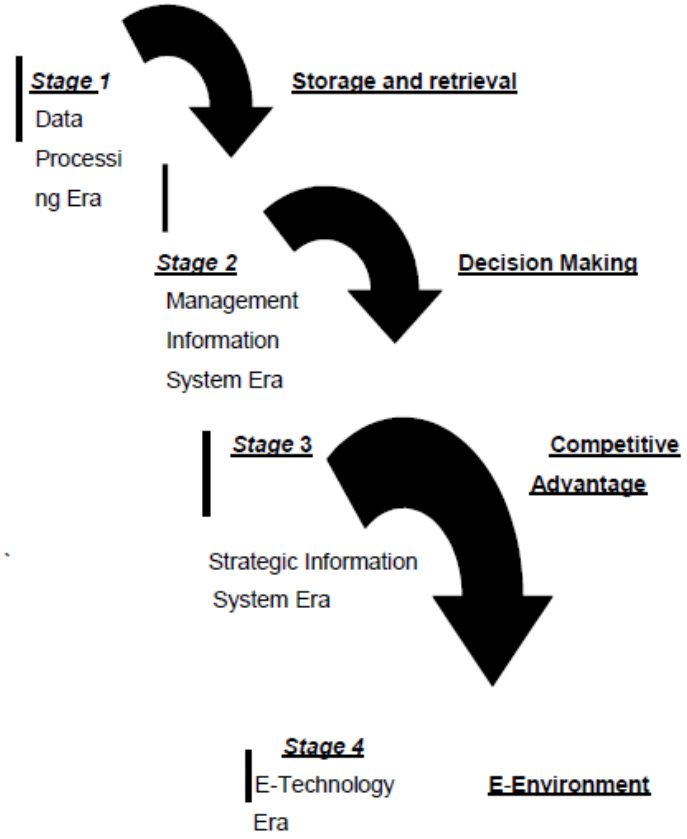

Figure 2: Evolution of IT in Organization

What is E- leadership?

The letter 'E' became popular during the internet revolution, and electronic mail (e-mail) was the first word to have the letter 'E' inserted before it. Then came e-business, e-commerce, e-books, e-seminars, and now e-leadership. E-leadership (Electronic leadership) happens in an e-environment where information technology, particularly the internet, is used to mediate labour (Hani, 2001). Not only is information technology used to facilitate communication between followers and

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leaders in this situation, but it is also used to collect and disseminate information (Avolio et al., 03). As a result, the leader's primary responsibilities and responsibilities remain unchanged; the only difference is how the leader may effectively communicate with his or her employees when they are not in the same office building as the leader. Furthermore, the E-leader does not need to be a "tech genius"; all he needs is a basic understanding of the new technology. He needs to know how to use it effectively in order to meet the employee's needs while also fostering connections, trust, and perception. (Hani, et al., 2001). Passionate commitment, focus and discipline, charisma, and other traits noticed by observers of leadership throughout history are timeless, universal leadership attributes that remain critical in the E-environment. In a different way, these cohabit with E-factors. Furthermore, there is no one-size-fits-all strategy to E-leadership that can be used everywhere. The new leadership will vary slightly from country to country, from culture to culture, and from sector to sector. It is becoming more apparent in economically developed cultures and organisations that have evolved in their use of information technology.

Need for E-Leadership

According to Kurlan and Egan (1999), the E-environment provides three significant leadership challenges. Worker professional isolation, distant surveillance, and distributive justice notions when employees are not physically present are examples of these. These challenges, according to the authors, need new leadership competencies relevant to E- leadership. Four different trends in the new organisational climate will have far-reaching ramifications for the rise of e-leadership (Avolio et al., 2013). For starters, the way people share information and media has changed. Followers now have access to the same information that leaders once had exclusive access to, and they often get it first. This has put additional pressure on leaders to justify their decisions more quickly. As a result of the numerous routes via which information flows, today's people can no longer control "releasing" the most critical information.

