A Study of Spiritual Leadership Values: Comparative analysis of different age groups of employees of MCB Bank

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ABSTRACT: *Purpose of this study was to evaluate the commonalities and difference in opinion about the conception of spiritual leadership, and about the values embraced in spiritual leaders in employees of different age groups. To develop an understanding regarding the values of spiritual leadership author have conducted semi-structured interviews with employees that belong to different age groups. For this study seventeen professionals were interviewed, out of which four were below thirty year of age, seven belongs to range of thirty to forty, and the remaining six employees were above the age of 40. After the completion of survey while compiling the responses from different respondents we came to know that people belongs to different age are having three common values concerning the spiritual leadership.*

Keywords: Spiritual leadership, social influence, Charisma, MCB bank
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Leadership has been described as a _process of social influence_ in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. The literature have provided many other definitions too that explain this term, some understand this term as someone whom people would follow or someone who can direct and guide or someone who can organize a group to deliver and work for a common good.

While there have been many studies on leadership but still the dimensions, clarifications and definition of the concept remain unclear as of today. To treat leadership as a separate concept, it must be distinguished from other social phenomena that influence others to behave in a certain way. Researches usually try to define the term but ignore to highlight the distinctions between leadership and other processes of social influence of material nature. A major point of the few review was that leadership research might develop more rapidly if more general theories of social influence were incorporated (Hollander, Julian: 1992 and Bavelas: 1960). It is also argued that there is no unique content to the construct of leadership that is not subsumed under other, more general models of behavior (Calder: 1977).

Kochan, Schmidt, and DeCotiis (1975) attempted to distinguish leadership from the related concepts of authority and social power. In leadership, influence rights are voluntarily conferred. Power does not require goal compatibility – merely dependence – but leadership implies some congruence, correspondence and resemblance between the objectives of the leader and the led. Few researcher analyzed leadership in terms of its closeness and punitive-ness of the supervision. Several authors have conceptualized leadership behavior in terms of the authority and discretion subordinates are permitted (Day and Hamblin: 1964). Few analyzed leadership in terms of the least-preferred-co-worker scale (LPC), but the meaning and behavioral attributes of this dimension of leadership behavior remain controversial (Fiedler: 1987). In short different authors tried to explain this concept in different ways and yet it seems as if the concept of leadership is not fully understood by many people in professional life.

Leadership has been categorized by many types. Few see this from the perspective of charisma, while other sees it from the lenses of power & politics. In recent past there has been a huge debate not only on transformational and transactional leadership but also on spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership is defined as influencing people through values, attitudes & behaviors to motivate them intrinsically in order to have a sense of calling and membership to the organization.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out what values people of different ages of MCB Bank think are important for a spiritual leader.

Methodology

The author(s) have interviews 17 staff members of MCB comprising of different age groups. These interviewees are divided into three groups details of the same are as follows

(a) Group A:　　　　Below 30 years
(b) Group B:　　　　Above 30 but less than 40
(c) Group C:　　　　Above 40 years

Out of these 17, four (4) belongs to Group "A", Seven (7) belongs to "B" while remaining (6) belongs to "C". All the respondents were interviewed with semi structured questions details of the same are given below. Few questions

Research Findings

The interview has ascertained there are some common and some different values among different age groups in perceiving spiritual leadership. Following values were identified in this study

Values	Group A	Group B	Group C
Wholeness		√	
Sense of Mission		√	√
Interconnectedness			√
Religiousness			√
Empathy	√	√	√
Honesty/Integrity	√	√	
Fairness	√	√	√
Provide Growth	√	√	
Respect	√	√	√

The following is the frequency table of values as identified/voted by all groups as important for the spiritual leadership.

Values	Frequency
Empathy	3
Fairness	3
Respect	3
Sense of Mission	2
Honesty/Integrity	2
Provide Growth	2
Wholeness	1
Interconnectedness	1
Religiousness	1

From the above table we know that there are only three values that are common in all three age groups of MCB. These three values are Empathy, Fairness & Respect. Sense of mission, honesty/integrity and acknowledging hard work are identified by two groups out of a total of three. Wholeness, interconnectedness & religiousness are values which are considered by Group "C" as important for a spiritual leader to have.