Leaders must be prepared to share information in case it has already been shared. If an employee is unsatisfied with the activities of a management, he or she can now take action that was previously impossible. For example, an employee can call senior management, send an angry message to the entire workforce, or, in one case, contact the editor of a local news show with a storey about the incident with the click of a button. Today, support groups and networks arise virtually spontaneously, allowing individuals to organise a challenge to powerful leaders who could previously keep such persons apart and unorganised. This change has permitted faster and more effective reactions to changing consumer wants and expectations, partly because employees now have more access to information and

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media and partly because they are closer to customers (Avolio et al., 2013).

Increased worker connection is the second key difference brought about by the e-environment. The interconnection of the world presents tremendous potential for businesses as they seek to respond to rapid shifts in customer needs and market globalisation (Avolio et al., 2013). Employees from various time zones, cultures, and even competing organisations are regularly brought together to complete work or provide support in record time. An employee can ask a question of a global workforce and receive a response twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week in such a corporation. Today's leaders must lead in a global web of interconnectedness that crosses time zones, country borders, and cultures. In virtual teams, which are made up of people from all over the world, continents, and nationalities, the distribution of leadership at different stages of the team's life cycle, depending on what the team needs to perform and produce, might confuse the picture. At any time, members of a virtual team might move from being a leader to being a disciple.

The third significant difference is that it is now simple to reach out and touch others. The CEO of a large international consulting firm can connect with his top country managers almost daily via e-mail and convey his views on a wide range of urgent and long-term issues. He believes that sharing his ideas with them, particularly on industry developments that may have an impact on their company, will be beneficial to them. In other exchanges, which he usually communicates to everyone in the company, he might express global gratitude for a team's outstanding performance. He may cite specific examples of excellence and convey his joy at being associated with those individuals. He can communicate with anyone in the globe, in any country, with the press of a button. On the other side, there are occasions when he unintentionally employs comparisons that do not connect well in other cultures (Avolio et al., 2013).

The fourth group of difficulties, according to the authors, is that communication in the e-environment is more indelible than before. Because of the convenience of e-mail, a leader can send remarks that he or she would normally say only in a private dialogue behind closed doors to others via e-mail. Leaders and followers must adapt to this new "nervous system" that is being developed within and across enterprises, according to the examples above. Leaders have immense power to reach out to and affect everyone in an organisation thanks to the nervous system. With the ability to reach out and touch everyone comes the necessity to be aware of the new neurological system's possible downsides and to appropriately employ the power it grants. Rumors, like viruses, may spread quickly within organisations, just as good news might. Conflicts can swiftly develop when people disagree without looking each other in the eyes. A charismatic e-leader may have a better chance than ever to attract unwitting followers into cults and clans that benefit only the leader (Avolio et al., 2013).

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According to Kazlowski (2002), the spatial distance between team members, which limits face-to-face communication and the consequent use of technical communication to integrate team members are the essential elements of virtual teams (e-environment) that have consequences for E-leadership. Each of these characteristics, according to Kazlowski, obstructs the two main leadership responsibilities of process improvement and team development. Due to the lack of face-to-face communication within these teams, leaders' ability to assess team member performance and implement solutions to work problems is severely limited. Standard monitoring, coaching, and development tasks are extremely difficult for virtual team leaders to complete. How do virtual team leaders keep track of squad member productivity and job completion? How do managers and supervisors train and supervise their teams? Kazlowski is a Polish writer (2002)