Empathy

Empathy in this study refers to compassion, responsiveness, sympathy and understanding others side of story. All three groups of ages feel that superiors must be able to understand, show compassion and be responsive to their employees and subordinates. Below mentioned responses are received from all three groups

"He gave me a week off (over and above my leave balance) last year when my mother was hospitalized."

"He extended help, got time out of his busy schedule and made me understand the flow of promotion interview due to which I got breakthrough"

"He is always a considerate superior"

Fairness

Fairness refers to equality, impartiality and without favoritism. Employees of all ages think that it is imperative for a superior to be fair and transparent. Following are few responses that author(s) received from the respondents.
"A leader should be fair and free from any bias and prejudice"

"A spiritual leader is one who not only exhibit impartiality within his team but also creates an environment which helps people feel fairness all around"

"My manager is very objective when it comes to performance appraisals"

Respect

Respect in this study refers to the regard, reverence and veneration. Employees of all ages think that a spiritual leader must show respect towards his colleagues and team under his command. Following are few comments made by the respondents

"One who kept their staff waiting without any reason can never be a true leader"

"My boss is a person of high moral values; he never looks down on people"

Sense of Mission

Sense of mission in this study refers to the far sightedness of the leader. It is ability of the leader to foresee the future and anticipate the uncertain. Group "B" & "C" rated this value as essential for a spiritual leader. One of the respondents in Group "B" said

"Leadership is a function of mission, sense of direction and far sightedness"

"My supervisor somehow sense what is next"

Honesty/Integrity

Honesty/Integrity refers to truthfulness, Trustworthiness and Uprightness. Group "A" & "B" rated this attribute as highly desirable for a spiritual leader. Two responses of Group "A" are as follows

"He told me about the bad condition of the company, when every other division head was hiding"

"He is a person of high moral value"

Provide Growth

Acknowledging hard work refers to recognizing the effort of the individual and provides them with the distinct and visible career growth. Group "A" & "B" rate this value as important for a spiritual leader. Few responses are as follows

"He gave highest increment to Ahmed who worked harder than all others in his department"

"My boss is admirer of one who delivers, and that's it for him"

Wholeness

Wholeness refers to comprehensiveness, totality & completeness. Respondent of Group "B" emphasizes that if a spiritual leader does not give feeling of completeness in life to his staff, he is a typical manager and not at all a leader. Followings are few examples

"The spiritual leadership approach helps people to have a sense of completeness in life."

"My boss acknowledges that people bring into the workplace their own self, their dreams and hopes."

Interconnectedness

Interconnectedness as defined by respondent of Group "C" is ability of the leader to connect the staff's internal self with external world and show them why they exist. Two respondents narrate this concept as follows.

"My boss helps me see how the things around me at workplace and at home are related with my inner and how changes in external world make changes within me and vice versa"

"Spiritual leader should know that he is a part of something bigger, i.e. God"

Religiousness

Religiousness refers to piousness & having sense of God. Only Group "C" rated this value a an important value for a spiritual leader.

"Leader must realize that there is someone who is more powerful than his own self, to whom all bow i.e. God"

"My division head is very pious and kind hearted individual, and probably that is one of the many reasons he is such an inspiring individual"

Conclusion

Author of this paper concludes that Empathy, Fairness & Respect are common spiritual leadership values for all ages of groups. Conversely, there are other values which are shared by two groups only. Sense of mission, Honesty/integrity and Acknowledging hard work / providing growth are three to mention here. Remaining three are only rated by one of the three groups only i.e. Wholeness, interconnectedness & religiousness. It is important for a spiritual leader to understand the perception of people of different ages about leadership. It is also imperative for leaders to know how people under their influence want to see them and how can they effectively influence all of them to deliver more and enhance organizational productivity.

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