Importance of E-Leadership

Today, information technology, particularly the internet, has emerged as a source of competitive advantage that no company can afford to overlook unless it is willing to pay a high price (Clemmer, 1999). Off-site workers relied more on e-mail to communicate with coworkers who were on-site. Furthermore, research has shown that electronic mail is more effective at expanding the range, amount, and velocity of information and communicating unequivocal information, whereas face-to-face interaction is more effective in situations involving high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty, as well as socially sensitive and intellectually difficult interactions (Nancy B. Kurland, Terri D. Egan, 1999). (Eccles, 1992, Nohria). The fundamental reason for the Manager's opposition to telecommuting is a fear of losing control (Nancy B. Kurland,Terri D. Egan 1999). They query, "How do you measure productivity, develop trust, and manage when you're physically out of sight?" (Mason, 1993; Nancy B. Kurland, Terri D. Egan, 1999). Supervisors must rely on means other than direct observation to oversee and monitor telecommuters' work because they are physically out of sight. Using output controls and assigning telecommuters assignments with easily measurable outcomes may be the best solution for many firms (Olson 1982). (Hamblin 1995). Terri D. Egan and Nancy B. Kurland, 1999 Every company's successful use of technology requires strong leadership. Information technology adaptation includes the acquisition and use of new IT or new features of current IT, as well as the disuse of IT and the altered use of existing IT features. Leaders have the ability to alter these habits. As a result, the impact of leaders on technological adaptation provides a theoretical lever for managing cooperation through manipulation of the digitally defined transitional area (Dominic Thomas, Robert Bostrom, 2018).

The dynamic between a leader and his or her followers has changed considerably. Many leadership practises are now predominantly carried out by leaders via electronic means. Given the rate at which firms grow and their global reach, "e-

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leadership will be the standard rather than the exception in our thinking about what defines organisational leadership" in the not-too-distant future (Zaccaro, Bader, 2013). As a result, having e-leadership capable of responding to the task of building and operating in a new work environment is vital for corporate organisations. The trust factor in teams can be improved with the help of technology adaptation. Information and communication technology failures can have a cascading effect on team productivity. As we discovered in the context of leaders achieving stronger trust and cooperation through technological adaptation management, virtual team leaders can impact better outcomes by regulating the adaptation of their teams' information and communication technology (Dominic Thomas, Robert Bostrom, 2018).

The growing usage of e-business technology within and between organisations, as well as the 'e-wakening' from the dot.com mania, has led executives to recognise that getting IT right this time would require creating and implementing relevant leadership competencies for effectively administering IT. When new leadership pushed for a required transformation, the nature of which was obvious to individuals with a clear vision that wasn't clouded by commitments to an older order of things, NCR was able to reclaim profitability. The company was able to pivot swiftly in new directions because it had strong capabilities in new technologies as well as sales and distribution capabilities that could effectively introduce new things to previous customers with some adaptation. Richard S. Rosenbloom, Richard S. Rosenbloom, Richard S. Rosenbloom, Richard Rosenbloom, Richard S. Rosenb.

Key Competencies for E Leadership

In order to succeed in the virtual workplace, Grenier and Metes (1995) identified six skills that an e-leader must possess. First and foremost, he must grasp the link between information consumption and enabling technology. Second, he should be familiar with the technologies and procedures required to establish data flow during virtual operations. Third, he knows when and how to replace traditional work methods with virtual ones. He should also be able to assess the value of e-technologies. Fifth, he has the capacity to recognise and facilitate product breakthroughs and innovation. Exploration with ideas is an E-sixth leader's skill. He should not be hesitant to experiment with new ideas and put them into practise.

When examining the key competencies for e-leadership, Susan Annunzio (2001) outlines seven such attributes. Some of these include interacting with followers, managing information resources, communicating with external stakeholders, promoting dialogue, active listening, empowering, and lastly delegating. Kissler (2001) outlines a list of qualities that effective e-leaders should have when it comes to promoting their company's success. These include organisational mind portion

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(quick and efficient information use), future print (creation and sharing of future direction), organisational alignment (in terms of leadership, manpower, structure, and process, with an overall strategy and vision), managerial staff similarity, creative tension, sense of panic, continuous improvement, and values-based leadership. E-leaders, according to Avolio et al. (2013), should strike a balance between old and new, communicate their goals, use technology to reach out and touch people, and use technology to deal with greater workforce diversity. Transformational leadership, according to Fisk (2002), lies at the heart of E-leadership. E-leaders are as a result more creative, communicative, blending, and collaborative.

No matter how quickly technology evolves, people need to feel that they are a vital part of the organisation. They must still believe that their efforts are having an impact. E-leaders must help them by defining and outlining not only the company's strategic direction, but also how to get there. Susan (2001) lists a number of qualities that an e-leader should have in order to foster a positive work environment. These qualities include honesty, attentiveness, awareness, a willingness to learn and relearn, a sense of adventure, and vision.

The e-leaders do not need to be technical or business management specialists, but they should have a good understanding of how technology works and be able to see where the company is going in order to help them turn their vision into reality. The e-leader, according to Yoo and Alavi (2004), aids an unorthodox firm's success in the new economy. He or she may be an expert in cutting-edge technology, although this isn't required. What's needed is to identify a support group, guide the company in the right direction, or figure out who among the company's longer-serving employees has an organisational structure (positions and culture) that allows the new to take over. Some of the e-leaders, according to the authors, have a technology business background that has catapulted them to positions of responsibility. Avoiding overspending on technology, from selecting whether and when to buy new equipment to maintaining present stuff, is one of the advantages of having such a leader. They also know how to maximise their benefits and invest wisely in technology so as not to overextend themselves. This is not to say that the e-leader must be a technological expert; nonetheless, the internet company's nature necessitates the e-leader in any executive position to be more watchful on technology and problems that may affect their industry.

Concluding Remarks

Big data will take a long time for businesses to completely realise its potential. In general, organisations have to go through four stages in order to fully realise the true potential of information technology. During the last decade or two, the internet and its supporting technologies have revolutionised information technology. These

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technologies have contributed in the formation of virtual organisations, making e-leadership possible. It is important to note that the four stages of digital technology evolution and integration into organisations did not supersede the prior stages. They did, however, coexist in a different way. Furthermore, no organisation has ever successfully completed all four stages. Different organisations operate at different levels depending on their ability to incorporate diverse technology.

The internet and e-commerce, among other recent breakthroughs in information technology, are revolutionising the way organisations function. As a result, new organisational structures, working environments, and leadership styles are arising. The virtual organisation is the new organisational form, the E-environment is the new work environment, and e-leadership is the new leadership form. The concept of E-Leadership is distinguished by the new contact between the leader and his followers. The dynamic between a boss and his or her followers has changed considerably. Many leadership procedures are now predominantly carried out by leaders through digital networks.

In an e-environment, where labour is mediated by information technology, particularly the internet, e-leadership emerges. In this context, information technology promotes not only communication between followers and leaders, but also the collection and dissemination of information. As a result, the leader's primary responsibilities and responsibilities remain unchanged; the only difference is how the leader may effectively communicate with his or her employees when they are not in the same office building as the leader. When it comes to E-leading, there are a few limitations. There is no universal E-leadership approach that can be applied everywhere and in all circumstances. A worldwide model is impossible to achieve since different organisations throughout the world are at different stages of e-technology adoption and business application.

E-leaders share the same transnational leadership traits as traditional leaders. Talents, attitudes, knowledge, and professional and personal experiences all define E-leaders. "Technology specialists" and "business geniuses" are not e-leaders. They are knowledgeable about technology, how to properly use it, and the company's business plan.

The industrial age is giving way to the digital age, and we are living in it. The information age is both more efficient and more challenging than previous eras. To close the gap and remain competitive, businesses in this region must make significant adjustments to their operations. A nation's economic struggle in the future will be won or lost by its business organisations, it must be recognised. As a result, Indian businesses are forced into a race that they cannot afford to lose. There is lots of space for exploitation because information technology is such a powerful force multiplier.

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This research has unearthed a slew of new research prospects. To begin, theoretical research into the impact of e-leadership on the literature on leadership is required. Because 'behaviour theories' appear to be more popular than 'trait theories,' the pendulum of focus appears to favour 'behaviour theories' over 'trait theories.' The literature on 'charismatic,' 'transformational,' and 'transactional leadership' should be assessed in the context of the e-environment, which lacks physical interaction between leaders and their leaders. Case studies of businesses that are pioneers in e-leadership, such as NCR and others, would yield fruitful study. Investigating why e-work environments do not materialise in the majority of business organisations and what may be done to change this is an intriguing topic. E-leadership is more than a concept; it is also a potent force. It will need work to realise its full potential in the local environment.

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